

What Is Faith?

Tomás learned a lot about being Catholic from his grandma. But he still had a lot of questions. So when Mrs. Evans asked for questions before they started class, Tomás was ready!

"How do we know God's real? What does heaven look like? Why can't we see heaven? Why don't I hear Jesus when I pray? Why doesn't Jesus come visit us?"

"Slow down, Tomás!" Mrs. Evans said, laughing. "Those are great questions! In fact, they all have something to do with what we're talking about today. Faith. Who thinks they know what faith is?"



What Do You Think Faith Is?

Has anyone ever asked you, "Just trust me?" What does that mean? How do you know you can trust what your parents, friends, or teachers say? How do you know you can trust God?

Faith means having trust in someone or something. Religious faith means we trust in God, his word in the Bible, and the things the Church teaches us. When we have faith, we trust even when:

- we don't (or can't) know for sure;
- something seems mysterious or impossible;
- others don't believe.

It's easier to believe something if we can see it, hear it, or touch it ourselves. The more we learn, the more we understand. This makes our faith stronger. But faith doesn't just come from knowing things. It comes from trusting the person who shares the truth with us. When we have faith, we believe:

- the person speaking knows the truth;
- the person speaking is honest.

The most important person we can have faith in is Jesus Christ. We were created "in the image of God" (Genesis 1:27). That means God made us like him. God wants us to know him and to believe in him.



ACTIVITY

List five people or things that you believe in.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

God's Great Gift

You have faith in someone or something every day. You have faith that your bus will get you to school on time. You have faith that your teacher will grade your homework fairly. You have faith that your friends will sit with you at lunch. All this trust comes from God. God gives you faith in him, faith in Jesus Christ, and faith in the Catholic Church. Faith is God's way of saying:

- "I love you and want you to be your best."
- "I love you and will always take care of you."
- "I love you and will teach you what you need to know."
- "I love you and will share everything with you."

Faith and Jesus

We are starting a journey with Jesus. He will be your best friend, guide, and teacher. Jesus said many things about faith. Read these words from the Bible and then think about the promise Jesus is making:

- "Everything is possible to one who has faith" (Mark 9:23).
- "You have faith in God; have faith also in me" (John 14:1).



**What promise is Jesus making?
What is Jesus asking you to do?**



ACTIVITY

FOUR WAYS TO GROW IN FAITH

1. Do Good Works

Jesus said, "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). The people Jesus calls the "least" were the unpopular people. No one thought they were important or special except Jesus. Jesus asks us to treat everyone like a brother or sister. When we love people we wouldn't normally talk to or do things with, it brings us closer to Jesus.

Who can you help this week?

2. Read

Keep your Bible nearby so you can hear and speak to Jesus whenever you want. Read other good books, too, like stories of the saints or a book of prayers for children.

Do you have a favorite Bible story?

3. Pray

Spend some time with Jesus in prayer every day. You can pray with words, your thoughts, and even your feelings. Prayer is like talking to Jesus. Remember to listen to what Jesus has to say.

What would you like to tell Jesus?

4. Be a Friend

Jesus said, "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (John 13:34). Loving others makes us more like Jesus. When we act like a friend to others, we grow in faith.

**How do you show your
friends you care?**



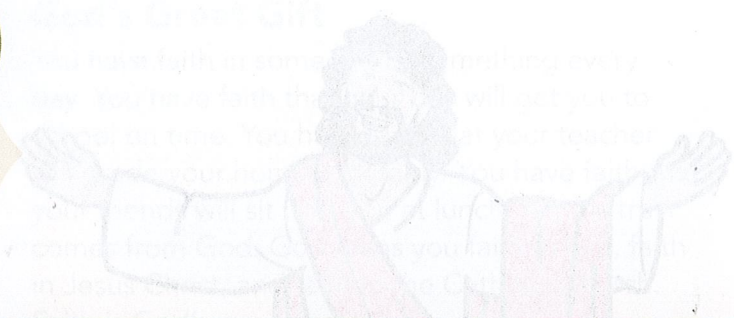
LIVING WITH FAITH

Draw a line from the action (on the left) to the way it helps you grow in faith (on the right).

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. Drying the dishes | A. Doing good works |
| 2. Going to church | B. Reading |
| 3. Searching online about a holy person | C. Praying |
| 4. Calling a classmate who is sad | D. Being a friend |
| 5. Going to your aunt's birthday party | |
| 6. Asking God for help before a test | |
| 7. Helping an injured player off the field | |
| 8. Reading a Bible story | |
| 9. Giving your allowance to the poor | |
| 10. Buying your friend a birthday gift | |

In Short

- Faith is a gift from God.
- Faith, science, and reason exist together.
- Faith grows when we nurture and share it.



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The process by which adults are initiated into the Catholic faith throughout the United States is now called the OCIA—the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. "Order" is a clearer translation of the Latin term for the process formerly known as the RCIA—the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. People preparing for baptism and reception into the Church celebrate several rites as part of the order to which those rites belong—an order whose mission is to journey in the faith. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted the name change in 2021, with American dioceses introducing the name thereafter. For more information, please contact your local diocese.

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