



## iBelieve Session 9. Our faith in action



### **Song – Taize: El senyor (In the Lord)**

In the Lord, I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice!  
God, do not be afraid,  
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near  
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

### **Scripture – Mark 12:28-31**

Love the Lord God with all your heart, with all your soul,  
with all your mind, and all your strength... Love your  
neighbour as you love yourself.

### **Prayer – Blessing**

**by Joy Cowley, *Psalms Down Under***

Enfold us.  
May the wisdom of God uphold us.  
May the fragrance of God be around us.  
May the brightness of God surround us.  
May the wonder of God renew us.  
May the loving of God flow through us.  
May the peace of God deeply move us.  
May the moving of God bring us peace.  
Amen.

## Activity

### Activity 1

Ask the group: As a quick refresher, what are the key elements of the Creed? What are the things that are important to us as Catholics that are not in the Creed? Answers should include celebration of the Sacraments, Mass, the Pope etc. So, what does it mean for us to be Catholic and to believe in the teachings of the Creed?

In small groups, come up with as many ideas as possible to go alongside the Creed which describe the behaviours that identify us as Catholics. Think about ways we pray, worship, act towards each other, or any other ways of expressing our faith. You may want to award points or prizes for the least obvious or most creative answers, but you may have to push the young people to justify their suggestions. If they need help, use the scripture passage as a starting point.

Get the groups to bring all their answers together. If there are any significant areas that the group miss out, guide the group to identify them until you are confident that it represents some of the breadth and depth of what it means for us to live our Catholic faith. This session does not need to be encyclopaedic, so gauge how far you push it to the level of the group. If the group needs a little prompting, try sharing this quote and asking them what they think it means: "Speak about Christ only when you are asked. But live so that people ask you about Christ!" *Paul Claudel (1868-1955, French poet and writer)*

### Activity 2

For this you will need a data projector and either a laptop and speakers, or a tv/dvd player so that you can play clips from the movie *Pay It Forward*. If these resources are unavailable, you can just explain the clip using the outline below – the impact is lessened, but the message will still get through.

The clip: *Pay It Forward* is a film starring Kevin Spacey as a teacher who sets his students a task; they must come up with an idea that will change the world. One of his students, Kevin, suggests that people should do kind things for one another, and that instead of paying the favour back, they should *pay it forward*. In other words, they should do something nice for three other people in return, then those people pay it forward and it multiplies. Kevin attaches conditions. Firstly, the favour must be significant, and secondly, they must be things people could not have done for themselves.

The clip you need to show is actually two separate bits of the movie. Firstly, the part where the teacher sets the students the task, and secondly, where Kevin explains his *pay it forward* idea. It is recommended that you watch the whole movie yourself beforehand, so that you can fully explain anything, and so that you can be sure of the timing of the clips you want to use.

#### *Pay It Forward* exercise

Introduce the clips to your group, and watch them together. Afterwards, ask questions to help reinforce the message of the clips and make sure everyone understands the key ideas.

Explain that in small groups, they are going to be set the same challenges as the students in the film: they have to come up with an idea that will change the world. The idea should be something that will make a difference, and crucially, enable them to put their faith into action. It should be simple and achievable. Explain that at this stage, they won't necessarily be actually implementing the idea, but it may be something you wish to follow up if any of the ideas are suitable.

Give them 15-20 minutes in groups to complete the task, giving help where necessary. Get each group to feed back their ideas to the other groups.

Debrief: Highlight any similarities in theme or action covered in the ideas. Ask the groups what were the key aspects of their faith that they wanted to put into action, and where possible, draw links to the Creed. See if any of the ideas are doable, and if the group want to pursue the project – if so, help them to come up with a plan.

Finish the session by bringing the conversation back to God, as our beginning and end. Invite your group to explain what they think the Pope meant when he said this: "What we believe is important, but even more important is the One in whom we believe." *Pope Benedict XVI, May 28, 2006*

**Adapt it:** Hold a movie night for your youth group, or for your parish as a whole, showing *Pay It Forward* or another appropriate movie. You could use it as a chance to draw more people into your group, or as a fundraising event, or as a way to connect the different generations/communities within your parish.

## Tool | Journaling

Journaling is a process and skill that helps us reflect and pray. It can be really helpful to take time to reflect and pray if we're busy trying to put our faith into action.

Journaling is all about expressing yourself. It helps us reflect on how the external experiences are connected to our inner journey and honours all the moments we recognise as precious. There are no rules, so you can draw and write in any way, language or style you feel comfortable with at the time.

If it seems difficult, just put pen to paper without thinking too much, and see what comes.

You can use questions to initiate your reflection. When asking a reflection question, be as simple as possible. After you have given your initial answer, it is often helpful to ask yourself the question a second and third time to encourage deeper reflection. Remember it is a tool for reflection; the purpose is not finding an answer to the question, but entering the reflection process.

### Example Reflection Questions:

1. This week, when have you felt confident and in touch with your strengths?
2. What holds you back from being present to the people and situations in your life journey?
3. What feeling was hard to feel today? Why?
4. What have you learned about yourself today? How?
5. Where have you experienced God today?