

JOURNEY OF FAITH

Rockford Ministry Formation Program

Preview Sheet

Questions of faith spring up in the lives of men and women in unplanned ways. While some of these questions deal with a wide variety of issues in the Catholic tradition, others speak to the curiosity about the meaning of daily life. The ultimate journey is recognizing how everyday decisions are impacted by the choice to believe in Jesus Christ and how the church honors our ordinariness and names it as holy.

Therefore, a faith-filled life is a celebration of the blessings and messiness of daily living. If Catholicism is real and not an empty symbol, then authentic pastoral ministers are men and women who can embrace the fact that it is natural for the people of God to wonder about what it means to "believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God," (John 21:31).

As we seek answers to these questions, it is natural for us to journey through progressive stages of faith leading to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Prior to our JOURNEY OF FAITH class:

1. Read the Catholic Update, *"How God Invites Us to Grow: Six Stages of Faith Development"*
2. Reflect on the six stages of faith outlined in the Catholic Update and be prepared to share your response to this question. What insights does James Fowler's theory of faith development offer you about your own life of faith?

We will use the material in this Catholic Update and your reflections to examine the relationships between the stages of faith development and your personal faith journey, and the faith experiences of the people of God and your call to serve as a public minister of the church.

Assignment

James Fowler and others remind us that growth in our faith journey is a pilgrimage of self-awareness. In a three-page paper, reflect on your own faith journey in response to the following questions.

1. How would you describe your own faith journey using the stages of faith format?
2. Which stage of faith do you recognize as most active in your life right now? What are some clues that suggest this is the stage expressed in your life right now?
3. As you begin the Ministry Formation Program, how does the article, class material and discussion help you understand the importance of recognizing how faith develops in yourself and the people you will be ministering to and with?

Writing Instructions

1. The reflection paper is to be submitted on the website (documents page).
2. Once you have completed the form, the system automatically sends the assignment to Mike and will send a copy to Rudy.

Contact Info: mdowling@rockforddiocese.org