

# Young Apprentices

A RESOURCE FOR THE OCIA

## INQUIRY SESSION: FAITH

### Inquiry Session (*Approximately 60 minutes*)

#### *Prepare*

Gather supplies needed for the session: a flip chart or whiteboard and markers; drawing paper for each child; and crayons, pencils, or pens.

Set the space with chairs in a circle and in the center place a candle and a Bible. (Mark the Scripture citations noted in participant materials.)

If needed, have name tags. Have some refreshments available.

#### *Gather (10–15 minutes)*

1. Greet the children as they arrive. Invite each child to share his or her name and something good that happened since the last time the group gathered.

Take time to find out how the children are doing.

Ask whether they had an experience of prayer or church since the last session.

2. Read together the **My Story** section of the participant page, then as a group create a list of all the people who make life better for us. Write the list on the flip chart or whiteboard for all to see.

3. Give each child a piece of paper and crayons, pencils, or pens, and invite them to draw or write the names of some of their friends.

Invite volunteers to share their drawings or some of the names they wrote on their paper.

4. Give one or two examples of qualities you look for in a friend.

Invite volunteers to share the qualities they look for in a friend.

5. Talk about ways to be a friend to each other and to friends at school, in our neighborhoods, and in other groups to which we belong.

Finally, work with the children to develop a list of ten ways to make and to keep friends. Write the list on a flip chart or whiteboard.

6. Summarize the key points of the discussion.

#### *Expand (15–20 minutes)*

1. Read and discuss the **God's Story** section of the participant handout.
2. Highlight the following discussion points:
  - Trust is a very important quality of friendship.
  - One way to think about faith is as a friendship. Faith is the friendship each of us has with God and with Jesus.
  - We put our trust in Jesus. Jesus teaches us about God's love for us.
  - Jesus shows us how to be a good friend by how he lived.
3. Read aloud each of the Scripture passages listed below.
 

**John 6:43-47**  
(Listen to and learn from the Father)

**John 15:11-14** (Love one another)

**1 John 4:14-15** (Jesus is the Son of God)
4. After reading each Scripture passage, invite the children to respond to the following or similar questions:
 

*What do you hear in the passage?*

*What does this passage tell us about Jesus? About God? About faith?*

## Our Response (15–20 minutes)

1. After discussing the three Scripture passages, invite the children to respond to the following questions:
  - What does it mean to place our faith—our trust—in Jesus?
  - In what ways can we grow in our friendship with Jesus?
  - Do you have any questions about our friendship with Jesus?
2. Read together the questions found in the **Our Response** section of the participant handout.
3. Lead the children in a guided meditation using these or similar words:
 

*Close your eyes. Imagine that Jesus is sitting next to you. He asks you to tell him about the people who love you—your family, your friends, people who help you. . . . You tell Jesus each one's name and something you like about each one. . . . Jesus tells you that you are his friend and he wants you to be happy.*

Allow some time for the children to speak to Jesus in the silence of their hearts.

When they seem ready, invite the children to open their eyes.
4. Invite the children to name people they know who give witness to the Gospel. Encourage them to listen to the story of one such person.
  - Refer to the participant page, or tell in your own words the story of Saint Francis of Assisi. Highlight the fact that he chose to live a life of faith in Jesus Christ, just as they are choosing to do.

- If time allows, invite the children to think about the faith life and witness of another Francis, Pope Francis. Ask them to name ways Pope Francis helps others to grow in faith. (*Answers will vary. If needed, be prepared to share some responses of your own.*)

5. Point out the **Faith Words** section of the participant page. Review the faith words with the children.

## Pray (2–3 minutes)

Invite the children to stand for prayer. If need be, take time with them to review how to pray the Sign of the Cross. After a moment of silence, begin by praying together the Sign of the Cross. Then offer the prayer, ending by again praying together the Sign of the Cross.

*Good and gracious God,  
thank you for the gift  
of your Son, Jesus.*

*Help us to grow  
in our friendship with Jesus.*

*Open our minds and hearts  
to be better listeners to Jesus' Word  
and to follow his example.*

*Amen.*