



PC · COMMON PASTORAL VISITS

Adoption preparation visit**PREPARING FOR AN ADOPTION VISIT**

The visit with a person seeking adoption into the New Apostolic Church is a pastoral and spiritual encounter, not merely an administrative requirement. Its primary purpose is to accompany the individual on a significant step in their faith journey and to help them freely discern whether they are ready to confirm their Christian faith and commit themselves to life within the congregation.

This visit provides a protected and unhurried space in which the guest can:

- Share their personal faith journey and motivations
- Ask questions openly and without pressure
- Reflect on their relationship with Jesus Christ
- Become familiar with the beliefs, sacramental life, and expectations of the New Apostolic Church

For you, the visit is an opportunity to:

- Listen attentively and pastorally
- Offer spiritual guidance rooted in Scripture and doctrine
- Ensure that the individual understands the spiritual meaning of adoption
- Discern whether the individual is prepared to take this step responsibly and in good conscience

The visit helps clarify that adoption is not simply joining an organization, but rather:

- A public profession of faith
- A conscious decision to follow Jesus Christ within our Christian assembly
- An openness to God's ongoing work of redemption through His Church and the apostle ministry

Ultimately, the purpose of the visit is to foster trust, clarity, and spiritual readiness so that the act of adoption (confirmation of faith) can be experienced as a meaningful, joyful, and faith-filled step in the life of the believer and the congregation alike.

MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ADOPTION

Adoption into our Church is more than formal membership. It is a conscious step of faith, involving a public profession of belief and a decision to follow Jesus Christ within our specific assembly of Christians. Adoption is for a guest who has been baptized with water in the triune name of God and would like to continue their journey of faith in our congregation.

Adoption signifies:

- A commitment to the New Apostolic faith
- Willingness to grow spiritually within this congregation
- Openness to further instruction, sacraments, and discipleship

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What has drawn you to our Church at this point in your faith journey?
- How do you understand this step of adoption in connection with your relationship with Jesus Christ?

Adoption should only take place when the individual feels free, unpressured, and confident that this is the right spiritual step for them at this time.

FAITH IN THE TRIUNE GOD AND HOLY BAPTISM

Clarify whether the individual has been baptized with water and in the name of the triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

Discuss:

- Their belief in the triune God
- The circumstances of their prior baptism
- Availability of baptismal documentation or confirmation

If there is uncertainty regarding a valid Christian baptism - explain that Holy Baptism in our Church may be necessary rather than adoption.

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What meaning does your baptism hold for you personally?
- How do you understand baptism as the beginning of a Christian life?

A valid baptism is foundational for participation in the sacramental life of the Church and should be approached with clarity, reverence, and understanding.

DESIRE TO PRACTICE FAITH IN THIS ASSEMBLY

Explore the individual's desire to live and practice their faith within our Church.

Use the THRIVE booklet to explain:

- Our beliefs and Creed
- Mission and Vision
- Membership expectations

Emphasize Christian living through:

- Aligning one's life with the gospel of Jesus Christ
- Faithful participation in divine services and Holy Communion
- Small group participation
- Personal prayer life
- Monetary offerings as an expression of gratitude and support for God's work

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- In what ways do you hope your faith will grow by being part of this congregation?
- How do you see your daily life reflecting your faith while serving Christ?

Adoption implies an active and lived faith, a willingness to grow, serve, and align one's life with the teachings of Christ.

UNDERSTANDING OF HOLY COMMUNION

Review our understanding of Holy Communion:

- The body and blood of Jesus Christ are truly present
- Bread and wine are joined with Christ's body and blood
- Christ shares His life with us in communion
- In communion, believers are especially close to their Savior and bear witness to His sacrifice.

Explain that Holy Communion is a profession of:

- Christ's life, death, resurrection, and return
- Faith in the apostle ministry commissioned to dispense and celebrate the sacrament

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- What does Holy Communion mean to you spiritually?
- How do you experience closeness to Christ through the sacraments?

Participation in Holy Communion is both a personal and communal confession of faith and should be entered into with thoughtfulness and reverence.

PREPARATION FOR THE ACT OF ADOPTION

Review the question that will be asked during the adoption in the divine service:

"Do you profess the New Apostolic faith, and is it your wish to follow Jesus Christ and be prepared to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit through the word of God?"

Explain:

- A simple, sincere "Yes" is sufficient
- Full understanding develops over time including the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Ongoing learning opportunities are available (Catechism Q&A, full Catechism, THRIVE, We Believe studies)

Discuss future steps, including:

- Continued instruction
- Preparation for Holy Sealing, if applicable

Possible questions for introspection and discussion with the believer:

- Do you feel ready to make this profession before God and the congregation?
- What hopes do you have for your spiritual future in the Church?
- Why do you think God calls us to live our faith together?

Adoption is a beginning, not an end. Growth in faith, understanding, and discipleship continues throughout one's life.

CLOSING THOUGHTS:

Invite remaining questions and briefly walk through the order of the divine service:

- Adoption takes place after the Eucharistic prayer.
- The priest addresses those to become adopted
- The vow – to profess their belief in Jesus Christ.
- Prayer following the vow.
- The act of adoption is carried out as the priest states the binding words of adoption as well as extends a blessing.
- After the priest has conveyed congratulations to those who have been adopted, they can return to their seats.

This ensures peace, clarity, and joyful anticipation becoming adopted in the New Apostolic faith.