

## Lesson Plan 1 – Faith and Life

**Objective** – After having explained this chapter, we should aim to achieve the following objectives–

1. Students will understand that Man’s desire to seek knowledge about creation and his relentless pursuit for truth is a gift from God, his creator.
2. They will understand that Christ was the perfection of this Divine Revelation by the Creator
3. Faith is the response of Man to this Divine Revelation.
4. Stir a desire in them to strengthen and deepen their Faith

### Starter - (10 mins)

*Story recounted by Fr Dwight Longenecker - ‘At a conference my sister met a missionary who was working with people in the jungles of Southeast Asia. The atheist government there had banned all foreigners. They had especially banned religious workers from having contact with the indigenous tribes. If trespassers were found, they were imprisoned, tried, and executed. The missionary—we’ll call him Edward—decided to live in the jungle just across the border from the country where he had been called to work. He took excursions across the border to meet with the tribal peoples he had befriended. On one trip he was caught by the government troops. They took him to a deserted village in the jungle and threw him into a well.*

*Down in the well Edward did the only thing he could do: pray. He prayed for three days, and finally he heard a voice calling him. He looked up to see a white man peering down into the well, calling his name. The man threw Edward a rope and pulled him out. He spoke with an English accent and wore a white suit and straw hat. The rescuer politely indicated the road out of the jungle, wished Edward a good day, and then strode off into the jungle himself.*

*Edward had never seen the man before, and it seemed impossible that another white man would be anywhere in the area. Was the mysterious Englishman really an angel who delivered Edward from death?’*

### Teaching Strategy (15 mins)

#### 1. Introduction to Faith -

What is the connection between seeking knowledge and Faith? Can seeking truth lead to Faith?

Give examples of scientists that were devout Christians, scientists who were priests etc., and historical figures in Bible that have set an example of complete faith and surrender in God.

## **2. Characteristics of Faith -** What is the source of these characteristics –

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- **Gift of God** – Human’s ability to know, acknowledge and experience the Son of God come from God our Father (give bible verse references). Explain how the human brain has been gifted the ability to understand and relate to supernaturalism by the Creator.
- **Human Act** – This definition of **Faith** by St Thomas Aquinas in his book ‘Summa Theologica’ can be used to elaborate this aspect  
*“an act of the intellect assenting to the Divine Truth at the command of the will moved by the grace of God.”<sup>[4]</sup> In other words, it’s an act of the intellect and of the will, as the will moves the intellect to believe. The will is moved by God.*
- **Perfects Reason** - This aspect of faith can be further emphasized using the following extract from Saint Pope John Paul II ‘s encyclical on Faith and Reason -  
*“our vision of the face of God is always fragmentary and impaired by the limits of our understanding. Faith alone makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently.”*
- **Beginning of Eternal life** – Accepting Faith without the physical and sensory evidence and starting to walk on its way is the beginning of the journey to Eternal Life.
- **A Gift to be protected daily** – Relate using the challenges to our Faith that we witness around, within our nation as well as internationally. The woke culture, extreme liberalism, dilution or abandonment of faith through inter religious marriages, culture of death (pro-choice, mercy killing) etc.

*Can elaborate using the below extract from Faith and Reason encyclical by St. John Paul II*

*“...freedom is not realized in decisions made against God. For how could it be an exercise of true freedom to refuse to be open to the very reality which enables our self-realization?”*

## **3. Themes of Faith – Holy Trinity, Catholic Church, Eternal Life**

Explain the importance of the mysteries that were revealed that form the basis of our Faith and professed through ‘The Creed’.

Following points can be highlighted –

- Biblical references of the Holy Trinity
- The universality and Apostolic nature of the Catholic Church
- How belief in Eternal life helps us to lead enriching and fulfilling lives even amidst gloom

#### **4. Levels of Faith - Church, Family, Personal, community**

Elaborate about growing and deepening of Faith at different levels. Faith in our hearts have to translate into actions that will help ourselves and others around too, to grow in Faith.

##### **Highlight the levels in the growth of Faith**

- **Church** - Listening to the word of God, receiving sacraments, participating in Holy Mass
- **Family** - Transferring this Faith to the siblings and to the next generation.
- **Personal** - Deepening the faith at a personal level through experiences, adding conviction and allowing the roots to grow deeper. Additionally, reading books by Doctors of Catholic Church, being a part of Bible study group, clarifying doubts from theology experts can help grow and strengthen our Faith.
- **Community** – Faith based lifestyle can inspire others in the community. Each one can inspire the other thus helping the entire community to grow in Faith.

Conclude by elaborating on how Faith can give direction to our lives and help us lead more fulfilling and purposeful lives

#### **Discussion (1<sup>st</sup> class )**

- What will be your stand when you are tempted to give up faith to attain your goal?
- “ It is enough you choose a religion only after you become an adult”, What is your reaction to this statement?

#### **Appropriate Habit Formation**

- To manage crisis and hopeless situations in personal and professional life
- To help your friends and family members in their days of doubt or hopelessness
- Learning and growing in Faith should be an ongoing journey. Arm yourself with knowledge about Church’s teachings by reading about Catholic Faith and reaching out to experts in case of doubts and questions.

#### **Group activity. (discussion for 2nd class)**

*If there are more than 5 - 7 students divide the group into two and ask them to discuss on the following*

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- A Christian youth after having faced a personal tragedy is on the verge of abandoning his Faith. He is leaning towards Atheism. He has few friends who have been influencing him and forwarding him website links to articles and materials on Atheism. How as a person of Faith will you convince him to return to a life of Faith.
- *Alternatively, a Debate can be conducted with one group defending Faith and another group supporting Atheism.*

## **Bible Verse: Read and learn**

Acts of Apostles 16:31