



Come & See

Step 1

Journey into Mystery Reflection: *Tribal Initiation into Womanhood*

Each of us has both feminine and masculine qualities. While most initiation stories focus on the journey into manhood, this story helps us to reflect on some of the feminine qualities of this important transition phase.

An initiation rite practiced by an ancient tribe involved the three reflective stages which help identify the important elements of life. Today we too will take part in this reflection.

At an age or stage of life determined by the tribe a daughter would approach her mother and ask, “Mother, what is the first secret of life and faith?”

In response the mother would offer her daughter a bag, asking her to put in her hand and feel the contents.

Having done so the girl would state, “mother, this is just soil.”

To enlighten her, the mother would explain though soil \ may seem very ordinary, yet is very important, then say, “Each time you see or touch soil, remember that it covers the ground everywhere, and from this ordinary, seemingly insignificant soil springs the most beautiful creations. Always remember that the secret of life and faith is found in the very ordinary events of our lives; the people we encounter daily and the beauty of nature around us. At times when they impact on our lives we may recognise some as extraordinary, but in the general circle of nature and life, like the birth of a baby, they are ordinary.”

The daughter would then be asked to go away and reflect on the ordinary, everyday events, that make up her life. We are invited to do the same.

- *Time to reflect*

Later, returning to her mother, the girl would ask, “Mother what is the second secret of life and faith?” Again, the daughter is asked to feel inside a bag. Doing so she looks puzzled and asks, “what is it?”

The mother explains the item is an umbilical cord; a reminder that the two were once joined by such a cord, and in the future she too might experience the joy of being joined to her own child by such a cord. The cord symbolises the importance of relationships; who we are, how we relate to and treat others is the second secret of life and faith.

The daughter would then be asked to go away and reflect on the important relationship in her life.

We are invited to do the same.

- *Time to reflect*

On returning to her mother the girl would again ask “Mother what is the third and final secret of life and faith?”

This time on being handed a bag the girl will be asked to hold, but not to open it. Her mother will explain that this bag is reminder that life and faith will always be full of mystery, surprise and wonder. No matter how carefully we may plan, we can never be sure of what lies ahead. Therefore, we must always be ready for surprises in life.

The daughter would then be asked to go away and reflect on the element of mystery, surprise and wonder already experienced in her life. We are invited to do the same.

- *Time to reflect*

*Adapted from Come and See Resources for the Precatechumenate, Fr Elio Capra SDB,
Melbourne Archdiocese 2004.*