

The Parish Renewal Process (PREP)

1. What is the PREP or the Parish Renewal Process?

The **Parish Renewal Process (PREP)** is a process of **Christian Re-initiation FOR ADULT CATHOLICS** who had already been fully initiated into the Catholic Church **AS CHILDREN**, but had not been properly evangelized nor adequately catechized in the faith of the Church. It offers an opportunity for participants to experience an **Initial Conversion into Christ** with the *First Evangelization* (through the *Missionary Kerygma-MK*) and **Continuing Conversion** with the *post-baptismal Catechesis* (through the *Doctrinal Kerygma-DK*). The PREP hopes to help Christians become **convinced believers, committed disciples and credible witnesses of Christ** to the world. In other words, the Parish Renewal Process intends to raise authentic disciples of Jesus and transform the parish church into a *community of disciples* inflamed by the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the salvation of God to others. It also offers a continuous Christian Formation leading to Christian Maturity and Sanctification.

2. Why is it called Parish Renewal Process or PREP?

It is called the **PREP or Parish(a) Renewal(b) Process(c)** because:

- a) It is born in the *parish*, grows in the *parish*, and serves *within the parish*. It is the Pastor, the father of the community who brings it forth, nurtures it, and empowers it to serve in the parish. The Pastor is the icon of Christ in the community and represents Christ as head of the faithful, his mystical body. The ultimate goal of the Parish Renewal Process is to raise **Authentic Disciples of Christ** for the parish community so that it (the parish) might become a **community of disciples**. The role of the **Pastor** is crucial and instrumental in the birth, continued growth and effective ministry of the brothers and sisters in the **Parish Renewal Community** within his own parish.
- b) It is called “**Renewal**” because it offers an opportunity for **Initiated Catholics** to re-discover the full meaning of our Baptism into Christ through the Holy Spirit in order to live it ever so faithfully until the end. As the universal church is in constant renewal so does every baptized person need constant renewal and re-commitment to Discipleship for Jesus. It offers a continued conversion into Christ through spiritual growth and Christian maturity that leads to holiness in life.
- c) It is called a **Process** because it is meant to offer an opportunity of an on-going conversion into Christ through continued Christian Formation until a gradual Transformation into Christ as St. Paul did in his lifetime (Gal. 2:20). The process offers a living experience of a faith-journey from a life of sin to a life of grace, from darkness to light, from slavery towards liberation in Christ. It is similar to an exodus journey from the Egypt of sin through the desert of grace unto the waters of life in the Promised Land in Heaven.

The process follows a definite paradigm of the Christian Faith Journey where God the Father is the goal, the Holy Spirit is the Power, Jesus is the Way, the Church is the vehicle and the Word of God is the road map through it all. Prayers and the sacraments are our nourishments in the journey with the Holy Eucharist as our main Banquet of life. We seek union with the Father, through the Son and with the Power of the Holy Spirit. As Pope Benedict said after World Youth Day, “to the degree that love grows, so grows the search for him who is already found,” until that glorious day when all will be one in Jesus through the works of the Holy Spirit for the Glory of the Father.

3. What is the Vision of the Parish Renewal Process?

Vision: The vision of the Parish Renewal Process is the same as that of the Universal Church which is to bring all of humanity to its fulfillment in Christ according the Eternal Plan of God (Ephesians 1: 3-14). This can only be accomplished through the Power of the Holy Spirit, who abides in the Catholic Church as the Sacrament of Salvation for all.

4. What is the Mission of the Parish Renewal Process?

Mission: The Parish Renewal Process (PREP) is an Intensive Christian Formation by which baptized Catholics are evangelized, converted into Jesus and formed into the faith of the Church in a way that they become more committed to Christ and spiritually renewed by the Holy Spirit.

The Renewal Process desires to form Catholic brothers and sisters into a Christian Community of Disciples in mission to evangelize others in the ways of the Catholic Faith.

Function: The process will prepare Catholic Christians for life of service and mission within the parish. Having been radically transformed by the gospel, through the Parish Renewal Process, these renewed Catholics will offer themselves to the service of the Parish Community and submit themselves to the Pastoral Direction of the Pastor and the Bishop. They will be ready to minister to all those in need and foster the spirit of love and service to others in the parish community.

When called upon by the Initiator of the Process, and with the permission of the Pastor, these Catholic Christians will go to other Parishes or/and Dioceses in compliance of the church's mission to proclaim the gospel to all.

5. What are the FOUR Essential Elements of the Process: (PREP?)

A) It is Charismatic

The process believes in the important role of the Holy Spirit in the works of evangelization. Personal conversion, Communal Growth and Credible "Martiria" or Witnessing will not happen without the Holy Spirit. A Christian cannot call God Father or Jesus a Savior without the power of the Holy Spirit. (CCC # 683) The Parish Renewal Process is based on the belief that without the Holy Spirit, the works of Evangelization within the church would not be accomplished with the vitality and power that only comes from the Holy Spirit. (READ Mark 16: 15-18 and Acts 4:33) The process helps the members discern their special charisms WITHIN THE CHURCH so that they can use them for the up-building of the Body of Christ. Talks on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and Advise on their PROPER USE ACCORDING TO St. Paul in 1 Cor. Discerning seriously on the different gifts of the Spirit is part of the formation and culture of the Renewal Process.

B) It is Catechumenal

Following the guidelines taught by the Vatican Council, The Parish Renewal Process (PREP) desires to retrieve, re-discover and re-experience the beauty and power of the catechumenal process of bringing adults into the church employed by the early church (Cfr.CCC # 1229, 1231 and ff.)

- a) **CCC 1229.** From the time of the apostles, becoming a Christian has been accomplished by a journey and initiation in several stages. This journey can be covered rapidly or slowly, but certain essential elements will always have to be present: proclamation of the Word, acceptance of the Gospel entailing conversion, profession of faith, Baptism itself, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and admission to Eucharistic communion.
- b) **CCC 1231.** Where infant Baptism has become the form in which this sacrament is usually celebrated, it has become a single act encapsulating the preparatory stages of Christian initiation in a very abridged way. By its very nature infant Baptism requires a post-baptismal catechumenate. Not only is there a need for instruction after Baptism, but also for the necessary flowering of baptismal grace in personal growth. The catechism has its proper place here.
- c) The Parish Renewal Process intends to help baptized Catholics into becoming 1) true believers, 2) committed disciples, and 3) missionary apostles of the church.

C. It is Communal

The Parish Renewal Process forms communities as schools for evangelistic living. It offers the laity a practical approach to and opportunity for spiritual growth and perfection by living the gospel values with brothers and sisters in the community. There is a community Pastoral Care System in place to give effective pastoral shepherding to every member in community. Brothers and Sisters of the Parish Renewal Process will be led to make simple commitments to 1) *live the gospel fully as authentic disciples of Christ to proclaim the gospel to others in the first level*, 2) *simplicity of life, a promise to live lives of simple poverty in the second level*, 3) *purity of heart and intention, a promise to practice chastity even and married life, in the third level* and 4) *total obedience to God and the Church, which is a promise to seek and live the will of the Father in all things, in the fourth level*. The end of the Process is a Personal Covenant Consecration of the Renewed Brother or Sister to a life of Mission and Apostolate of the Church in the Presence of the Local Bishop.

This special charism of the Parish Renewal Process derived its inspiration from the richness of our church's tradition which hopes to fulfill our Christian Vocation to a life of holiness. (cfr. Reflection of the American Bishops Commemorating the Fifteenth Anniversary of the issuance of the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, Nov. 13, 1980) The Catholic Catechism clearly spells this out when it declares that: "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity." **All are called to holiness: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (CCC # 2013)**

D. It is EUCHARISTIC

The Eucharist is the "summit and source of Christian Life." And so it is at the heart of the Process. Everything in the formation of the Parish Renewal Process must lead to an experience of Jesus in the Eucharist. All the four elements or dimensions of Catholic Faith namely, The Creed, the Sacraments, the Creed, and the Christian Prayer all draw their meaning and find their goal in the Holy Eucharist. The union of the Soul with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist is the goal of Christian life for all brothers and sisters in the Renewal Communities.

A monthly Agape Mass is held for brothers and sisters to renew their commitment of love and service for one another. This commitment forms the covenant of community life shared and practiced by all those who live community life in the Process. The Agape Mass is the same Eucharist celebrated among brothers and sisters committed to live together the gospel of love.