

Name: Zach Kessie

### **What led you to begin your journey through OCIA?**

I have been part of the Catholic Church for more than twenty years with my wife, but for one excuse after another I never made OCIA a priority. As I watched my family grow in their faith each year, I realized something was missing in my own journey. I felt a pull to go deeper and to stop standing on the outside of something that had already become such an important part of our lives.

The season of life I am in, along with my experience over the last few years at St. Joseph, made me genuinely excited to begin this process and join the Church in an official way. It felt like the right time and the right step, and I am grateful for the clarity and encouragement that helped me move forward.

### **How has learning about the Catholic faith impacted your life?**

I am naturally a curious person and a lifelong learner. Discovering the history and tradition of the Catholic faith has been an amazing experience. As I have grown older, my perspective has changed, and this journey has helped me realign how I view our day to day lives. It has reminded me that we are called to live with intention and to pursue a life of fullness. The more I learned, the more I felt my understanding deepen in a way that was both grounding and inspiring.

### **What has been the most meaningful part of your OCIA experience?**

The most meaningful part for me was the Easter Vigil with my family present to see my commitment to my faith.

### **What surprised you most about the Catholic Church or the OCIA process?**

I always knew the history of the Church ran deep, but I did not understand just how much tradition and teaching had been carried forward through each generation. The depth of what has been preserved and shared was far more than I ever expected. It gave me a new appreciation for the faith and for the people who have protected it and passed it on with care.

### **What would you say to someone who is thinking about exploring the Catholic faith through OCIA?**

I waited far too long to begin this process. For many years I created reasons in my mind for putting it off. I told myself I was too busy, too nervous, or not confident enough in my understanding of the faith. The reasons changed over the last twenty years, but the hesitation stayed the same.

Now that I have gone through the experience, I would encourage anyone who is considering this journey to step into it fully. The people who guide you are patient, welcoming, and genuinely committed to meeting you exactly where you are. They help you move forward at a pace that feels right and make the entire process feel approachable and meaningful. I am grateful that I finally chose to begin.