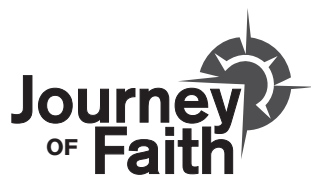


My *Journal* of Faith

A COMPANION
FOR OCIA

FR. PAUL COURY, CSSR



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First edition

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"A concerted effort is needed to look into our hearts in order to see the shadows and wounds that mark us, and then to have the courage to abandon our masks and cultivate an intimate friendship with Christ. In this way, we will allow ourselves to be transformed by the life of the gospel and become authentic missionary disciples."

POPE LEO XIV, JULY 25, 2025

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INQUIRY





Becoming a Disciple

Listen with your heart as you read these words of Jesus:

"[Jesus] said to them, 'Come, and you will see.' So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about four in the afternoon." — John 1:39

"Come after me." — Matthew 4:19

"Follow me." — Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22

Let your mind and imagination rest in these words. Then, ask yourself:

- What do these words mean to me?
- What does it mean for me to be called at this time to follow Jesus and to become his disciple?

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TO BEGIN ⇨

- Find a quiet place and become still.
- You might wish to play some soft, gentle music to help you enter this time of quiet.
- Once you have entered into stillness, open your mind, heart, and spirit to Jesus.
- Say to Jesus, "I am here, Lord. Please speak to me."

..... TO CONTINUE ⇨

- When you are ready, write down your reflections in response to the prompts or the questions in your lesson. Feel free to use pens, pencils, or markers to doodle and draw around your words.
- Read over what you have written, then pause and sit in stillness, asking Jesus to speak to you.
- After your quiet time, record any further thoughts.
- End by writing a closing prayer.

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My Faith

Take a quiet moment to pray with these words about faith:

"Through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus." — Galatians 3:26

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God."
— Ephesians 2:8

"Jesus said... 'Everything is possible to one who has faith.' Then the boy's father cried out, 'I do believe, help my unbelief!'" — Mark 9:23–24

Let your mind and imagination rest in these words. Then, ask yourself:

- When I sit with these words, what do they say to me?
- What does it really mean for me, personally, to live with faith?
- What do I hold onto so deeply that it becomes more important than anything else in my life?

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CATECHUMENATE





Called to Go Deeper

Let these passages speak to you personally. Read them slowly, perhaps more than once, and listen for the word or phrase that most touches your heart today.

"[The LORD said,] 'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine.'"
— Isaiah 43:1

"As [John] watched Jesus walk by, he said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God.' The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (which translated means Teacher), 'where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come, and you will see.' So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day. It was about four in the afternoon." — John 1:36–39

"[Jesus] saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, 'Follow me.' And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him." — Luke 5:27–28

"Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wishes to come after me, must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.'" — Matthew 16:24

Consider your own journey to this point and ask yourself:

- Now that I am on this journey, is there anything I could let go of to better follow Christ?
- What about this process so far has brought me to a deeper faith and a more intimate connection to Jesus?
- Who has been a companion to me on this road? Take a moment to thank God for them.

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

ENLIGHTENMENT





Called to Follow Jesus

As you read the following passages, place yourself in these gospel scenes. Watch the way people respond when Jesus calls them. Take time to listen for how Jesus is also speaking to you, inviting you to trust him more deeply and to follow wherever he leads.

"When Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side. A scribe approached and said to him, 'Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.' Jesus answered him, 'Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head.' Another of [his] disciples said to him, 'Lord, let me go first and bury my father.' But Jesus answered him, 'Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.'" — Matthew 8:18–22

"When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, 'Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.' For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him and all those with him, and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners of Simon. Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.' When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him." — Luke 5:8–11

"After this [Jesus] went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the customs post. He said to him, 'Follow me.' And leaving everything behind, he got up and followed him." — Luke 5: 27–28

Let your journaling be a conversation with Jesus about how you first heard his call and how you are trying to say "yes" today.

- When did I first sense a call to enter the Catholic Church? Where was I, and did someone invite or accompany me?
- What has been difficult about this journey so far? How have I responded to those difficulties—with trust, resistance, fear, hope?
- In this moment of my life, what is Jesus "electing" or calling me to do or become as I follow him more closely?

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MYSTAGOGY



Journal Reflection



Living Your Baptism Daily

Take a few quiet moments and place yourself with Peter, James, and John on the mountain. Ask Jesus to show you how his glory, his call to faith, and his gift of grace are at work in your ordinary life day by day.

"After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, 'Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.' When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Rise, and do not be afraid.' And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone. As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, 'Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'"
— Matthew 17:1–9

"Faith is faith precisely because we do not know, yet we still believe. Recall Jesus' words to Thomas after the resurrection: 'Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed' (John 20:29)." — M1 lesson

"Anything that draws us closer to God and helps us live out our calling, anything that keeps us close to God...that's grace." — M1 lesson

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- After your quiet time, record any further thoughts.
- End by writing a closing prayer.

Write about your own journey and how your faith has unfolded over time.

- There have been many conversions described in the New Testament: St. Peter, St. Paul, the woman at the well, the man born blind, and others. Have I had a conversion moment? Was it dramatic or a quiet realization?
- How would I describe my experience of the Easter Vigil and my baptism? What did I feel, see, hear, and sense God doing in me?
- Conversion is a lifelong project. What do I need in order to persevere—practices, people, or supports? Can I name some areas of the Catholic faith I want to learn more about as I continue this journey?

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fr. Paul J. Coury, CSsR, a priest since his ordination in 1972, has ministered as a teacher, retreat director, formation director, and theological editor at Liguori Publications. He lives in Tucson, Arizona.

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