



My faith journey...

It was almost a year and a half ago that I first spoke with Sister Anne about my desire to explore my faith and become a part of the Catholic Church. I figured I would be baptized and confirmed in about a week and then move on with life. As I began to learn about the RCIA process, I can remember thinking, "A whole year! Is it worth it? With my fiancé living in a different state, working full time, planning a wedding, and all the other obligations of life, I wasn't sure that I could make the commitment to the RCIA process. But one of the first things I learned on my journey was that I wasn't making a commitment to the RCIA process, I was making a commitment to God. This commitment to God has taken me on an amazing journey – one in which I have had the privilege of meeting some amazing people. To all those on the RCIA team – you are truly disciples of Christ on earth

and I appreciate all you have done to guide me in my faith journey.

My faith journey has changed my life – and not in the corny “I’m supposed to be saying this” way, but in a true way that resonates in my heart and in the way I relate to the world around me. I have discovered the peace that comes through prayer and from knowing that God is always present in my life. Seriously, how awesome is it that we can put our fears and anxieties in God’s hands? I look at the homeless man on the street differently, knowing that he also has a story to tell – and renewing my commitment to charity. My journey has rekindled my husband’s faith and has given us a stronger marital bond. I have also learned a lot during my journey. As someone who thrives on knowledge - and who knew very little about Catholicism or the Bible when I started the journey – I can now speak with some degree of intelligence on the topic, instead of avoiding the subject all together. I also “see” God’s footprints in the world more readily now. Whether in the man who gives up his seat on the train for the elderly woman, or the stranger that smiles at me on the sidewalk, I see God’s presence in the world and in my life. And I’ve learned how to thank Him for the gifts that I have been given in my life.

When I started this journey, I figured it would end with my baptism at the Easter Vigil – but I have learned that the journey is never really over. And, with God’s help, I’m looking forward to continuing to learn and grow in my faith. I want to thank my husband and Godparent, Paul, my parish sponsor, Ann Leonardelli, Dianna Lehnen, and all the members of the RCIA team for their time and commitment to my faith journey. And thank you to the entire St. Raphael community for supporting me on this journey.

--Heather Heppner