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# Our Response to God's Invitation

## INTRODUCTION

The invisible God, from the fullness of his love, addresses men and women as his friends, and lives among them, in order to invite and receive them into his own company.

—*Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum)*, no. 2

We began our delving into the mystery of divine Love in Book 1, *God's Word Revealed in Sacred Scripture*, where we examined that God reaches out to us in so many different ways. In chapter 1 of this text, *Son of God and Son of Mary*, we continued our exploration of how our longing for God is mirrored by God's longing for us. Here in chapter 2 we continue this theme by addressing the human response to God's Revelation; namely, faith. We look at the expression of Christian faith in the form of discipleship, of our apprenticeship to the Master, Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2 is developed under five major headings:

- ⊕ **ATTEND AND REFLECT:** What does it mean to have faith?
- ⊕ **HEAR THE STORY:** Why bother with faith?
- ⊕ **EMBRACE THE VISION:** Faith in Jesus Christ leads to discipleship
- ⊕ **THINK IT THROUGH:** Living out our Catholic faith
- ⊕ **JUDGE AND ACT:** (*Activities and exercises that encourage the young people to integrate what they have learned in the chapter into their daily lives*)

## Theological Background for the Teacher

God's reaching out to us inspires a response from us. As we have already observed, the experience of 'longing' is inherent in our human nature. But the ultimate human longing is the longing for God. Knowingly or unknowingly, every person desires and strives to know and live in harmony and peace with the 'Other', the Transcendent—God.

## FAITH AS OUR RESPONSE TO GOD

Faith is our initial response to God, who is Love, who desires that we share in his divine life. Faith is both a human act and a gift from God. (See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC], nos. 153–154.) To make that possible, God offers us both the invitation and the power, or grace, to respond freely to his invitation and to fulfill the deepest longing of our heart. God's offer is truly an invitation and not a demand; nor does God coerce us. We are truly free to respond and place our faith in God and make God the center of our life; we are also free not to respond and not to believe in God. Such is the mystery and depth of God's love. (See CCC, no. 160.)

The Holy Spirit (see CCC, nos. 687–688) 'opens the eyes of the mind' and 'makes it easy for all to accept and believe the truth' (CCC, no. 153). It is the grace of God within us and the interior guidance of the Holy Spirit that enables us to respond to God by way of faith. By faith we submit our intellect, heart and will to God the Revealer (see CCC, no. 143). 'When St. Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus declared to him that this Revelation did not come "from flesh and blood", but from "my Father who is in heaven"' (CCC, no. 153, quoting Matthew 16:17 and 11:25).

## JESUS SHOWS US THE WAY

Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God, the Word made flesh. He is true God and true man. For a Christian, believing in God cannot be separated from believing in the One whom he sent, his 'beloved Son', in whom the Father is 'well pleased' (CCC, no. 151). Furthermore, we cannot believe in Jesus Christ without sharing in his Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who reveals who Jesus is (see CCC, no. 152). To respond to God in faith, we respond to the Holy Trinity, One God in three divine Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ is the fullness and final Revelation of God. Whoever comes to know and believe in him, comes to know and believe in God. When Philip the Apostle asked him, 'Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied', Jesus responded:

Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

—John 14:8–14

#### THE CALL TO FAITH AND DISCIPLESHIP

During his public ministry Jesus issued invitations to 'Follow me'. (See Matthew 4:19 and 9:9; Mark 1:17 and 2:14; Luke 5:27.) In John we read that Philip was among the first to receive Jesus' invitation to believe in him and follow him. (Read John 1:43–50.) The call to discipleship in Jesus is always an invitation to follow him who is 'the way, and the truth, and the life' (John 14:6). Men and women freely responded to Jesus' invitation and followed him then, and continue to do so now, and will continue to do so until he comes again in glory.

The first disciples of Jesus continued to spread his message and invite others to faith following his Death, Resurrection and Ascension; and we, the Church, continue to carry on that mission. Your work with your students carries on that mission. It is at the heart of what you do. Pope John Paul II reminded us:

At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father. . . . Christ, the Incarnate Word and Son of God. . . is taught—everything else is taught with reference to him—and it is Christ who above all teaches—anyone else who teaches to that extent is Christ's spokesman, enabling Christ to teach with his lips. . . . Every catechist should be able to apply to himself the mysterious words of Jesus: 'My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me'.

—Paul VI, *On Catechesis in Our Time* (*Catechesi tradendae*), nos. 5 and 6

#### CATECHESIS—AN INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

Theology and catechesis go hand in hand. Catechesis is an invitation to discipleship. The study of theology is faith seeking understanding. Both look to Jesus to optimize our faith response, as the belief in him and

in the One who sent him is necessary for our salvation (see CCC, no. 161). The means through which we are enabled to hold on to our faith in spite of difficulties we may encounter are set out in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

To live, grow and persevere in the faith until the end we must nourish it with the word of God; we must beg the Lord to increase our faith; it must be 'working through charity', abounding in hope, and rooted in the faith of the Church.

—CCC, no. 162

Jesus taught his disciples the way, and the truth, and the way to live through both his life and his teachings. Jesus called his disciples to faith not only in him but also in the Father and the Holy Spirit (see CCC, no. 1695). Jesus' invitation to discipleship was an invitation not only to follow him, but also to share in the life and love of the Triune God. This is the faith we profess in the Creeds.

In this text we offer you and the young people the opportunity to grow in faith and discipleship by exploring the 'ways' of Jesus, which we can incorporate in a practical way into our lives each and every day. These include:

- ⊙ the perfection of charity (see CCC, nos. 915, 1823);
- ⊙ possessing the inner strength to bear witness confidently and spread the faith (see CCC, no. 1816);
- ⊙ honoring work as a union with the Creator's gifts and talents (see CCC, no. 2427);
- ⊙ to live in the 'Spirit of Truth' (see CCC, no. 2466);
- ⊙ to pray and to be watchful (see CCC, no. 2612).

In all, faith, both as an invitation and a response to God's invitation, is a lifelong, ongoing process. It is a lifelong conversion, of deepening our response both in words and deeds that witness 'I believe'. Introducing our young people to some of the many Christian witnesses is an excellent way to demonstrate how lives of faith are meaningful, significant and, possibly of most importance to young people right now, achievable. These may be the saints or people from their own lives and neighborhoods.

#### GROWING IN FAITH AND DISCIPLESHIP IN TODAY'S WORLD

St. Augustine summarized the life of faith this way: 'I believe, in order to understand; and I understand, the better to believe'. Faith is alive. Faith is dynamic. Faith seeks to understand (see CCC, no. 158). The young people we work with may face challenges arising from the modern misconception that faith is somehow contrary and incongruent to the technological and scientific advances that help shape our world today.



It is our call and responsibility to help them respond to their own inner longing (whether they can put it into words or not) that all things worldly find their origin in the same God of our faith. God is Truth. All truths are found in God. (See CCC, no. 159.)

Everyone wants a sense of security. We all seek definite answers. It is part of human nature to want to lessen the risk of an endeavor and to feel that there is 'something to fall back on'. For many, faith is the 'guiding light' of their lives. It shapes their daily routines and provides the 'answers' to most of their dilemmas. However, there is an increasing trend today to demean such faith as 'blind' and 'old-fashioned'. More and more voices, whether on the streets, in the visual media or in books, claim to refute 'faith in God' as obsolete, meaningless and necessary only for the weak. Our young people, just like ourselves, live in the midst of this 'anti-faith phenomenon'. Your voice speaks out against those voices; your voice—your words and deeds—show the emptiness of that message.

Here, we have a wonderful opportunity to dispel the growing misconceptions surrounding faith, and to enable our young people to discover its real meaning; and, most important of all, to discover the significance of their Baptism and a life of faith in God. Instead of ignoring this so-called 'anti-faith phenomenon', we should respond to it with confidence; the Advocate and Teacher, the Spirit of truth, speaks through you. Questioning, reasoning and debating can all be positive; they can push us to further learning and, consequently, to deeper growth in faith. A faith that is unchallenged will remain stagnant. Your time with the students, your sharing the faith of the Church with them, will help them grow in their Catholic identity; you will help them grow in the knowledge and skills that will better equip them to enter into conversation with the world.

We are disciples of Jesus, the truth and the only way to true life. Through freely responding to Jesus' call to discipleship, and imitating the examples of faith as lived by Christian witnesses, inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can lead our lives in the best way possible—lives whose foundation is the Great Commandment.

#### **ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND READING**

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 142–184;  
*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 35–37;  
*Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 25–32; John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Fides et Ratio* (On the Relationship Between Faith and Reason), Chapter IV 'The Relationship Between Faith and Reason', September 14, 1998.

## **CHAPTER OUTCOMES**

*See general note on page 19 of this resource.*

### **Learning Outcomes**


As a result of studying this chapter and exploring the issues raised, the young people should be able to:

- define 'faith', and subsequently refine this initial definition following their work in this chapter, with the ensuing objective of: articulating faith as a free human act, enabled by the grace of God with the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, as a response to God's invitation;
- understand faith as a gift from God;
- examine the language surrounding the common understanding of faith and explore how such understandings can help and hinder a true appreciation of the meaning of Christian faith;
- understand and explain the link between faith and reason;
- discover, with more clarity, Jesus' Revelation of the Holy Trinity;
- understand that the life and teaching of Jesus are at the heart of Christian faith;
- investigate accounts of faith in the Gospels to ascertain an authentic meaning of 'discipleship';
- identify ways Jesus taught his disciples for living the way, or life, of faith;
- understand the role of the Church in the living of one's faith;
- associate faith with the actions of the 'head, heart and hands';
- read about the lives of Christian witnesses and comment on how faith influenced those witnesses.

### **Faith-formation Outcomes**

As a result of studying this chapter and exploring the issues raised, the young people should also:

- appreciate more deeply how faith has an impact on the areas of belief and doubt in their lives;
- value faith as both a gift and a free choice;
- grow in their awareness of how they feel about God and his presence in their lives;
- welcome challenging life experiences as opportunities to strengthen faith;
- accept Jesus as both teacher and exemplar, or the role model, for our living a life of faith;
- live an active faith of the 'head, heart and hands';
- be inspired by accounts of Christian witnesses;
- accept the invitation to grow as disciples of Jesus.



## Teacher Reflection

### *The Eyes of Jesus*

I imagine the eyes of Jesus  
Were harvest-brown,  
The light of their gazing  
Suffused with the seasons:

The shadow of winter,  
The mind of spring,  
The blues of summer,  
And amber of harvest.

A gaze that is perfect sister  
To the kindness that dwells  
In his beautiful hands.

The eyes of Jesus gaze on us,  
Stirring in the heart's clay  
The confidence of seasons  
That never lose their way to harvest.  
This gaze knows the signature  
Of our heartbeat, the first glimmer  
From the dawn that dreamed our minds,

The crevices where thoughts grow  
Long before the longing in the bone  
Sends them towards the mind's eye,

The artistry of the emptiness  
That knows to slow the hunger  
Of outside things until they weave  
Into the twilight side of the heart,

A gaze full of all that is still future  
Looking out for us to glimpse  
The jewelled light in wintered stone,

Quickening the eyes that look at us  
To see through to where words  
Are blind to say what we would love,

Forever falling softly on our faces,  
His gaze plies the soul with light,  
Laying down a luminous layer

Beneath our brief and brittle days  
Until the appointed dawn comes  
Assured and harvest deft

To unravel the last black knot  
And we are back home in the house  
That we have never left.

# Notes and Guidelines for Student Activities

## ATTEND AND REFLECT

### What does it mean to have faith?

#### Learning Outcome

That the young people would:

- ⊗ define 'faith', and subsequently refine this initial definition following their work in this chapter, with the ensuing objective of: articulating faith as a free human act, enabled by the grace of God with the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, as a response to God's invitation.

#### Faith-formation Outcomes

That the young people would also:

- ⊗ appreciate more deeply how faith has an impact on the areas of belief and doubt in their lives;
- ⊗ value faith as both a gift and a free choice.

#### Overview

Chapter 2 opens with a collection of quotations from a range of people who answer the question "What is faith?". In addition, the young people read some of cyclist Lance Armstrong's thoughts about belief.

### Supplementary Activities for 'Attend and Reflect'

#### Additional material on 'belief'

In the opening section of this chapter, 'Attend and Reflect', the young people read some of Lance Armstrong's thoughts about belief. Here is another statement about belief, written by a group of young people from Ayacucho in Peru. You might encourage the students to read it carefully and reflect for a few moments on how the beliefs expressed by the young people from Peru reflect their own beliefs. This could be the basis for a class discussion.

#### I Believe

- I believe in the equality of all,  
rich and poor.
- I believe in liberty.
- I believe in humanity through which we can  
create unity.
- I believe in the love within each of us,

- and in the home, happy and healthy.
- I believe in the forgiveness of sins.
- believe that with divine help  
we will have the strength to establish  
equality in society.
- I believe in unity, the only way to achieve peace,  
and I believe that together we can obtain justice.

**Worksheet 1: 'Faith—More than Words?'** (page 49 of this resource) invites the young people to conduct a brainstorming exercise based on the word 'faith'. We then invite them to discuss and clarify how the language that surrounds faith can both help and hinder a true understanding of Christian faith. In the context of what they have already studied in this chapter, the exercises on this worksheet will assist the young people in taking a more in-depth look at the language surrounding faith. They will help the young people to deepen their understanding of the Catholic belief and teaching on the connection between faith and good works. Faith is about what we do as well as what we believe; 'faith without works is dead' (James 2:20).

**Teacher Tip:** You might like to invite the young people to conduct a 'vox pop' based on the question "What is faith?". (See 'Student Activity Tool Kit', page 347 of this resource, for instructions on conducting vox pops.) Encourage the young people to ask their family, friends and neighbors what they think faith is and to record their responses. Afterward, they may share their findings with the class.

## HEAR THE STORY

### Why bother with faith?

#### Learning Outcomes

That the young people would:

- ⊗ understand faith as a gift from God;
- ⊗ examine the language surrounding the common understanding of faith and explore how such understandings can help and hinder a true understanding of the meaning of Christian faith;
- ⊗ understand and be able to explain the link between faith and reason;
- ⊗ discover, with more clarity, Jesus' Revelation of the Holy Trinity.

### Faith-formation Outcome

That the young people would also:

- ⊙ grow in their awareness of how they feel about God and his presence in their lives.

### Overview

In section two, 'Hear the Story', we begin by examining the universality of faith and then go on to explore the characteristics of the theological virtue and gift of faith. We challenge the young people to accept the gift of faith in their lives and to consider the personal implications of such faith. The section ends with a reflection on the connection between faith and reason.

## Supplementary Activities for 'Hear the Story'

### Worksheet 2: 'Faith Is a gift' (page 50 of this resource)

provides an outline for an art-based activity that the young people can do either in class or at home. We invite them to make a 'faith box', into which they put various items that speak to them of faith. This exercise seeks to help the young people to concretize the dimensions of faith, which can seem abstract and difficult to understand. You may wish to extend the use of this worksheet throughout the chapter and have the young people take from or add to the contents regularly, as their faith and their understanding of their faith develops.

### Worksheet 3: 'My Response to God's Invitation' (page 51 of this resource)

presents the young people with 'a written invitation from God', to which they write a personal response, giving their reasons for accepting or declining the invitation. Through this exercise we aim to assist the young people in reflecting upon and articulating the current stage of their faith journey.

## EMBRACE THE VISION

## Faith in Jesus Christ leads to discipleship

### Learning Outcomes

That the young people would:

- ⊙ understand that the life and teaching of Jesus are at the heart of Christian faith;

- ⊙ investigate accounts of faith in the Gospels to ascertain an authentic meaning of 'discipleship';
- ⊙ identify ways Jesus taught his disciples for living the way, or life, of faith;
- ⊙ understand the role of the Church in the living of one's faith.

### Faith-formation Outcomes

That the young people would also:

- ⊙ welcome challenging life experiences as opportunities to strengthen faith;
- ⊙ accept Jesus as both teacher and exemplar, or the role model, for our living a life of faith.

### Overview

In section three, 'Embrace the Vision', we focus on Jesus, the heart of Christian faith, and explore that the response of faith includes the assent of both the intellect and the will. The invitation to faith calls us not only to believe in the truths revealed by God but to act on and live those truths as well. In this section we encourage the young people to become more familiar with the actions and teaching of Jesus in the Gospels in order to learn how to live, or practice, the faith into which they were baptized and that they now profess. We explore both the account of Jesus meeting with Zacchaeus the tax-collector in Luke's Gospel and also the three versions of Jesus' explanation of the Greatest Commandment found in the Synoptic Gospels. Through the investigation of these Gospel passages we aim to help the young people to come to know Jesus the Way more fully and to learn an authentic meaning for 'Christian discipleship'.

## Supplementary Activity for 'Embrace the Vision'

### Group Activity

Encourage the young people to work in small groups (1) to read the Gospel account of Jesus meeting with Zacchaeus and (2) to select a key moment from it. Invite each group to create a group 'sculpture' to represent the key moment they selected; for example, they could use gestures and facial expressions to convey what is happening. When the groups are ready, each group, one at a time, 'freezes' their 'sculpture'; while you, the teacher, ask the different characters to say who they are and what they are thinking. They must answer in character.



## THINK IT THROUGH

### Living out our Catholic faith

#### Learning Outcome

That the young people would:

- ⊙ associate faith with the actions of the 'head, heart and hands'.

#### Faith-formation Outcome

That the young people would also:

- ⊙ live an active faith of the 'head, heart and hands'.

#### Overview

In section four, 'Think It Through', we concentrate on living the Christian faith as an active faith that involves the whole person: the 'head, heart and hands'.

### Supplementary Activities for 'Think It Through'

#### Additional material relating to Christian faith as a 'way of the heart'

The first paragraph under this topic in the students' text quotes a phrase from the poem 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' by the Irish poet and dramatist William Butler Yeats (1865–1939). Here is the full verse:

I will arise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the  
shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements  
grey;  
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

**Worksheet 4: 'Jesus Shows Us the Way'** (page 53 of this resource) provides a template for the young people to fill in based on a number of Gospel passages. This activity requires that the young people read the passages carefully, examine what the passages say or imply about faith and reflect on the advice Jesus gives through them. The young people will then identify areas within the passages that correspond to obstacles in their own faith journey and explore the practical implications that follow from implementing Jesus' advice into their own faith life.

**Worksheet 5: 'Standing on the Shoulders of Giants'** (page 55 of this resource) offers the young people the opportunity to research and draw inspiration from three twentieth-century Christian witnesses. A very helpful

account of each may be found in the book *So Great a Cloud: A Record of Christian Witness* by Stephen Redmond SJ (Dublin, Ireland: Veritas, 2009).

## JUDGE AND ACT

#### Learning Outcome

That the young people would:

- ⊙ read about the lives of Christian witnesses and comment on how faith influenced those witnesses.

#### Faith-formation Outcomes

That the young people would also:

- ⊙ be inspired by accounts of Christian witnesses;
- ⊙ accept the invitation to grow as disciples of Jesus.

#### Overview

In section five, 'Judge and Act', we continue to explore the link between faith and life. We examine the story of a Lithuanian woman, Birute, as an example of someone who lived the admonition of St. James and put faith into action. Once again we reassure the young people that the Risen Jesus will be with them in their efforts to live their faith.

### Supplementary Activities for 'Judge and Act'

#### Listen and Respond

In the 'Listen and respond' meditation in the students' text the leader rereads the story twice. On the first occasion the students become observers in the text; on the second occasion they enter into the story and respond.

#### Web-based Exercises

At this point we may need to reassure the young people that the way of faith can be found in ordinary situations experienced by ordinary people just like them. Point out to the young people that they can live a life of faith without being entered into the history books! Sometimes 'ordinary' things and 'ordinary' people can be 'extraordinary'. As a follow-up to their research, you might encourage the young people to reflect on and write about how their own intellect, heart and hands are an integral part of their faith life. Encourage them to reflect as well on what a life of faith would be like without all three dimensions. If your school has a web page on which the young people can share their faith experiences, invite them to submit their reflections.

### Media Project 1

Encourage the young people to identify which popular movies and television programs reflect directly or implicitly the 'Greatest Commandment'—to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. Invite the young people to explore the stories, themes, characters and settings of movies and programs that they name.

### Media Project 2

Invite the young people to research the media's role in the portrayal of faith. They might watch a number of news bulletins, sitcoms and discussion programs over a period of time. Perhaps they could arrange with their classmates to watch different programs and then share their perceptions.

In the context of both media projects, the young people should note in particular the media's use of language in relation to faith. They could discuss these and similar questions:

- ⊙ How do the various media help or hinder a true understanding of the meaning of Christian faith?
- ⊙ In what ways, other than language, can we express our understanding of faith?

## Additional Prayer Suggestions

### Guided Meditation: 'Through Zacchaeus's Eyes'

The purpose of this guided meditation is to help the young people absorb and reflect on the central theme of this chapter; namely, that faith is our response to God's invitation. The meditation is based on the story of Zacchaeus from Luke's Gospel. We invite the young people to imagine themselves to be Zacchaeus and to see the meeting with Jesus from his point of view. (See 'Student Activity Tool Kit', pages 348–50 of this resource, for additional helpful suggestions in relation to conducting guided meditations.)

Ask the young people to close their eyes and relax. Pause for a few moments before beginning.

### LEADER

Imagine you are Zacchaeus, the tax collector. . . . You are living in a hot desert climate. . . . You have been working hard all day. . . . You have had plenty of doors slammed in your face. . . . You have seen children

running to their parents' house to warn them of your arrival. . . . You have seen the look of heartbreak on a widow's face as she gave you her money. . . . and you knew she did not have enough left to feed her children. But what could you do? You must do your job. The boss will see to that. (Pause)

You have heard that a teacher is coming into town to speak to the people. You have work to do but you really want to see him, to hear what he has to say. You have been thinking about it all day. In fact, it's what got you through the tough morning. (Pause)

When you reach the place where the teacher is due to speak, you find that a large crowd has gathered. You are too small to see above the crowd. But you feel you must see! So you climb a tree. Hopefully, no one will notice you. You've had enough scowls thrown your way today! (Pause)

Then you hear your name. You stop. Surely you must have misheard. No, he is calling you. (Pause)

People are starting to look at you. He tells you to come down. People are staring at you. (Pause)

He tells you to hurry down, because he must stay at your house today.

Pause for a few minutes to allow the young people to reflect.

Then invite them to open their eyes and stretch.

### Scripture Reflection

(See instructions for the use of doodling in prayer in the 'Student Activity Tool Kit', page 348 of this resource.)

Use this quotation from St. Augustine to engage the young people in prayer:

**I believe, in order to understand;  
and I understand,  
the better to believe.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## Faith—More than Words?

The language of faith is about much more than words, and words often have several meanings. People use words in many ways and do not always mean the same thing when using the same words. This worksheet will help you become a discerning listener when you hear the word 'faith'.

### CREATE A 'FAITH-WORD BOARD'

Look back at the quotations from the *New York Times* on the opening page of chapter 2 of your theology text. Take a few moments to recall the words or phrases that arose during the class discussion that followed.

- Working as a class, use a board or flipchart to write down all the words and phrases you can brainstorm that are in any way associated with the term 'faith'. Here are some terms and phrases to help you get started:



- Use a marker and join together the terms or phrases that match or that extend an idea further.
- Add the following, if they are not already on the list: free choice; response; disciple of Jesus; action; head, heart and hands.

### TALK IT OVER

Look at the terms on your 'faith-word board'. Take a few moments to reflect upon the following questions privately. Then discuss your reflections with a partner.

- Which words or phrases have most significance for me right now?
- Which ones do I agree or disagree with?
- How did the addition of the second group of phrases affect the patterns on the board, and how did these phrases affect me?
- What have I learned about faith and language from this exercise?

Share your best insights with the class.

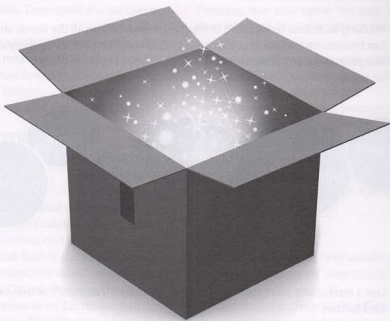
NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## Faith Is a Gift

Signs of faith surround us. Our awareness of these 'signs of faith' can help us grow in both understanding and living this wonderful gift.

### CREATE A 'FAITH BOX'

You will need a small cardboard or tin box with a lid (for example, a shoe box or biscuit tin). Decorate the box to make it look like a gift.



Place in the box cuttings of articles, quotations, photographs, Christian witness accounts and so on that speak to you of faith. Remember to include those that challenge faith! Refresh the contents of the box regularly.

From time to time, use the box to help you think about your personal response to God's invitation to know him, to believe in him and all that he has revealed, and to live in communion with him. Here are two suggestions for ways you can use your 'faith box':

- ① Select an item from the box at random. Examine it. Reflect upon it. Allow it to speak to your heart. Think about faith. Think about your faith.
- ② Allow the box to represent faith as a gift from God. Keep it somewhere you can see it. Sometimes you may not want to open it! Sometimes you may feel you *must* open it!



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Response to God's Invitation

Faith is both an invitation and a response. Take the time to value your faith as both an invitation from God and your free response to God.

**Work alone. First, imagine you have just received this invitation. (In reality, God is always inviting you to faith.)**

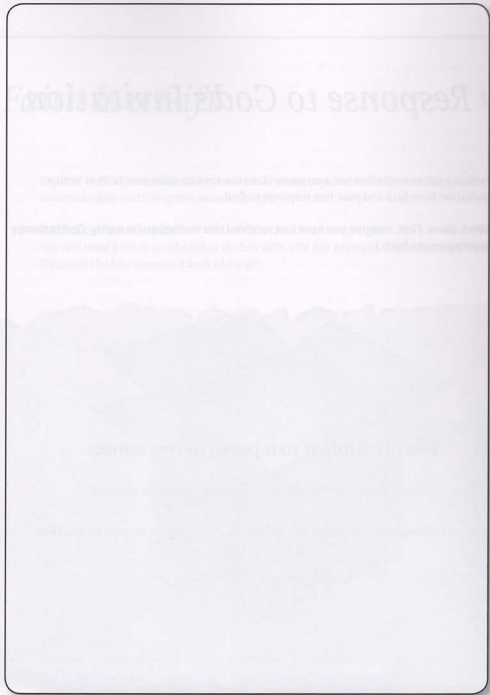
*You are invited to a party at my house.*

*All are welcome. No gifts are needed. (Come as you are!)*

*I am so looking forward to your arrival, but feel free to accept or decline.*

*R.S.U.P. God*

Now, write your response in the space provided on the next page. Expand your response beyond that of 'I accept' or 'I decline'. Give reasons for your choice.

**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

- ⊙ Why might a person's response be different at various stages in her or his life?
- ⊙ What factors might influence one's response?

**JOURNAL EXERCISE**

Repeat the above activity every once in a while. Each time, compare the reasons for your response with those you gave on previous occasions.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## Jesus Shows Us the Way

In chapter 2 you have explored some examples of Jesus' teaching on how to live as his disciples. Now, work alone or with a partner to fill in the grid below (some boxes may not apply to every reference). Quiet your mind and open your heart. Pray to the Holy Spirit, your Advocate and Teacher. Read the passages very carefully and reflect on them before answering the questions. Option: Write your responses in your journal. Share your responses.

Scripture	What challenges or difficulties cited are especially relevant today?	What instructions for faith can be learned from this passage?	What actions can I take to strengthen my own faith?
LUKE 6: 46-49			
MATTHEW 8: 23-27			
LUKE 8: 43-48			

Scripture	What challenges or difficulties cited are especially relevant today?	What instructions for faith can be learned from this passage?	What actions can I take to strengthen my own faith?
MATTHEW 6: 25–33			
LUKE 6: 27–37			
LUKE 10: 21–24			
JOHN 3: 31–34			



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

The English mathematician and physicist Isaac Newton (1642–1727) wrote, 'If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.' Newton's discoveries have inspired many aspiring scientists. The story of the Church is filled with countless people who inspire those who aspire to be disciples of Christ. They are the ordinary people who have become the giants of our faith.

### RESEARCH, DISCOVER . . . AND BE INSPIRED!

Work in groups of three. Each group chooses one of these witnesses to their faith in Christ, or one of your own selection:

Edith Teresa Stein (Teresa Benedicta of the Cross)	Rose Philippine Duchesne
Dorothy Day	Andrew Dung-Lac
Jerome Lejeune	Pierre Toussaint
Elizabeth Bayley (Elizabeth Ann Seton)	Rose Hawthorne Lathrop (Mother Alphonso)
Kateri Tekakwitha	Teresa of Calcutta
Isaac Thomas Hecker	Juan Diego
Charles Lwanga	

Research and record the information you discover about the 'giant of the faith' chosen by the group. Use these guidelines to conduct your research:

- ⊙ Give a brief biography; include place of birth, family, occupation and so on.
- ⊙ Summarize the key events of the person's life, their achievements and so on.
- ⊙ Give an account of any obstacles or hardships they encountered.
- ⊙ Describe your view of the person's faith under the following headings:
  - Head
  - Heart
  - Hands
- ⊙ Describe how prayer featured in this person's life.
- ⊙ Explain why this person can be called a Christian witness.
- ⊙ Find an inspirational quotation from your chosen person and share it with the class.
- ⊙ Mention some inspiration that we can glean from their life story.

Report your findings to the class, and share your thoughts on how the person you have studied inspires you.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## Review of Chapter 2

I. True or false. Mark the true statements 'T' and the false statements 'F'. Cross out the words that make the false statements false. Write the words that make the false statements true under each false statement.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Everyone has some kind of faith.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Faith in God is a gift from God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Faith and reason are at odds with each other.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Faith is belief in action.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The Catholic Church is the heart of the faith of Catholics.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Faith is primarily believing in the dogmas of the Catholic Church.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The announcement of the beginning of the Catholic Church was at the center of Jesus' preaching.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Jesus preached that the Beatitudes sum up what God wants us to do to live our faith in him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. God's love for us depends upon the way we live the Ten Commandments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The celebration of Eucharist is the summit of the Christian life.

**II. Define the following terms.**

1. Faith

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2. Creeds of the Church

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3. Triune God

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4. Greatest Commandment

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5. New commandment

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