

CREDO

Catholic Resources for the Year of Faith

How To Use

These resources are an initiative from NYMO to inspire youth leaders during the Year of Faith. They are designed to be incorporated into a school lunchtime session, a confirmation meeting, an RS class or regular youth group meeting. They are not in any particular order and can be downloaded and used as and when you wish. Each session of CREDO focuses on a particular passage of Scripture about faith and then offers you a variety of activities on the topic to choose from.

Set List

These resources cover the following:

Faith to Follow - Call of Disciples	Strength in Faith - David & Goliath
Courageous Faith - Daniel & the Lions	Wavering Faith - Jonah
Obedient Faith - Joshua & the Walls of Jericho	Bold Faith - Peter's First Sermon
Faith Choices - Mary	Joyful Faith - Shepherds at Christmas
Being Faithful - Noah and the Flood	Grateful Faith - Healing of Ten Lepers
Faith and Friendship - Paralyse Man	Jesus has Faith in Us - Miraculous Catch
Stepping out in Faith - Peter Walks on Water	Sharing faith - Woman at the Well
Generous Faith - Widow's Offering	Prayerful Faith - Jesus Prays
Perseverance in Faith - Temptations of Jesus	Denying Faith - Peter's Denial
Faith Begins - Baptism of Jesus	Suffering Faith - The Crucifixion
Faith for the Future - Abram Leaves Home	Faithful Father - Prodigal Son

Year of Faith October 2012 - November 2013

The CREDO Key

You will find symbols alongside each activity that denote what kind of activity is being suggested. At a glance you should be able to see the structure of the session by following these symbols:



HINT - some helpful suggestions to make your session run more smoothly



QUICK QUIZ - quick-fire questions to ensure the group have read and understood the text



GAME - suggested games to either break the ice or further explore the theme



YOUCAT - quotes and paragraphs from the youth catechism to help young people apply the teachings of the Catholic Church



CHALLENGE - a task to give the group to encourage the young people to put their faith into action



LINK TO THE MASS - a practical way to connect the theme with weekly Mass



STORY - the Scripture passage that this session is based on



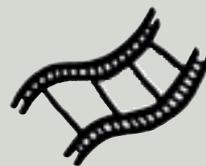
THOUGHTS - some initial reflections on the passage for the leader to read in preparation



ART - an image to use for discussion or prayer



RESPONSE - a chance for your group to respond in a creative way



FILM - a suggested film to use as a whole or a clip for discussion to look at the theme in a different way



PRAYER - a creative idea for praying with your group that is appropriate for the session



MUSIC - suggested music to use to aid your prayer time

Adapting The Sessions

There is no set way of leading these sessions but we assume you would always use the Scripture with the Quick Quiz and then select the most appropriate sections for your group according to age, ability, dynamics, and time available. For example, with an older group you might introduce the Scripture, then watch the film and discuss it afterwards. With a younger, more energetic group, you might simply play the games and run the prayer activity. With a creative group you may spend more time on the creative activities and not include the games.

Having said that we feel there are three key elements to each session which we hope you will follow:

- 1 Gathering and a game to relax everyone
- 2 Hearing the Biblical text – using the Quick Quiz
- 3 Prayer – whether you use the prayer activity or something else

Do play around with our ideas and feel free to adapt and add to them in the best way to suit your young people.

Preparation

Make sure you read through the session plan fully BEFORE you start!

Make a particular note of anything that you will need to assemble, or any activities that you think you'll need to change for your particular situation. You should also make sure that those who you have asked to take any responsibility for a particular activity or segment of the session are confident with their role.

Any resources that are mentioned are available to download or access via our website. Just go to www.nymo.org/credo

As with many ministry activities, you should ensure that you have an appropriate number of leaders who are aware of child protection procedures and that you have the necessary consent forms etc. For more information about operating safely within youth ministry, see your parish rep.

The better you prepare yourself and your team, the smoother your session will run. Perhaps you could gather your team together to prepare and study the piece of scripture that the session is based on. See below for some helpful pointers.

Bible Study

Don't be scared of using the Bible! You might not be as familiar with it as you would like, but you will find there are surprising moments when you recognise bits of the Bible from hymns, parts of the Mass or everyday sayings. Perhaps you didn't realise that they originated from the Bible.

Studying the Bible is a way for us to engage with the writings that form the basis of our faith. It sounds like hard work, but it's actually similar to reading a letter from God. Each page has something to teach us - even if it's not immediately apparent! The difference between simply reading the Bible, and studying it, is that when we begin to look into a text on a deeper and more prayerful level, we can begin to internalise it and make it part of our life, rather than something to 'get through' or to be puzzled by.

It's worth noting that there are a wide range of different translations of the bible. Within the Catholic community we have historically used the Jerusalem Bible translation and will be familiar with this as it is used in the Liturgy. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is currently thought to be a closer translation of the original Hebrew and Greek. Therefore all quotes given are from the NRSV. You may like to read the same passage in a more 'fluid' translation such as the Good News or New Living Translation or even a paraphrase such as 'The Message' or 'The Street Bible' (which aren't strictly speaking Bibles, but are useful for re-hearing the essential message). Use whichever suits you and your group, and helps you understand the authentic message behind the words.

Using this programme will give you access to plenty of opportunities to explore particular Biblical texts at a deeper level than perhaps you have done previously.

Resources to aid Bible Study

There are plenty of resources to help you understand more about the Bible when you are preparing for the sessions. Here are some of our favourites:

BOOKS:

'Your Bible', by Noel Donnelly is described as "the essential companion for all Catholics wishing to learn more about the Bible", giving information in bite-sized portions

'A Bird's Eye View of the Bible', by Mary Williams is a guide for beginners which looks at the Bible in themes

The 'Take and Read' series, by Adrian Graffy, covers the Gospels and Acts in a new way

'The Writings of the New Testament' by Luke Timothy Johnson looks at the meaning of the New Testament writings for today

'The Bible Jesus Read' by Philip Yancy is a great look at the Old Testament

'Eat This Book' by Eugene Peterson looks at developing a loving relationship with the Bible

'Jesus of Nazareth' parts 1 and 2 by Pope Benedict XVI aim to restore Jesus' true identity as discovered in the Gospels

'The Drama of Scripture' by Bartholomew and Goheen gives a run down of the whole story of the Bible in an accessible way

CHURCH TEACHING:

'YOUCAT' is the new youth catechism of the Catholic Church and it is well worth getting yourself a copy. This catechism is well presented and uses colour, pictures and short summaries in a language suitable for young people. We have used various quotes on faith from the YOUCAT in these resources.

'Dei Verbum' available from the Vatican.va website, is the teaching of the church from the Second Vatican Council about how God reveals himself to humanity through a combination of Scripture and Tradition.

'Verbum Domini' is the post-synodal apostolic exhortation from 2010, which is also available from the Vatican.va website.

'The Gift of Scripture' is a document released by the Bishops of England and Wales examining the message of the Bible and how it should apply to us as British Catholics. It can be downloaded from www.cbcew.org.uk.

DAILY READING/DEVOTIONAL:

'Bible Alive' and 'Magnificat' are both daily reading guides to reflect on short passages of the Bible each day. Both keep to the Lectionary readings so you journey alongside the readings in Mass. This can be ordered online, or often in parishes-ask your priest.

'Encounter with God' is a good non-denominational daily reflection guide with extra activities for reflection. More than Catholic versions, it will tackle a particular theme or section of the Bible for a fortnight at a time.

ONLINE (see our website for direct links):

www.biblesociety.org.uk provides a download called 'Style guide' which is a resource at a basic level aimed at those working in the media industry but the snippets are packed with useful facts and figures and handy overviews of issues often in the news as well as misused terms.

www.universalis.com is an American site that lists scripture references for Mass every day. Occasionally feasts will be celebrated at different times so we suggest you select 'settings' and click 'Europe England' for the UK dates.

www.biblegateway.com is probably the most used Christian site in the world! It is an online Concordance, so you can search for any word mentioned in the Bible within different translations, as well as reading articles on a particular theme.

www.scriptureunion.org.uk has a wide variety of free resources for you to use, both for yourself (Closer to God is their daily reading online) and for young people (LightLive).

Setting Up

You will need to think carefully about the setup of your venue before the young people arrive. Think about:

Is there enough space to do the activities - If not, consider changing venues, using a separate room or scaling back the activity

Will the space be warm enough? Do I need to turn on the heating beforehand?

Will the group be sitting on chairs - do I need to get them out?

If they are to sit on the floor - would some cushions or beanbags be more comfortable?

Will you be using equipment that is valuable or breakable? Is it out of harm's way?

Will everyone be able to see/hear any audio visual equipment?

Do you have spare parts for the equipment? e.g. matches, big bags, scissors, glue etc.

As part of any session you will want to consider 'framing' your prayer time by changing the mood slightly. If prayer is a small section of your evening, try framing the time by turning down the lights or moving the group to a different area with a candle as a focus. To help designate the prayer time as sacred, don't allow the group into the room/area until it is all set up and ready. This helps to build up anticipation and will give you a chance to explain to them what will happen before inviting them in.



Music

In every session we have suggested songs that would be appropriate to the theme for the group to listen to together. Generally these are Christian songs, but not always so. Occasionally we suggest a secular song to encourage our young people to look for God in all places including songs.

Sometimes we suggest playing some 'ambient' music. Often young people find silence very difficult but with some background music playing they find it easier to concentrate and are less likely to be distracted by those around them. Music shops (or even garden centres) sell CDs of 'ambient', 'meditative' or even classical music quite cheaply and it is a good idea to have several of these type of CDs handy. You could also look online or ask your local Christian bookshop for suggestions. You may find the music has a strong beat and is not the type of music you would choose to enhance quiet moments, but some of the young people will find it helpful. The important thing is to add variety to the sessions.

Technology Equipment

Good youth ministry doesn't rely on technology! It's about interpersonal, trusting relationships and allowing space for God to act. However, there are times when we can harness the technology available to us to help share the message, or to evoke a spiritual space within the group. Here are some technological tips to help you get started:

SOUND: Easiest way to get sound is to use a CD player or the CD drive on a laptop and turn up the volume! Alternatively you could use a pair of computer speakers and plug them into an ipod or similar device. This gives you greater flexibility to move from one song to the next and to create a song-list on your computer.

VISION: Again DVD clips will all play using a TV linked to a DVD player, or a laptop plugged into a set of speakers (its own sound won't be loud enough). You need to ensure the DVD/film clip can be seen by the whole group and if there are more than a handful of you, you will need a data projector. These are increasingly available in parishes and plug into a laptop or DVD player, projecting the image on a wall or screen. If you use a data projector, do try it out before the session begins. You will need speakers to provide sound also.

I.T.: Sometimes it might be appropriate to show a PowerPoint presentation from your computer. Or there may be times when the group can use your computer to type or draw directly onto the laptop or ipad. The key thing is to ensure the end result can be viewed by all and that you have carefully prepared what you will use beforehand.

POWER: Think about where you're going to plug in all the equipment. In older buildings there are fewer plug sockets and you will need extension cables. You need to make sure all loose cables are taped down and that you are not running extension leads off other extension cables as this would be a fire hazard.

Running the session

Below are some tips to ensure the session runs smoothly:

It is important to have everything set up and all leaders present before the young people arrive, so that the focus moves from your preparation to involving the young people and developing their faith. The earlier you are there, the more time you have to pray beforehand and the more you will enjoy the session yourself.

Make sure you have refreshments and have factored in a time to eat/drink them, to ensure the young people do not get dehydrated if they have been playing games.

When the young people arrive, focus on welcoming them, rather than catching up with the other leaders. The session is for them, not a chance for your leaders to catch up with each other!

Make sure you listen to what the young people say. Remember that there are no wrong answers. If however, you disagree with what they say, respond with "that's interesting, I've never thought of it that way".

Do not force anybody to respond or share anything they do not want to. It may be something very personal, or they may just be shy. It is voluntary, and you may find they may not share in the first few weeks, but by the end you may not be able to stop them from speaking! In the end. It doesn't matter about what you get out of them, rather what they get out of the session.

If the discussion digresses, allow it if the topic is appropriate - it may be that the young people may really need to discuss it, but try to steer it back to the topic as soon as possible.

Be aware of people who have special needs within the group, such as an inability to read or write, and ask a leader to help them, or adapt the task so they are able to join in.

If you find the group getting silly or disengaged, play a game to let off some of their energy and refocus their attention.

Pray!

Don't forget, everything will run smoother if you remember to pray before you run the session. It is a great idea to gather together anyone who is helping you to run the session to pray before the young people arrive. You could simply say the following, or make up your own prayers to pray for specific elements of the session and the young people:

Dear Lord,

Thank you for gathering us here and for this opportunity to talk and learn about you.

We dedicate this time to you and pray that you would fill each one of us here with your Holy Spirit so that the young people can meet with you.

Give them open hearts and open minds and a willingness to receive from you.

We offer you our time together and pray that you will do with it what you will.

Amen

We would love to hear from you!

If you have any feedback or suggestions please email info@nymo.org

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