



PART 2

Four Important Conversations

*“Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their
children, and their children another generation.”*

—Joel 1:3

YOUR CHILD'S CHOSEN JOURNEY

Throughout *Chosen*, the three phases of the catechumenate (sacramental preparation) follow John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.'" In *Chosen*, we discover that Jesus is ...

— ***The Way***

(pre-catechumenate, or discovering the Faith)

— ***The Truth***

(catechumenate, or learning the Faith)

— ***The Life***

(purification and enlightenment, or living the Faith)

Following Confirmation is the fourth phase, *mystagogy*, when the newly initiated Christian is immersed in the life of Christian community. After Confirmation, encourage your child to seek out and get involved in parish-based activities (like a youth group) to continue his or her spiritual journey.

Corresponding to these three phases of Confirmation preparation (the Way, the Truth, and the Life) and the mystagogy phase are four important conversations that you will have with your son or daughter.

SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD

Talking about the Faith as a family can have a lasting impact on young people's continued practice of the Faith. Faith conversations are a missing ingredient in many Catholic homes. This guide will help you to reflect and prepare for targeted conversations that complement the program sessions. Some conversations may occur at parish-sponsored sessions, and others will be yours to initiate.

For each of the four conversations we provide these steps:

- **Prepare:** This short reflection corresponds to the program themes and topics so that you can engage with your child's journey. You may find these themes also speaking to your own faith life. Perhaps as your child grows in faith, you too will find yourself drawing closer to Christ and his Church.
- **Pray:** A short prayer and Scripture passage will help you reflect and prepare spiritually before your conversations with your child.
- **Discuss:** The "Conversation Starters" are launching pads for fruitful discussion between you and your child. Beforehand, set aside time to prepare your own thoughts. This can help the conversation feel more natural than reading verbatim from the book. You can discuss all three conversation starters in one longer conversation or use them one at a time. Your goal is to draw out your teen's thoughts and feelings about the preparation journey as well as to share your own faith. Listen carefully and ask follow-up questions.

If you are stumped by a question and need help finding the answer, consult the *Catechism* or ask your parish priest. Some other great resources are also listed at the end of this guide.

CONVERSATION

“THE WAY”

On the Road to Discovering Christ

**The journey begins with lessons devoted
to each of the following questions:**

- » Why am I here?
- » What makes me happy?
- » What’s your story, God?
- » How do I know God is real?
 - » Who is Jesus?
 - » Why be Catholic?

PREPARE

What do you want?

What a potentially awkward question! What if this question was not merely about your immediate desires, but about your deepest, most private longings?

In John's Gospel, Jesus' very first words to his future disciples are "What do you seek?" (John 1:38). These fishermen working on the seashore don't know how to respond. So they ask, "Rabbi ... where are you staying?" Jesus replies, "Come and see" (John 1:38-39).

The disciples do not know how to express the longing of their hearts. Like us, they struggle to identify the source of their restlessness. Like us, they are not seeking something but someone.

Both you and your child are being called to encounter the answer to "What do you seek?" This first phase will address barriers to belief and then introduce the Gospel message. Your child is invited to "come and see" how Christ, through his Church, satisfies our deepest longing.

You can help by supporting and encouraging your child's relationship with his or her sponsor, who serves as a spiritual mentor. You should also share your own experience of being Catholic, searching for happiness, and seeking God; personal testimony is one of the most effective paths to genuine dialogue.

PRAY

Jesus, sometimes my heart is restless, distracted by worldly desires and cares. When I pursue things contrary to your will, I feel unsatisfied. I am restless because I have not turned to you wholeheartedly. Help me to know that you are the source and fulfillment of my desires and the healer of my brokenness. Empower me, Jesus, to be a living witness to you, especially with my child during this important journey toward Confirmation. May my heart, fully united with you, be a beacon of your love to everyone in my life. Amen.

“Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, ‘What do you seek?’”

– John 1:38

DISCUSS

Conversation Starter 1

Share: What are your dreams and desires for your child? Take this opportunity to express how much you love your child and your hopes for this journey toward Confirmation.

Ask: What are your hopes and desires? What makes you happiest right now? What are you looking forward to right now? What hopes do you have for this year? What hopes do you have for the next five years?

Conversation Starter 2

Share: Share about your own belief in God, experience of Faith, and moments that have shaped your faith.

Ask: What are your honest thoughts about God, the Catholic Faith, and being confirmed? Make a deep effort to listen instead of immediately reacting.

Conversation Starter 3

Share: Share why you are Catholic and what you appreciate about being Catholic.

Ask: How do you feel about being Catholic? What are your biggest questions or doubts? Do not feel pressured to answer immediately, but assure your child that you will help and will find answers together.

CONVERSATION

“THE TRUTH”

Encountering the Light of Christ

The journey continues with lessons devoted to each of the following questions:

- » Where am I going?
- » How do I get there?
- » When did my journey begin?
- » Why tell my sins to a priest?
- » How does God help when it hurts?
- » Who is the Holy Spirit?
- » What does the Holy Spirit do for me?
 - » Why have I been *chosen*?
 - » Why do I have to go to Mass?
 - » What does it mean to say, ‘I do’?
 - » Who’s calling?

PREPARE

Before he sentenced Jesus to death, Pilate asked, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). Little did Pilate realize that the fullness of truth was standing before him.

This phase begins with questions of eternity—the ultimate goal of the Christian life. Our “endgame” is heaven. Reflecting on eternity gives us a new vision of our everyday world, because the reality of heaven changes everything. Jesus clearly taught that *he alone* is the source of salvation (see John 14:6). But how do we receive the eternal life he has won for us?

According to Jesus, the path of salvation is through the Church. This *doesn’t* mean that only Catholics can be saved. It means that Jesus has tied his saving work to the Church he founded (see CCC 846).

Jesus promised that the “gates of hell” will never prevail against his Church, and he gave his apostles the authority to govern it (see Matthew 16:18-19), which they passed on to the bishops. Jesus commanded the apostles to baptize and preach the Gospel, thus establishing the sacraments (see Matthew 28:19). Our most profound encounters with God are in these outward signs of spiritual realities given by Jesus himself.

The sacraments, including Confirmation, give us grace (see CCC 1131). Sacraments are not merely rites of passage. They transform us through real encounters with Jesus. Exploring the power of the sacraments with your child can have a profound impact—as can your example of praying and participating in the sacramental life of the Church.

PRAY

Jesus, you are not merely the teacher of truth. You are the Truth that brings order to everything. Help me experience the Church as a sanctuary of truth in an ever-changing world. Through the Holy Spirit, give me courage to speak and live the truth in love, even when it is difficult. Help me grow in love and knowledge. Amen.

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.’”

—John 14:6

DISCUSS

Conversation Starter 1

Share: This section addresses big questions about life after death. Share your own experiences with death and thoughts about heaven and hell. This is a heavy topic, but your child may have questions about eternity, especially if they know family members, such as grandparents, who have died.

Ask: What are your memories and thoughts about death, heaven, and hell? How does healthy reflection on death help us to live our Faith more fully?

Conversation Starter 2

Share: Share your personal experience of Confession. Consider going to Confession before this conversation, even if it has been a long time. Share how repentance, forgiveness, and mercy have been a part of your own life, especially in connection with Confession. Seeing your own need for God's mercy and forgiveness is a powerful witness.

Ask: How do you feel about Confession? What has your Confession experience been? Offer to go to Confession with your child, then watch for growth. Affirm your child when you see God's grace evident.

Conversation Starter 3

Share: Talk about your family's Mass habits. If weekly Sunday Mass isn't a habit, discuss a plan for change. If weekly Mass is a habit but you find it dry or are distracted, make a plan for better engagement (such as previewing the Mass readings beforehand or arriving early to get focused).

Ask: How is Mass for you? Which parts are most meaningful to you? Which parts do you not understand? What is your favorite place and time to go to Mass?