



Growing Faith Mini-Course 2

Growing Our Faith in Everyday Life

Booklets # 1, 5, 9, 10, & 16.

1 Description

This course asks and responds to the following questions about God and the Christian, Catholic faith to which we hold:

- What do humans want?
- How are we made in God's image?
- Why do we sin?
- How are we made whole and free?
- How do we make a response in faith?
- How do we live our faith in everyday life?
- What is human freedom?

2 The flow of this mini-course...

The Growing Faith booklets used in this course include the ones listed below by number. The flow of this course is set by the *Catechism* itself, where we see an emerging understanding of human nature, both grace and sin – and how the Holy Spirit, working in the Church, makes us whole and restores us to true spiritual health.

#1 – The inborn hunger for God

- We are religious beings by nature.
- We are made to live in communion with God
- Being with God is the only way to find happiness.
- When we listen to the message of creation and to the voice of conscience, we can arrive at certainty about the existence of God.

#5 – Faith is our response to revelation

- Faith is a personal loyalty of our whole being to God who reveals God's self.
- In order to believe, we need the interior helps of the Holy Spirit.

- Believing is a human act, conscious and free, corresponding to the dignity of the human person.
- Believing is also an ecclesial act. Our belief is stronger because the church guides us and teaches us.

#9 In God's Image: things seen and unseen

- Angels are God's messengers and our protectors.
- God willed the diversity of all the creatures and their own particular goodness, their interdependence, and their order.
- God destined all material creatures for the good of the human race.
- We humans, though made of body and soul, are a unity of body and soul.

#10 Why do we humans sin?

- We were created to live in paradise and be near to God.
- From the beginning we humans have experienced within us an inclination to be selfish and unilateral. This is called 'original sin.'
- As a result of original sin, human nature is weakened and inclined to sin.
- Everyone experiences original sin.

#16 -- The Holy Spirit sets us free

- Whenever God sends Christ, he always sends the Spirit: their mission is conjoined and inseparable.
- In the fullness of time the Holy Spirit completes in Mary all the preparations for Christ's coming among the People of God.
- The Holy Spirit, whom Christ sends, builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church.
- The Church is the sacrament of the Holy Trinity's communion with us.

3 Procedures and Suggestions

We recommend you follow the order for this course laid out above.

- ✚ Use the individual Growing Faith booklet [STUDY GUIDES](#) for each session (they're free & available at [PastoralPlanning.com](#)).
 - Begin with the first step on the [STUDY GUIDE](#) and follow the outline provided to the end of that session.
 - Do not rush the learners. Allow ample time for questions and discussion. Allow the learners to explore the various exercises and topics thoroughly before moving on.
 - If necessary, spread the treatment of any one booklet over two sessions rather than running late and long. If you finish early in one particular session, simply move to refreshments and pick up next time at the beginning of the next booklet.
 - Have on hand a copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for reference. The article numbers from the *Catechism* are given on the front cover of each Growing Faith booklet.

- ✚ Make ample use of the [Exercises & Reflections](#) which are given in each booklet. Use them to guide your discussions. Remember that the goal here is not so much to create “mini-theologians” among your learners as to help increase their faith and the understanding of that faith.

- ✚ Work in a room which is [prepared for your gathering](#). Remember that your learners are exploring the mystery of faith in these sessions, not studying theology as they would in college or religion class. You may wish to have on hand sacred music, a special copy of Sacred Scripture in an honored position in the room, and symbols of the Church’s liturgy and faith tradition.

- ✚ At each gathering, begin by [Breaking Open the Word](#) from the readings of the liturgy from the previous Sunday. We provide a resource for this purpose on the web site at this link: <http://store.pastoralplanning.com/quofwerere.html>. The connection to the Sunday Liturgy is essential in order to have a thoroughly Catholic understanding of faith.

- ✚ If you have questions or need assistance, or simply wish to talk with a specialist about your mini-course, call anytime 8 AM eastern to 5 PM pacific time, Monday thru Friday at [612-220-6943](tel:612-220-6943).