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Visit www.osvcurriculum.com to find Research Links, Q & As, Activities, and Life Connections.

Rite of Confirmation

"This makes clear the specific importance of confirmation for sacramental initiation, by which the faithful 'as members of the living Christ are incorporated into him and configured to him through baptism and through confirmation and the eucharist' [AG no. 36]."

Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation. Pope Paul VI, The Rites, p. 474

Catechism Connection

To deepen your own background and reflection on the gift of faith, refer to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 26, 144, 153–165.

Facilitator Resources



Tell Me a Story: The Role of Narrative in the Faith Life of Catholics

Rev. Robert Hater

Twenty-Third Publications

Describes how stories can enrich our faith practices and our understanding of Church teaching.



The Catholic Source Book*

Rev. Peter Klein

Our Sunday Visitor Curriculum Division

Referenced to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, this book contains the essential teachings, beliefs, prayers, practices, and traditions of the Catholic Church.

Young People's Resources



Here I Am, Lord: The Letters and Writings of Ita Ford

Jeanne Evans, Ita Ford

Orbis Press

Describes the life of this martyr from her own writings and reflections.



Will You Carry the Light (20 min.)

Videos with Values, Oblate Media
Teens discuss taking a closer look at how the Light of Christ, the Holy Spirit, is present in them, and how they carry the Light to others and what it means for others their age to be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.



*Available at www.osvcurriculum.com

Background

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.

John 16:13

Connected through the Spirit

What a promise we have received from Jesus! The Holy Spirit will lead his disciples into all truth. Cell phones and the wireless networks for computers work well only when the signal is strong enough to enable a connection. We have all experienced the frustration that occurs when we are out of signal range. The connection or relationship we have with God need never be out of range. The "signal strength" of our faith stays strong when our personal faith is nurtured by the Church through the action of the Holy Spirit. We have tremendous back up, so that our connection to God is never really severed, unless we ourselves choose to downplay, misuse, or ignore it.

A Living Reality

Jesus made this promise, that his disciples, as a group, would be led into all truth. Pentecost sealed this promise. It is a promise continued in the life of the Church today. As a community—one body formed by the gift of faith—we share in this tremendous potential for understanding and handing on the truth as revealed by God the Father in Christ. The Church, the whole People of God, continues to embrace, penetrate more deeply, and live more fully the gift of divine revelation. New ways are found to articulate ancient teachings, and the challenge of living out the faith in an ever-changing modern world is met because we are connected to our Triune God and one another. The heritage we have received from Jesus is a living reality that finds constant growth so that we ourselves, and our world, might be saved.



What are the things that most threaten your personal connection to God in the Church? How do you counter these things?












When have you most strongly felt the impact of the heritage you have received from Jesus as his disciple?



Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, help me to see and make connections to the truth that is revealed in the Scripture and in the life of Jesus, that I may grow closer to living the life to which the Father calls me. Amen.

	OBJECTIVES	SESSION PROCESS	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
Celebrate	15 minutes Ritual Focus  Receiving a Candle ■ To experience a celebration of the word including Receiving a Candle	■ Celebrate the opening prayer		PROGRAM RESOURCES  <i>Songs of Celebration: Confirmation CD</i> OTHER RESOURCES Bible, table, white cloth, candle, large glass bowl of holy water, small candles or tapers for each candidate
	■ To explore the meaning of the ritual action ■ To explain the gift of <i>faith</i> Pages 14–15 Pages 16–17	■ Complete the activities ✚ Read about and discuss Paschal Candle ■ Explore the gift and effects of faith	 Reflect ■ Young people reflect on the experience of receiving the lit candle and the gift of faith	
Remember	30 minutes Faith Focus  <i>What does faith do?</i> ■ To explain that faith helps us see things differently Pages 18–19	■ Discuss the Gospel of John and signs of faith  Proclaim the Scripture story Matthew 8:23–27 ■ Complete the activity	 Share ■ Young people discuss Scripture passages and complete an open-ended sentence	PROGRAM RESOURCES copies of Activity Master 2, p. CE2 OTHER MATERIALS Bibles, parish bulletins
	Faith Focus  <i>What is the role of the community in faith development?</i> ■ To describe the role of the community in faith development Pages 20–21	■ Discuss personal and communal faith ■ Explore ways the local parish supports faith development ■ Discover what the Rite says about being a witness of faith  Read about and discuss cloud and light		
Live	15 minutes ■ To encourage young people to reflect on the witness of faith ■ To present the integration of the Catholic social principles into daily life ■ To assist young people in integrating the session through reflection and action Pages 22–23	■ Read about and discuss how Ita Ford displayed the Gifts of the Spirit ■ Discuss the Catholic Social Teaching: Solidarity of the Human Family ■ Introduce the activity ■ Pray the closing prayer	 Respond Young people: ■ write thoughts ■ draw a map	PROGRAM RESOURCES <i>Confirmation Stories of Celebration</i> Video/DVD (optional) OTHER MATERIALS art supplies <i>Embracing the Leper*</i> Video/DVD (optional)
	Pages 24–25	■ To review different parts of the Journey Together pages ■ Encourage the candidates to meet with their sponsor or family member	■ Suggested activities for family member or sponsor/mentor and candidate	PROGRAM RESOURCES <i>Sponsor & Mentor Handbook</i> , p. 19

Objective

To experience a celebration of the word including Receiving a Candle

Preparation

Familiarize yourself with the movements of the ritual focus for Receiving a Candle.

Prepare the prayer space ahead of time. You will need:

- a Bible
- a table covered with a white cloth
- a candle and a large glass bowl filled with holy water
- small tapers or candles for each candidate



Use the *Songs of Celebration*: Confirmation CD, track 2, to practice the suggested song "We Believe" or one of the optional music suggestions on page 15.

Select young people to carry the candle and Bible in procession and to read the Prayer of the Faithful. If the group of young people is large, select another catechist to assist in the ritual of receiving the candle.

Gathering Rite

Procession with the Word

Invite young people to assemble with their books for a procession.

- Direct the group to follow the people carrying the unlit candle and the Bible.



As you process, lead young people in singing, using the *Songs of Celebration*: Confirmation CD, track 2.

- When all are assembled, light the prayer candle.
- Begin prayer, and lead young people in the Sign of the Cross.

Follow the order of prayer on pages 14–15.

Believe with the Spirit

Gathering Rite Procession with the Word



Sing together.

We believe, we believe, we believe.

"We Believe," © 1993, 1994, Benedetta Farrell,
Published by OCP Publications

Leader: Let us pray.

All: *Pray the Sign of the Cross together.*

Leader: Lord, our God, we gather together as a people who believe in you and your promises. Open our hearts to know you more and believe in you more fully. Guide us to seek and find you as you continue to make yourself known to us through the Holy Spirit. We give you praise and thanks for the gift of our faith and the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.

All: Amen.

Celebration of the Word

Leader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Leader: *Read Matthew 17:14–21.*
The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflect silently.

? What does the Gospel tell us about the power of faith? What image of nature describes your faith today?



Liturgical Background

Christ is our light Why do we receive a lit candle at Baptism? The Church community has always associated Christ with light. The teachings of Jesus give light to the mind, because they show divine truth. His example illuminates the path to walk as faithful followers. His death and Resurrection fill us with joy and dispel the darkness of sin. In Scripture Jesus calls himself "the light of the world" (*John 8:12*).

Each newly baptized Christian receives a lit candle to show that the light of the Risen Christ has been shared with each of them personally in the Sacrament of Baptism. The lit candle symbolizes a living faith, shining for all to see. It represents an Easter faith, bright with hope in the Resurrection. It is also a reminder that all the baptized are called to bear witness to Christ until he comes again.

RITUAL FOCUS

Receiving a Candle

Come forward as directed.

Leader: Heavenly Father, at Baptism, we entered into the faith of the Church. We received the Light of Christ. Hear our prayer as we recall our Baptism and seek to deepen our faith. We ask this through your Son, Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: [Name], receive the Light of Christ, walk always as a child of the light and keep the flame of faith burning and alive in your heart.
Respond: I will.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Let us pray.
The response is Hear us, O Lord.

Reader 1: That we will come to a deeper appreciation of the faith we received at Baptism, we pray to the Lord.

Reader 2: That God will bless us with open eyes and hearts that will come to believe in him more fully and love him more faithfully, we pray to the Lord.

Reader 3: That we will find, in this community of faith, support and strength to live as children of the light, we pray to the Lord.

Reader 4: That in faith we will become more responsive to the needs of others, we pray to the Lord.


Leader: Let us pray as Jesus has taught us:

Pray the Lord's Prayer together.

We Go Forth

Leader: God, our Loving Father, we stand before you in faith. Send your Holy Spirit that we may act as witnesses of that faith to those around us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

 *Sing again the opening song.*



Celebration of the Word

Proclaim the word and invite young people to reflect silently on the question on page 14.

RITUAL FOCUS


Receiving a Candle

- Invite young people to come forward in one or two lines. If the group is large, have two people lead the ritual.

Prayer of the Faithful

- Invite selected individuals to pray the prayers.
- Say or sing the response.

We Go Forth

- Lead young people in the closing prayer.
-  As young people process back to their seats, have them sing "We Believe" from the *Songs of Celebration: Confirmation CD*, track 2 or one of the optional music suggestions.

Optional Music Selections

"Here I Am Lord"

© 2001, Daniel L. Schutte,
Published by OCP Publications

"If You Believe and I Believe"

Zimbabwean Traditional © 1991 Iona
Community, GIA Publications

"We Believe"

Kevin Johnson © 2005,
Lion and Lamb Publishing



Ritual Background

Receiving a candle At the beginning of the Easter Vigil, a new fire is kindled, and from it the Paschal Candle is lit. This large wax candle, symbolizing the Risen Christ, is then carried into the church joyfully, as the people sing "Thanks be to God!" in response to the words, "Christ our Light." At every celebration of Baptism, the Paschal Candle is present. From it, individual baptismal candles are lit for each of the newly baptized. The ritual of receiving a lit candle reminds us that Baptism is intimately connected to the Easter mystery. It is not just any candle. It is a symbol of our sharing in the light of the Risen Christ.

A family member or godparent usually hands on the baptismal candle to a newly baptized child of catechetical age or an adult, or he or she holds it if the newly baptized is an infant. Handing on the candle shows the important role of the godparent in passing on the faith of the community.



Objective

To explore the meaning of the ritual action of Receiving a Candle

To explain the gift of faith

Liturgical Catechesis

The purpose of this section is to help young people reflect on their experience of the signs, rituals, prayers, and gestures of the celebration and to lead them to express their own meaning of the experiences. Allow young people to share their experiences without commenting on them.

★ Reflect on the Celebration

- On the board or chart paper, write the following questions: What did you see? What did you hear? What did you do?
- Guide young people to review the celebration by reflecting on what happened in the prayer.
- Invite young people to summarize what the celebration taught them about the Light of Christ.

My Thoughts

- Invite young people to reflect silently and then write their responses in their books.

Faith Sharing

- Organize young people in pairs or small groups to complete the activities.
- Invite one or two groups to share their lists.

► Brainstorm, and lead young people in the Sign of the Cross.
Review the order of prayer on pages 14-15.

Light of Christ

★ Reflect on the Celebration

My Thoughts

When I received the candle and heard the words, "Receive the Light of Christ; walk always as a child of the light and keep the flame of faith burning and alive in your heart," I

Faith helps me



Faith Sharing

- With a partner or in a small group, review the four Prayers of the Faithful from the celebration. Choose the intercession that you think most expresses a need you have today and share it with your partner or the group.



How does your family keep the flame of faith alive at home and with others?

- Together make a list of the ways young people show their faith in everyday life.

★ SIGNS OF FAITH

Paschal Candle Another name for the Paschal Candle is the Easter Candle. It is a tall, white candle. During the Easter Vigil, the priest cuts a cross in the candle and traces the Greek letters Alpha above the cross and Omega below, which symbolizes that Jesus is the beginning and the end. Then he carves the numerals of the calendar year into the candle and lights the candle from the Easter fire. While the church is still in darkness, the Paschal Candle is carried in procession into the church as a symbol of the Risen Christ. The candles of the assembly are lit from the Paschal Candle.



The lighting of the Paschal Candle at the Easter Vigil tells a story of faith. List what you think are the important parts of the story.

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Teaching Tip

Brainstorming This is a technique to use with groups for everything from making a list to solving a problem. Here are three different ways to brainstorm:

- Freewheeling brainstorm**—used to encourage free association among group members. Group members call out their ideas spontaneously, and a selected person records each idea as it is suggested.
- Round-robin brainstorming**—used for an orderly brainstorming session that gives each member a chance to speak. Members take turns, in order, offering a single idea until everyone has had a chance to add to the list. The leader or recorder writes down each member's idea.
- Slip method**—used when confidentiality is an issue or when you're brainstorming ideas about several subjects at the same time. Members write ideas down on a separate piece of paper rather than sharing them out loud. The ideas are collected, organized, and presented back to the group.

Enlightened by Christ

During the Baptism of a child, the priest or deacon refers to the Easter candle, which represents the presence of the Risen Christ in the world, and says "Receive the Light of Christ." Then one of the parents or godparents lights the child's baptismal candle from the Easter candle. The priest tells the parents and godparents to keep the light "burning brightly." He prays that the "flame of faith" will be kept alive in the child's heart. The more the child comes to know the Risen Christ and grows in relationship with him, the more faith grows and the more he or she sees things through the life and teachings of Jesus.

Faith and Light

Light is one of the many images and words the Church uses to describe the mystery of faith. Faith is our free response to God, who first shares his great gift of love, and to all that he tells us about himself in revelation. Revelation involves God's communication of himself in the Old and New Testaments, and especially through his own Son, Jesus Christ.

We begin to see and understand life better through the light of faith. We can see what we are called to be and do as disciples. Faith is a way of seeing—enlightened by the Risen Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, we grow to see the world as God does. The Holy Spirit helps us see and hear with the eyes and ears of faith. Through faith, we can discover new possibilities for ourselves and new strengths and talents. We see the world in a different way from those who do not believe.



TALK ABOUT IT

With a partner or small group, recall an experience when the lights went out and you were stuck in the dark. If this has never happened to you, imagine what it might feel like. Share the experience and how it felt or might feel. How did you or would you find your way out of the darkness?

THINK ABOUT IT

Sometimes we just do not understand how or why something is happening. Think about a time when you were clueless about something, such as how to do a math problem or why someone did something good for you. What was it that helped you to understand? Compare that to how faith helps you understand things.

TALK ABOUT IT

How does your faith help you see things differently from people who do not have faith?

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Additional Activity

Being still Young people are often caught up in activity and external stimuli and do not take much time for quiet and reflection, which will help them become more aware of God's presence in their own lives. Propose that they focus on taking time each day during this preparation time to be still and to establish conscious contact with the God who discloses himself to them. Suggest the following practices:

- Set a consistent time each day.
- Begin with a five-minute time slot and gradually increase it.
- Find a quiet spot inside or outdoors.
- Begin the time of prayer by taking slow, deep breaths and concentrating on the presence of God.
- Be still and pay attention.
- Keep a journal of thoughts and feelings about these quiet times.

SIGNS OF FAITH

Paschal Candle Obtain permission to bring the Paschal Candle into the session and explain the marks that have been made on it during the Easter Vigil.

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the text on page 16.
- Have young people write their responses in their books.

Enlightened by Christ

Summarize the text.

TALK ABOUT IT

Organize the group into smaller groups. Guide the young people to share stories of being in the dark. Discuss ways people find their way out of the dark.

THINK ABOUT IT

Allow young people time to read the text and reflect on the question. Ask volunteers to share their responses.

TALK ABOUT IT

Share some examples of how faith helps you see things differently (examples: attitude to those in need, respect for all human life, value of marriage, care for creation) to begin the discussion.

Faith and Light

- Write the words *faith* and *revelation* on the board or on chart paper.
- Explain each concept.
- Stress that revelation is the communication of God's own self to us and faith involves our response to that revelation.
- Select a volunteer to read aloud the last paragraph on the page.

Objective

To explain that faith helps us see things differently



GO TO THE SOURCE

- Distribute Bibles.
- Organize into small groups and assign each group one of the readings (John 1:1–5, 3:1–21, 9:1–40).
- Direct them to choose a reader, and listen to the images described as the Scripture is read aloud in the small group.



Initiate the discussion by sharing an example of what faith has done in your life. Have the same small groups brainstorm responses. List their responses on the board.

FAITH FOCUS

What does faith do?

- Summarize the first paragraph of text on this page.
- Select two candidates to read the Gospel: one taking the part of Jesus, the other the part of Nicodemus.
- Discuss the last paragraph using the questions: When is it easy to believe and when is it difficult?
- Discuss young people's responses to the question. (Answers will vary.)

Seeing and Believing

SCRIPTURE

GO TO THE SOURCE
John 1:1–5, 3:1–21, 9:1–40



With a partner or in a small group, brainstorm responses to the Faith Focus question. Be prepared to give examples from your own experience.

FAITH FOCUS

What does faith do?

The Gospel of John uses many symbols and images to describe the Good News and the Kingdom. Light and darkness are two of these symbols. In the beginning of the Gospel, we hear that Jesus was a light that came into darkness. Later we read that when Jesus instructed Nicodemus about faith, Jesus talked about light and darkness again and referred to himself as the light of the world. In the story of the Man Born Blind, Jesus used light, darkness, and seeing to teach about the mystery of faith. The Jewish people would not believe the man's testimony about Jesus. They drove him out of the town. Jesus found him and said:

SCRIPTURE

"Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind."

John 9:35–39



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Maybe it was easier for the man born blind to believe in Jesus because he had experienced the miracle of having his sight restored. But the Pharisees had seen the miracle, and they still did not believe. Faith is a gift of God, but it has two sides. God continues to make known his presence and to call humans to a faithful relationship with him. We must choose to recognize and respond to his presence.



When have you recognized and responded to God's call to faith?



Cultural Background

Fishing It may seem unusual that the disciples who were fishermen—and therefore accustomed to water—would be so terrified of a storm. In Jesus' day many people never learned to swim. Fishing could be a risky business, especially because storms on the Sea of Galilee could catch boaters totally unaware due to bowl-like mountains that funnel the wind onto the waters. The disciples' terror was very real. A capsized boat could mean death. This experience definitely made a lasting impression on them. Versions of this episode appear in each of the synoptic Gospels. (See *Matthew 8:23–27*, *Mark 4:36–41*, and *Luke 8:22–25*.) While other people may be a conduit for healing and miracles, Jesus also does what God alone does when he calms the raging waters. (See *Psalms 107:29–30*.)

Faith and Fear

The Pharisees were not the only people who had a difficult time believing in Jesus; sometimes the Apostles questioned and doubted.

THINK ABOUT IT

What events and/or occurrences in your life have helped you believe in Jesus? What things might have made it more difficult to believe?

Jesus Stills the Storm

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him up saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm.

They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

Matthew 8:23-27

What is Jesus' message to the Apostles about belief?

How can this reading help your faith?

Share the Word

With a partner or in a small group, select two of the Scripture passages below. Read and discuss what they tell you about faith. Then write a paragraph to complete the open-ended sentence that follows.

Matthew 14:28-33	Mark 4:35-42	John 20:24-29
Matthew 15:21-28	Luke 18:35-43	Acts 3:1-10
Matthew 26:69-75	John 14:1-26	Hebrews 11:1-2

These Scriptures helped me see that faith and believing _____

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THINK ABOUT IT

Allow some silent time for reflection. Ask the group to share their reflections with a partner.

Faith and Fear

- Talk about reasons the Apostles may have questioned or doubted Jesus.

Jesus Stills the Storm

Matthew 8:23-27

- Invite a strong reader to read the Scripture passage.
- Direct young people to close their eyes or bow their heads and picture themselves in the reading.
- Re-read the story slowly.
- Invite young people to share their thoughts and feelings as they pictured themselves in the reading.

Discuss the questions.
(Answers will vary.)

Share the Word

- Organize the large group into smaller groups.
- Explain the directions.
- Have young people work in their small groups to read and discuss the Scripture passages.
- When the discussion is finished, have young people work on their own to complete the open-ended sentence.

Quick Review

- Faith enlightens us.
- Faith replaces fear.

Objective

To describe the role of the community in faith development

FAITH FOCUS

What is the role of the community in faith development?

List responses on the board or on chart paper.

TALK ABOUT IT

Discuss the question together.

THINK ABOUT IT

Quietly reflect on the question.

- Summarize the first paragraph of text on this page and emphasize the idea of lifelong faith.
- Ask young people to share how their faith might be different in ten years.

Communal Faith

- Write the word **communal** on the board or on chart paper.
- Direct young people to read the first paragraph and give one reason why it is important to belong to and participate in the Church.
- Using the bulleted items about the Church, discuss the ways the local parish embodies these communal aspects. Have parish bulletins available for young people to use for examples.
- Introduce the second set of bullets.
- Tell young people to read the bullets silently and then rate themselves, on a scale of 1–5 (with 5 being the highest), on how well they are actively growing in their faith.
- Have them share their ratings with a partner.

Personal Faith

FAITH FOCUS

What is the role of the community in faith development?

TALK ABOUT IT

One of the names given to the Church is *Mother*. How has the Church been a mother for your faith?

THINK ABOUT IT

Why do you think it would be difficult to believe alone, without others who shared your faith?

Faith is a lifelong relationship with God. Each of us has a very personal and unique relationship with him. As your faith continues to deepen, you will see things from a different point of view. You will grow in your trust of God and feel more connected to him and his plan for you and the world. This is what the Sacraments of Initiation celebrate—your new connections and deepening bonds with God and the Church.

Communal Faith

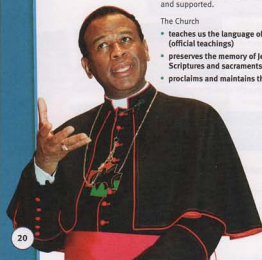
While faith and the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation are personal acts, they are much more than that. They are actions of the Church. Just as we cannot live alone, we cannot believe alone. We receive our faith from God through other people like our parents and family members, and we hand it on to others. We are all links in the chain of faith. Faith has an important **communal** aspect—we are carried by the faith of others, and we support others in faith through our beliefs, prayers, and actions. It is through the community of the Church that our faith is fed and supported.

The Church

- teaches us the language of faith through prayer and doctrines (official teachings)
- preserves the memory of Jesus' words and actions in the Scriptures and sacraments
- proclaims and maintains the mysteries of faith in the creeds

Guided by the Church and inspired by the Holy Spirit, we grow in both our personal and communal faith through actions such as these:

- talking to God
- reading and thinking about the Scriptures
- participating in the communal worship of the Church, especially in the Sacraments
- going out in service to those in need
- learning more in parish programs



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Facilitator Background

Faith development Faith is a gift of God and a human act. It involves God's call and our response. Faith is a theological virtue, enabling us to believe in God and all he has revealed to us. Faith develops in stages.

- Experienced faith**—In the early years, a child experiences and takes on the faith of significant adults in his or her life.
- Affiliative faith**—As their world expands, the faith of children and adolescents is affected by their peer groups and the outside world. It is nurtured by being involved in rituals of the larger community and being active in the community.
- Searching faith**—This stage of faith development occurs when people "leave home" both literally and figuratively. Crises can and do move people back and forth into this stage from owned faith.
- Owned faith**—In this stage an individual takes upon himself or herself the values and beliefs of faith as one's own because it is what he or she chooses to believe and act on.

Completion of Baptism

The Holy Spirit began the journey of faith with you at Baptism. In Confirmation you will again be blessed with the special Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation is necessary for the completion of the grace of Baptism. During his homily, the bishop or priest who will confirm you will remind you of your Baptism. He will talk about the importance of your responding to faith in your life.

In these or similar words he will say the following:

You have already been baptized into Christ and now you will receive the power of his Spirit and the Sign of the Cross on your forehead. You must be witnesses before all the world to his suffering, death, and Resurrection; your way of life should at all times reflect the goodness of Christ. . .

Be active members of the Church, alive in Jesus Christ. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, give your lives completely in the service of all, as did Christ who came not to be served but to serve.

So now before you receive the Spirit, I ask you to renew the profession of faith you made in Baptism or your parents or godparents made in union with the whole Church.

Rite of Confirmation, 23

The Sacrament of Confirmation joins you more closely to the Church and gives you a special strength of the Holy Spirit, which will help you share and explain your faith with others in word and action.

TALK ABOUT IT

Imagine that your diocese is going to award three all-expense-paid trips to World Youth Day. The young people will be chosen by their peers as witnesses of faith and service. Your group has been asked to write the requirements for the nomination process. What would you include as essential for the young people to be nominated for these awards?

TALK ABOUT IT

Distribute Activity Master 2 on page CE2. Direct young people to silently read the directions and write down their suggestions. Organize the large group into groups of four to five and have young people share their suggestions and compile a group nomination form. Have a member from each group share their requirements.



Completion of Baptism

- Invite volunteers to read aloud the text.
- When they have finished reading, direct their attention back to the words of the Rite, discuss:
 - the meaning of being witnesses
 - what being an active member means for young people.

SYMBOL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Cloud and Light In the Old Testament, the images of cloud and light often appear together when the Lord is revealing himself. With Moses on Mount Sinai (see Exodus 24:15–18), the meeting tent (see Exodus 33:9–10), and the wandering in the desert (see Exodus 40:36–38), the cloud that reveals Yahweh is both radiant and murky. In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit “overshadows” the Virgin Mary at the Annunciation (see Luke 1:35); at the Transfiguration (see Luke 9:34–35) the cloud overshadows Jesus, Moses, and Elijah; Peter, James, and John hear a voice from the cloud that says: “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” (Luke 9:35).

Cloud and light seem almost to be opposites. From your experience, why do you think these are good images for the Holy Spirit?

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SYMBOL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Cloud and Light Have a volunteer read the text.

- Have young people write their answers in their books.

Catholic Sources

Catechesi Tradendae The word *catechesis* comes from a Greek word that means to “echo” or “resound,” to teach or instruct about the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is an essential process, aimed at maturing initial faith and instructing a person through a systematic knowledge of Jesus and Church teachings. It is an ordered and systematic initiation into God’s revelation, manifested in Jesus Christ, that brings people and communities to deeper faith. It hands on the faith of the community through a variety of ecclesial activities, such as instruction, liturgy, prayer, and action for justice.

In this apostolic exhortation, Blessed Pope John Paul II calls on catechists to remain faithful to the tradition:

Whatever be the level of his responsibility in the Church, every catechist must constantly endeavor to transmit by his teaching and behavior the teaching and life of Jesus. . . . Every catechist should be able to apply to himself the mysterious words of Jesus: “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me [John 7:16].” (6)

Quick Review

- We grow in faith by being part of the Church.
- The Sacrament of Confirmation joins us more closely to Christ and the Church.

Objective

To encourage young people to reflect on the witness of faith

To present the integration of the Catholic social principles into daily life

To assist young people in integrating the session through reflection and action

Bio Stats

- Direct young people to read the bio stats silently and to look for
 - ways Ita was supported by the communal faith of the Church
 - how Ita brought her light to the world

Living It Out Today

- Invite volunteers to read aloud the text.
- Discuss what kinds of situations in today's world raise questions of faith for young people.

Witness of Faith

Bio Stats

Ita Ford

- 1940 Ita is born in Brooklyn, New York.
- 1960 She graduates from Marymount College.
- 1961 She enters the Maryknoll Sisters.
- 1964 Ita leaves Maryknoll due to health problems and works awhile as an editor.
- 1971 She reappplies to Maryknoll and is accepted.
- 1972 Assigned to the missions in Chile. Ita goes with her friend, Sister Carla.
- 1980 In March, Ita and Carla respond to a call from El Salvador's Bishop Oscar Romero—just before his assassination. In June, they begin working at the Emergency Refugee Committee in Chalatenango. In August, while returning a political prisoner to his home, Ita and Carla are caught in a flash flood. Carla drowns after pushing Ita to safety. Mauna Clarke becomes Ita's new missionary partner.



In December, Ita, Mauna, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan are tortured and murdered for helping the people of El Salvador.

"Am I willing to suffer with the people here. . . Can I say to my neighbors, I have no solution to this situation, I don't know the answers, but I will walk with you, search with you, be with you?"

Living It Out Today

My baptismal name is Ita. I was named after my grandmother who is a great person and fun to be around. I love her a lot, but I did not like having her name. It was so different from everyone else's. When I was being confirmed, my catechist gave us an assignment to look up our patron saint. My grandmother had already told me about Saint Ita who was an Irish nun in the fifth century. I just couldn't identify with her. I went online and found the story of Ita Ford and the women martyrs of El Salvador. Here was somebody with my name that I could understand and identify with. I read more about her and found out that her friends said she had "a buoyant personality." She was fun even though she had a difficult life as a missionary. She did not have visions. She had questions and wondered if she should stay in the missions where she worked with the poor. She wanted to do the right thing even though it was difficult. I chose this Ita to be my patron. I pray to her a lot because I want to be good and serve God, but I don't know the answers to all the problems in the world either.

Ita Q.



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For More Information

Ita Ford



Ita Ford: Missionary Martyr
Phyllis Zagano, Paulist Press

A story about Ita Ford's life that gives a picture of her faith and courage, not just in her tragic death, but throughout her whole life.



Lives of Service: Stories from Maryknoll
Jim Daniels, Orbis

Using text and images, a photojournalist tells the story of Maryknoll missionaries around the world.



Solidarity of the Human Family

The Light of Christ in us at age thirteen may not be as bright as Ita Ford's at age thirty-two or when she began her missionary work with the poor in Chile. But "this light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!" Like Ita Ford, we can choose to believe that God calls us to be in solidarity with others who are hurting. We can contact Maryknoll's Office of Global Concerns about their work overseas and find out how we can be in solidarity with one of their projects. Maybe together, with others around the world, we can work with such faith and courage that we will move the mountain of injustice at least a little in our lifetime.

Visit www.osvcurriculum.com to discover more about Catholic Social Teaching.

Respond in Faith

My Thoughts

Write a short paragraph explaining how this session helped you see the relationship between faith and the Holy Spirit.

Draw a Map

Think about the people and events of your life as a faith journey. Create a map of places, paths, rest stops, and detours that have been part of your journey.



CLOSING PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit,
Open my eyes that I may see the events of my life through the eyes of faith.
Open my ears that I may hear the word of God spoken to me.
Open my heart that I may grow more in love with God who has loved me first.
Open my hands and move my feet in faith to serve others.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is Lord.
Amen.

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Faith in Action

Solidarity of the Human Family

- Read the text aloud.
- Discuss the meaning of solidarity.
- Encourage young people to research ways to be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.
- You may want to show *Embracing the Leper* to enrich the session and give an example of one person's solidarity with the poor, or show the story of Dr. Ann Sly from *Confirmation Stories of Celebration*.



Encourage young people to visit www.osvcurriculum.com to discover more about Catholic Social Teachings.

Respond in Faith

My Thoughts

- Use background music to create quiet reflective time.
- Have young people write a short paragraph on the relationship between faith and the Holy Spirit.

Draw a Map

- Provide young people with art supplies to create their maps.



CLOSING PRAYER

- Gather young people around the prayer table.
- Begin with the Sign of the Cross.
- Pray the prayer aloud together.
- Lead young people in singing "We Believe" or one of the optional suggestions on page 15.

Faith in Action: Catholic Social Teaching

Solidarity of the Human Family Since God is the source of all human life, all people are united in one human family. Practicing the principle of solidarity is more than feeling concern or sadness when others suffer misfortune. It is a serious and constant commitment for the good of all our brothers and sisters, whether they are our biological brothers and sisters or our brothers and sisters in the human family. We practice the principle of solidarity when, regardless of our nationality, race, ethnic roots, or how rich or poor we are, we live as members of one human family, knowing that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, and it is our responsibility to contribute to the common good.

Visit www.osvcurriculum.com and look under Resource Links for a link to the Maryknoll Missionary or Catholic Relief Services for more information on this topic.



Respond

in Faith Together

Review the parts of the Journey Together pages with the young people.

Encourage them:

- to review and discuss the **FAITH FOCUS** statements with their sponsor or family members.
- to ask their sponsor or family members to pray the prayer in the **RITUAL FOCUS**.
- to share their reflections on **BEING CATHOLIC** with their sponsor or family members.
- to do the **SHARE TOGETHER** and **ACT TOGETHER** activities with their sponsor or family members.

Respond

in Faith Together

FAITH FOCUS

Discuss the following beliefs together. Focus on how these beliefs have or could have an effect on your lives today. Refer to the lesson if necessary.

- Faith is based on God's great gift of revelation. Among other things, revelation tells us that God the Father communicated himself and his plan for all creation by sending us his own Son, Jesus.
- Faith has two sides: God's call and our response.
- Being a member of the Church strengthens and supports our faith.

RITUAL FOCUS

During the celebration, the candidates received a candle and were reminded of the call to be children of the light. At the end of your time together, pray together for one another using these or similar words:

May Christ always be our light,
May we walk always as children of the light,
May we see life through the eyes of faith,
May our journey of faith bring light to others.
Amen.

ACT TOGETHER

At the conclusion of the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, the bishop or priest will say these words:

This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rule of Confirmation, 23

Together select two persons from the parish community who are witnesses of faith. Set up a conversation with them to discuss how they nurture their faith and how and why they are proud to profess it in their daily lives.

BEING CATHOLIC

To the Sponsor or Family Member: Discuss these quotes from famous Catholics. Focus on how they apply to your life.

66 Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.

— Saint Augustine

SHARE Together

To the Sponsor or Family Member:

Call to mind the practices and disciplines—such as daily prayer, a certain form of meditation, or reading a favorite devotion—which you do or have done in the past that have helped you grow in faith. If you are comfortable doing so, share those with your candidate and explore some options that he or she may find helpful to continue or start.

To the Sponsor or

Family Member: Reflect on your own faith journey. Recall the people and events that have been significant in the deepening of your faith.

66 **A strong, lively faith is the foundation of all virtue.** 99

— Catherine McAuley

66 **Faith has to do with things that are not seen, and hope with things that are not in hand.** 99

— Saint Thomas Aquinas

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▶▶ Looking Ahead

For Session 3, you will need:

- a Bible for each young person
- a large glass bowl filled with holy water
- a candle
- a prayer table



Songs of Celebration:
Confirmation CD

- copies of Activity Master 3 on p. CE3 for each young person
- enough clay for each candidate to mold a symbol
- optional video/DVD:
 - *Endless Exodus*