



Evangelization & OCIA Workshop

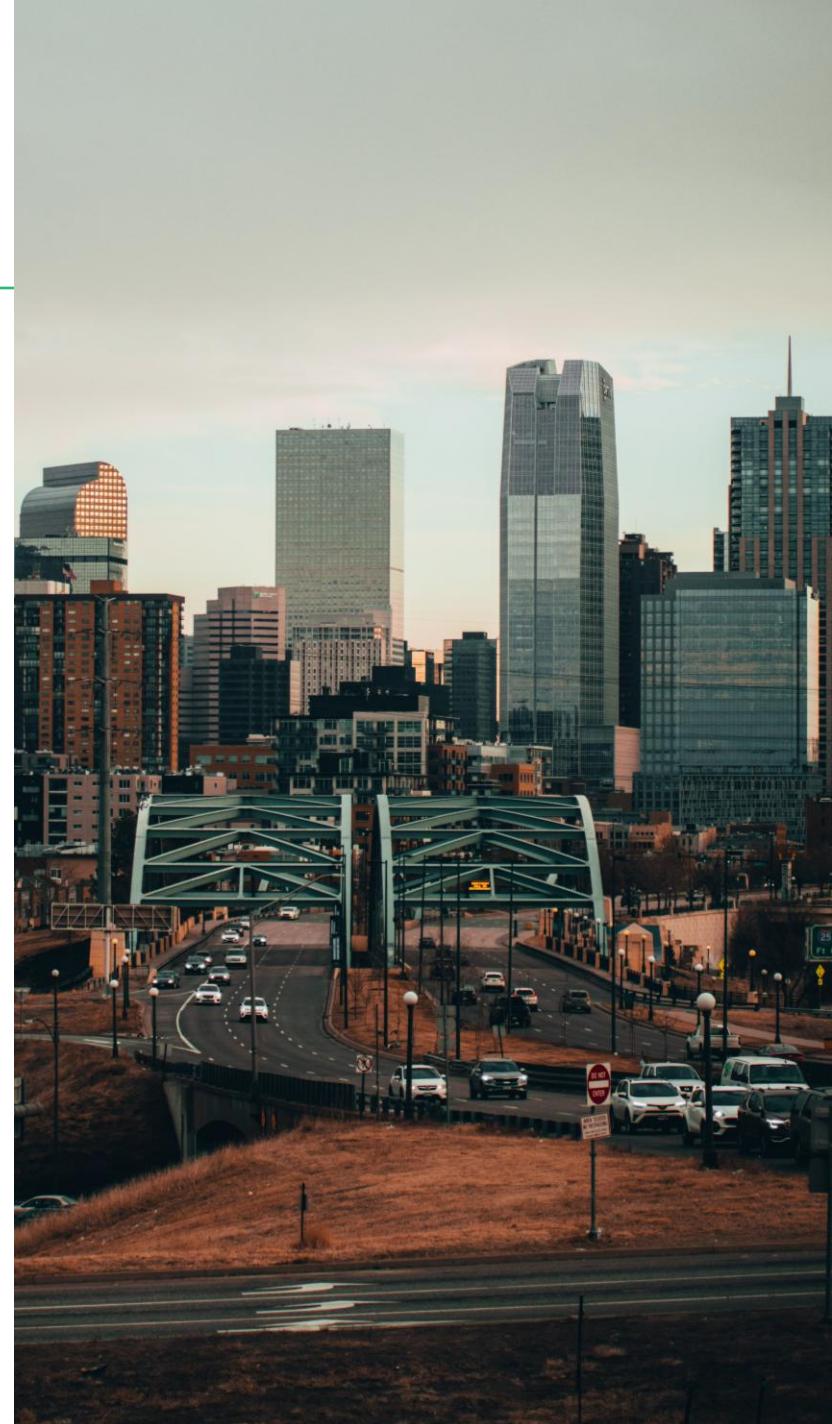
All Things Accompaniment

21 August 2025



Agenda

- Opening prayer
- OCIA Transition
- Concrete Examples: What does Accompaniment actually look like?
- Break
- Applying Accompaniment to Parish Life
- Sponsor Trainings



Gospel of the Day: Matthew 20:1-16

**When those who had started about five o'clock came,
each received the usual daily wage.**

**So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more,
but each of them also got the usual wage.**

**And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying,
'These last ones worked only one hour,
and you have made them equal to us,
who bore the day's burden and the heat.'**

He said to one of them in reply,

'My friend, I am not cheating you.

Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?

Take what is yours and go.

What if I wish to give this last one the same as you?

Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money?

Are you envious because I am generous?'

Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Updates on the OCIA Transition

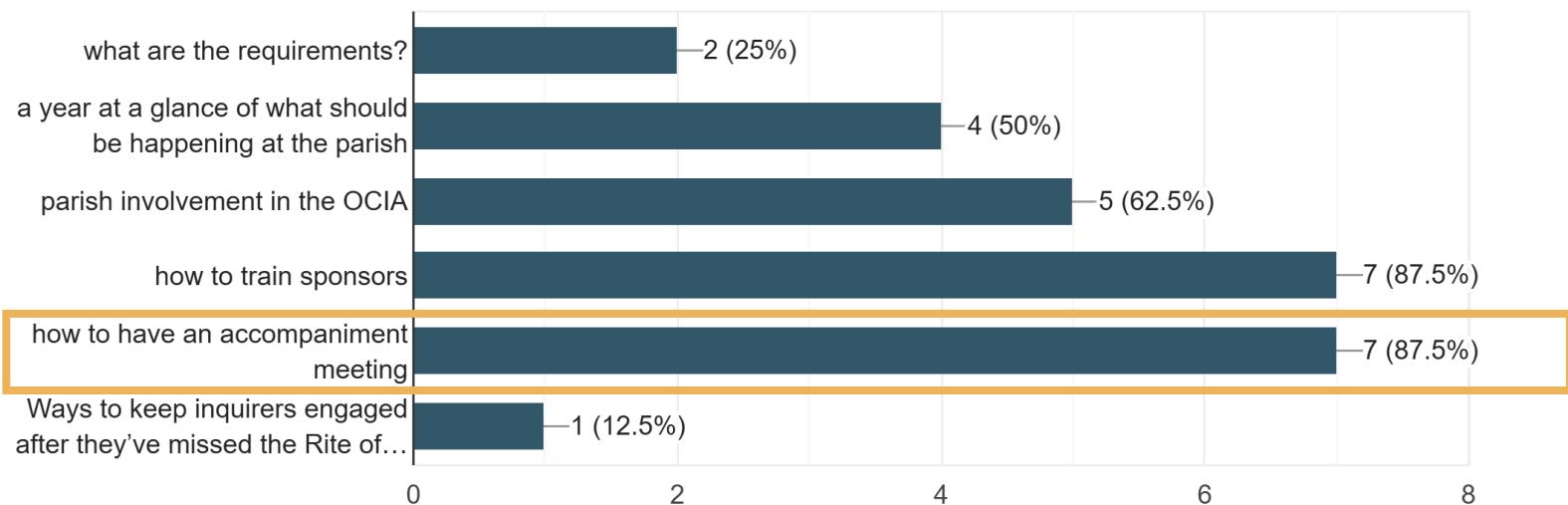
- Transition expectation is still set for January 1, 2026
- Website Updates will be up soon
- Essential Catechumenal Formation
- Sponsor Training
- How you can prepare right now:
 - Ensure that your Rite of Entrance for Easter 2026 is this fall (ideally as soon as possible)
 - Start gathering inquirers for a Feb OCIA start for Easter 2027



Why Talk About Accompaniment?

What topics would it be helpful for us to cover in workshops? (please add your own ideas as well!!)

8 responses





Accompaniment

Practical tips on how to actually do it

The 3 Ps of Intentional Accompaniment

- What happens when we don't focus on people?

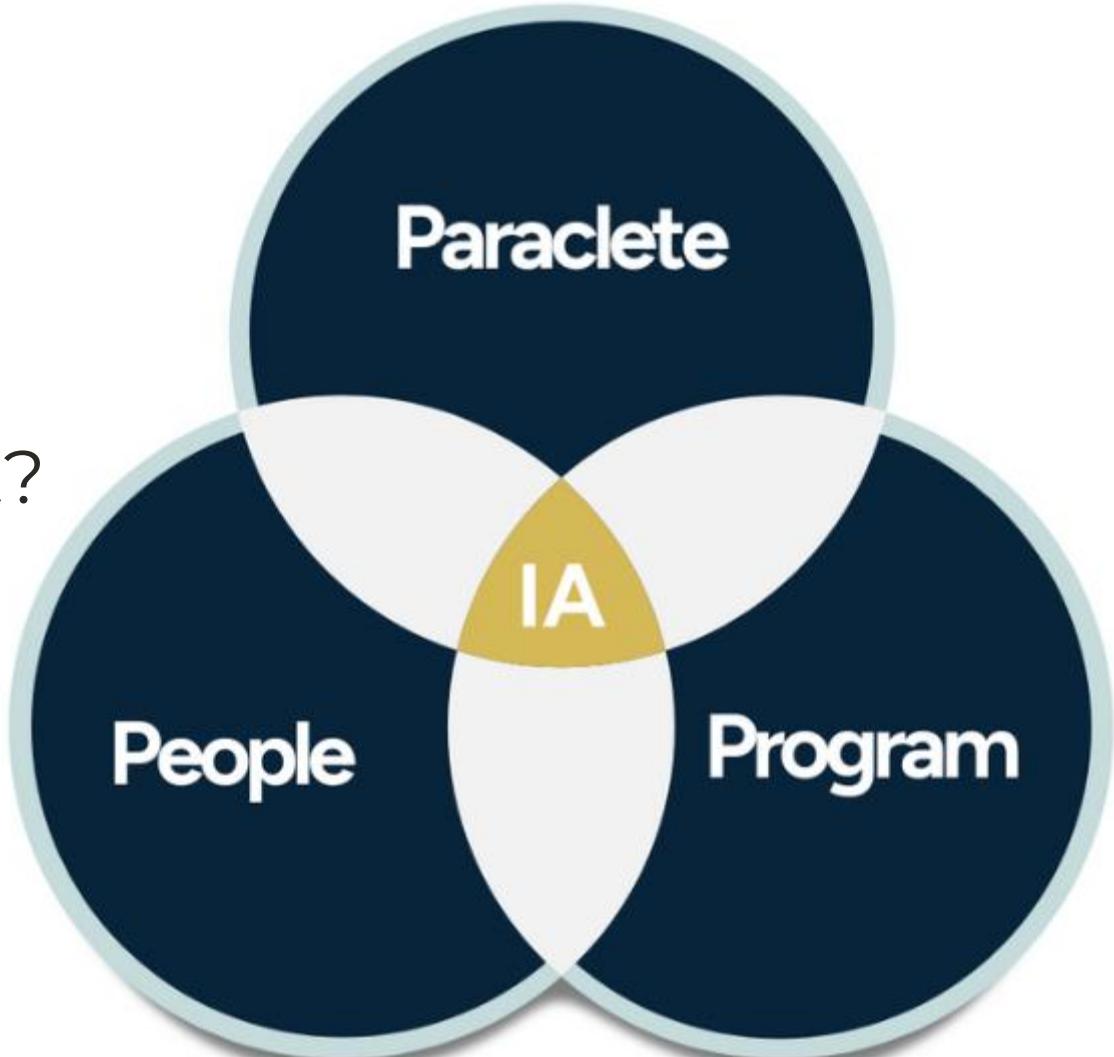
**lack of accompaniment aka
"forgetting the cart"**

- What happens when we don't include the Holy Spirit?

**fruitless accompaniment aka
"forgetting the horse"**

- What happens when we don't have a program?

**aimless accompaniment aka
"forgetting the driver"**



a saintly friend to look to for inspiration & guidance...

St John Henry Newman, “the apostle of friendship”



Quotes from Newman on Evangelization in Friendship

“I answer, that it (Christianity) has been upheld in the world not as a system, not by books, not by argument, nor by temporal power, but **by the personal influence of such men ... who are at once the teachers and the patterns of it** ... we shall find it difficult to estimate the moral power which a single individual, trained to practise what he teaches, may acquire in his own circle, in the course of years. ... the attraction, exerted by unconscious holiness, is of an urgent and irresistible nature; it persuades the weak, the timid, the wavering, and the inquiring; it draws forth the affection and loyalty of all who are in a measure like-minded.”

“... While the Scriptures are thrown upon the world, as if the common property of any who choose to appropriate them, **he is, in fact, the legitimate interpreter of them**, and none other; the Inspired Word being but a dead letter (ordinarily considered), except as transmitted from one mind to another ... Men persuade themselves, with little difficulty, to scoff at principles, to ridicule books, to make sport of the names of good men; but they cannot bear their presence: **it is holiness embodied in personal form, which they cannot steadily confront and bear down.**”

{From “Sermon 5. Personal Influence, the Means of Propagating the Truth” in 1833}

Newman's Friends in his own Faith Journey

Richard Hurrell Froude (1803-1836)

- A protestant friend in “The Tractarian Movement” (a group led by Newman for the Anglican Reformation) who was sympathetic to Catholicism and had a strong admiration for it
- Upon his death, Newman edited his writings *Remains*, which kept the Catholic inspiration alive and influencing the Movement Group
- Helped Newman gain **trust** in the Church and introduce him to some of its ideas

Ambrose St. John (1815- 1875)

- Newman's closest friend in The Movement and fellow **Catholic-curious** researcher
- moved with him to Littlemore, a pseudo-monastery where Newman and some of his closest friends moved after being asked to leave Oxford after arguing that the fundamental doctrines in Anglicanism were more Catholic than Protestant Continued to explore Catholicism alongside Newman **in openness** (Church Fathers, ascetism, daily prayer)
- Supported Newman emotionally and socially when he lost many of his protestant friends and colleagues at Oxford

Maria Rosina Giberne (1802-1885)

- A childhood family friend who frequently drew and painted Newman
- Drawn to Catholicism in the 1830s and formally entered around three years before Newman did
- Maintained a supportive friendship with Newman, sharing her testimony as an example of encouragement while he was conflicted in taking the next step in his conversion (**seeking**)

What Can We Learn from This?

Lessons from St. JHN's Conversion Journey

- Conversion doesn't happen in a day (or even in a year, or in a decade)
- A seeker needs time to “try out” these new ideas and ways of living (you don't jump into the deep end when you don't know how to swim)
- Encouragement and friendship is the basis for accompaniment
- Change takes great courage, humility, and strength in the seeker– it is not always about the accompanier's virtue, but the seeker's!

The 3 Ps in St JHN's Story

- People

Accompanied by scholars (because he was a scholar) and by family friends that encouraged him

- Program

“The Movement” (his investigation into Anglican vs Catholic doctrine) with 90 “tracts” written about it

“The Littlemore House” (3 years of pseudo-monastic living and trying out the faith)

- Paraclete

humility, courage, and strength– “Lead, Kindly Light”



Key Themes for Accompaniment to Bring With Us

- Genuine Relationship
- Encourage Investigation
- Importance of Community
- Work Off of God's Momentum and Guidance
- Don't Be Afraid to Be Create and Try Something New

Break





Applying this to Ministry

Before You Go: Prepare Yourself

- Reflect on your own faith
 - Why did I first choose to follow Jesus?
 - Why do I continue to choose to follow Jesus?
- Prayer
 - Ask for patience, discernment, and closeness with the Holy Spirit
 - Intercede for the other person's openness
- Reflect on what this person has going on in their life
 - Why are you meeting?
 - Do you know what is going on in their life right now?
- Identify the long-term destination
 - The person's happiness, peace, and unity with God
- Surrender the journey and choose to follow the HS

Create Genuine Relationship

- Create an atmosphere of familiarity
 - Find ways to connect and things in common
 - Show an interest in their life
- Signal Safety and Presence
 - Affirm their feelings and validate their experiences
 - Refrain from any judgement
 - Don't have your phone out
- **Table Question: How can we do this in our ministry context better/at all?**

Encourage Investigation

- Get curious about their “why”
- Questions to Ask:
 - “Why did you become curious about faith?”
 - “What was your experience of religion growing up?”
 - “What do you think you believe now?”
 - “What are you looking for?”
 - “What challenges or doubts are you carrying in your faith?”
 - “Have you had an experience of God’s presence?”
 - “What do you see as your next step in your journey?”
- **Table Question: What questions have you found to be good starting points?**

Importance of Community

- Think of other people that you know they would get along with:
 - Similar hobbies
 - Similar season of life
 - Similar personalities
 - Similar searching questions
- Invite another person to meet up with them (or meet up all together!)
 - A group can be a mix of Catholics and other inquirers— meet up for coffee or drinks, it does NOT have to be formal!
- **Table Question: Who at your parish/in your community would you invite these people into if they were inquirers?**
 - **John- academic professor seeking faith in his 50's who wants to debate**
 - **Elizabeth- recently widowed single mom in her 30's who wants fellowship**
 - **Paul- military guy who just left a decade of service**
 - **Nora- atheist who is dating a Catholic and wants to know more**

Work Off of God's Momentum

- Ask yourself:
 - What is God doing in their life right now?
 - What is making them curious or open about the faith?
 - What window of opportunity is God creating?
- Make Sure Your Posture is in the Right Place:
 - The goal is not OCIA right now, the goal is their conversion to Christ and commitment to Him
 - God is writing this story of conversion, not you
 - Surrender yourself to the process
- **Table Question: What do you find most difficult about this? Most freeing?**

Try Something New

- Let's Brainstorm: What kinds of contexts would help our inquirers in their journey?
 - **John- academic professor seeking faith in his 50's who wants to debate**
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A Great Way to Familiarize yourself with this: Read stories of conversions!

Local Conversion Stories:

The Latest Issue of the Denver Catholic &

<https://DenverCatholic.org/all-articles/tags/why-i-m-catholic>

John Henry Newman's Life and "Series of Conversions"

<https://www.newmancanonisation.com/1801>

The Long Loneliness by Dorothy Day

A Severe Mercy by Sheldon Vanuken

The End of the Affair by Graham Greene

Brideshead Revisited by Evelyn Waugh

Save the Date: Evangelization & OCIA

Sponsor Training
Flyers

Workshops for Fall 2025:

October 16- Parish Involvement

December 4- OCIA Expectations for Jan 1, 2026



Sponsor Trainings (in English):

September 15- Queen of Peace (Aurora)

September 17- St Elizabeth Ann Seton (FoCo)

September 18- Light of the World (Littleton)

September 22- Immaculate Heart of Mary
(Northglenn)

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