

baptism) and being received into the Church.

Some Points for Consideration

- There are plenty of misconceptions in circulation about things which would prevent you from becoming a Catholic. A common one is that divorced people are automatically barred from Church membership. This is not necessarily so and your status is something that will be discussed when you call the parish house.
- Our belief must always be a free response to God and his love for us, with our conscience as our guide.
- Nobody should become a Catholic simply to please someone else or just to have the same religion as their marriage partner. Our decision must be in response to God's call.
- If a person is unable to decide, it is good to consider whether

there are real doubts about the truth of the Catholic faith, or only difficulties in understanding. A person may not be able to accept every Catholic belief with the same degree of understanding or enthusiasm. Some things may never be very meaningful or relevant.

- Some people feel that they are not 'good' enough to become Catholics. But what draws us together into the family of God is not our 'goodness' but our belief in God as our Father, who loves us just as we are, with all our faults, limitations and inadequacies. *'For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved.'* John 3:17

St Anne's Catholic Church,
Eastworth Road,
Chertsey,
Surrey KT16 8BU
01932 562375
www.stanneschertsey.org.uk

Searching for Meaning?



Thinking About the Catholic Church?

There are a number of things you can do to help you decide whether God is calling you to become a member of the Catholic Church.



First try praying. If prayer is unfamiliar to you don't be alarmed. Prayer is talking to God — and listening for an answer. Imagine

that you are talking in your own words to somebody who really loves you; perhaps a parent, grandparent or a really good friend who would stay with you through thick and thin. You don't need to speak out loud. You can pray in the silence of your own heart. Ask God what plans he has for you.

If you would like some ready made words try the following:

Lord God, help me in my search to know you, the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent. Teach me by your Holy Spirit what to believe, what to do and how best to live my life. Amen.

Your answer is unlikely to be a voice speaking to you. It is much more likely to be a growing conviction or a increasing desire to learn about what Catholics believe and how we live our lives.



If you feel the call to learn more:

Continue to pray. Read the Bible, particularly the Gospels.

Come to Mass on a Sunday. If you already know a Catholic you might ask him or her to accompany you. If you don't know anybody you are welcome to come by yourself. Just sit somewhere near the back and watch what happens and listen to what is said.

You might also try to find out the Catholic viewpoint on matters affecting daily life by reading Catholic newspapers which are on sale in Churches.

If you would like to talk to somebody about how to proceed call

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where you will receive advice on the steps you can take. If you get

the answering machine leave your details and we will get back to you. There is never any obligation to proceed further. You should be sure that this is what God wants. After this step of inquiry and exploration, you will be asked whether you wish to go on to the next stage.

One possibility is to join the Journey in Faith group which meets regularly to learn about the Catholic faith.



With the help of a small group comprised of members of the parish you will be invited to deepen your understanding of what it means to be a Catholic Christian. They will love you and care for you and tailor the input they give to your personal requirements.

You will be free to ask any question you like. Nothing is out of bounds. You will be completely free to drop out at any time. Nobody will chase you or think any the worse of you.

After a while you will be invited to take the next step when you will learn about Baptism (if you have not already received a valid