



Inquiry - Step 1

All about me and God

Aim

To explore who God is, who we are, and the relationship between the two.

Resources needed

Leaders

- *Crossroads Inquiry 1 Notes*
- *Break Open the Word*
- *Catholic Youth Bible*

For Young People

- *Crossroads Activity Book (pp 3–4) or Journal*

Prayer Focus

Expressions of our belief:

Bible - (*God is with us*)

Candle - (*The light of Christ*)

Cross - (*God so loved the world*)

Cloth - (*Appropriate to the Liturgical season*)

Liturgical Link

To develop the relationship with God, Christians spend time in prayer, both individually and gathered with others in Church. We believe that the prayers of the world church are joined as one.

Overview

- Why are we here?
- Awareness of God's love in your life
- God's plan for us
- Me and God
- Getting in touch with God
- Scripture and Reflection
- Activity to do at home
- Prayer

Preparation by Catechists

- *Familiarity with content and resources*
- *Reflect and be ready to share ways you experience God in your own life*
- *Pray for the young people and leaders*

Scripture Passages

- Psalm 86:15 You O Lord are...
- Isaiah 43:1 Called by name
- Isaiah 43:15 Do not fear
- Roman 8:38–39 Nothing can separate us
- John 3:16 God so loved the world...

Tenets of Faith (Faith Formation)

- We are all God's children
- We are all unique, individually gifted
- We can experience God in different ways in all aspects of life
- God will always love us

Gathering

Setting

Create a welcoming environment by having everything in place before the young people arrive

- a sign in sheet
- name badges for each person to collect
- spares badges in case any extras turn up.

Welcome and Introduction

- Welcome the young people by name.
- Introduce the catechists, and any others present in a supporting role.
- Provide the context for the gathering.
- Outline the process, the aim and outline of the gathering for today.

Exploring

➔ Use Crossroads Inquiry Session 1 – **All About Me and God** - material for 30–40 minutes

➔ **Optional Activities** for use, or to add if you have more time with the young people

➔ **Activity - Faith Timeline** (use as part of the introductory activity)

Give each young person a piece and invite them to create a timeline divided into sections by years from birth to the present. Ask them to write above the line note occasions when people (name them) have introduced them to a God, of any faith and below the line times and occasions when they remember being aware of God's presence in their life.

➔ **Activity - Called by name** (use after looking at the Scripture passages Isaiah 43:1 God says: 'I have called you by name, you are mine.')

- Invite the young people to reflect for about 30 seconds on what their name means to them, then ask them to share in 2's or 3's on the following questions:
 - Do you know the origin or meaning of your name?
 - Do you know why your parents chose to give that particular name to you?
 - How happy are you with your name – might you have adapted it, or chosen to use a middle name instead, if so, why is that?



Explain to the young people that names are very personal things. When people we may have only fleetingly remember our name, we feel quite special. When we are called by the wrong name; maybe that of a sibling, something not quite right, or shortened, we might get annoyed. God's love for us is so deep that God never forgets our name.

Reflection – Getting in touch with God



Use Video clip / PowerPoint with images, Inquiry Step 4 Wonders of the Natural and Modern World PowerPoint or printed images if access to technology is a problem. Have gentle background music to help.

- Invite the young people to sit with the images thinking about the wonders of creation and how through these God who has brought these things into being, can speak to us.
- Ask them to call to mind places that are special to them, places where they feel the presence of God close to them.
- Encourage them to thank God for giving them that special space.
- Ask them to think of some of the most important 'wow' moments in their life and reflect on what they reveal about God, and about themselves.



Explain to the young people that appreciation of nature helps to deepen our awareness of God around us. It also develops within us a sense of awe and wonder. There are many times in our lives when we say 'wow' or that's amazing. These are moments of recognition of the presence of God.

Activity – New Beginnings

Being called is about a new beginning. There are many times in life when we are called to have new beginnings.

- Allow the young people a minute or two for to recall times in their lives when they have made new beginnings and how you felt at these times.
- Examples could include, starting school / a first sleep over at family member or friend's house / joining a club / representing your school / becoming a student leader / moving to a new house or new school.
- Invite the young people to share their new beginnings and the feelings they experienced.



Explain to the young people that at such times we become very conscious of who we are, how others will see and treat us, we worry about if we will fit in, or will we be good enough. Some of these feelings may be the same that have surfaced in relation to taking on this journey in the Christian faith. As with all beginnings becoming a Christian will require a change to aspects of our life. When Jesus called his first disciples they were called to a new beginning.



Read Jesus calls the disciples [Matthew 4:18–22]



Explain to the young people that the story describes the call of first disciples, Peter, Andrew, James and John. To make their new beginning, they are asked to leave their jobs, homes and families to become disciples of Jesus, and they did. Imagine the sheer impact Jesus must have made on them. It could be as though your favourite sports player, musician or movie star had asked you to go and be part of their team – you might be excited at the prospect, but would you really go with them? Yet we are told the disciples responded, 'at once.' No hesitation on their part!

This journey into the Catholic faith does not require such a radical response. However, it will require us to leave some things behind, just as the disciples did. Reflect for a moment on what some of those things might be for you? Invite the young people to note these in their journal.

Prayer

To become a disciple, we need to come to know Jesus, and God the Father. We come to know God through the life of Jesus. Jesus taught us that we come to know God through prayer and as with any other relationship, time is needed for us to deepen this relationship. This journey allows that time, enabling the relationship to grow, as we take the time communicating with God, or simply allowing ourselves to be in God's presence.

One of the disciples asked Jesus, 'Lord teach us how to pray.' Later in the journey we will discover how Jesus did that. For you at present the idea of praying or communication with God might seem quite daunting. The question posed by the disciple shows how unsure they too were about the best way to pray. Today we don't want to worry too much about that, but simply to invite you to be in God's presence and join together in offering a short prayer.

Invite the group to sit straight with feet flat on the floor and hands on their lap, then to close their eyes and let their breathing settle. Encourage the young people to quietly say 'Here I am God,' and to trust that God is present and will hear the prayer we will offer. After a few moments of silence invite the young people to pray.

Together slowly and gently, we offer this prayer to God.

Dear God,
 I'd like to talk to you,
 but I'm not sure I have the right words.
 I'd like to listen to you,
 but I'm not sure what you sound like.
 I'd like to come to know you better,
 but I'm not sure if I would recognise you.

Please open my eyes,
 my ears and my heart,
 to be open to whatever it is
 you want me to know of you.

Be with me God,
 as I begin this journey of prayer.
 Amen

From Discovering Prayer Catholic Enquiry Centre, Australia

Conclusion

- Invite the young people to reflect on how they felt before, during or after the prayer. A few words to describe these feelings can be added to the workbook / journal.

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