

This prayer service is best after chapter 5 in the book *Our Catholic Faith*.

**Prayer Service:  
“I Believe, Help My Unbelief”**

**Needs:**

- a decorated prayer table with the Bible
- Assign the readings to readers in advance.
- Each student should have a prayer journal or paper on which to write reflections.
- soft music for the time of reflection

**Prayer Introduction**

Part One of our text is titled “We Believe,” and we spent the first chapters of the book examining a summary of our Catholic beliefs as found in the Apostles’ Creed. When we pray the creed, we proclaim, “I believe.” If we are honest with ourselves, few of us have rock-solid faith in God all of the time, and none of us operate on the same level of faith at the same time. This happens for any number of reasons, and yet we pray the creed for and with each other because we know that belief is a gift. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, “Faith is a supernatural gift from God. In order to believe, man needs the interior helps of the Holy Spirit” (no. 159). Today let us ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen our faith, so that with the man in the Gospel of Mark, we can proclaim, “I believe, help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24).

**Opening Prayer**

Come, Holy Spirit,  
With your wisdom guide us  
to acknowledge in gratitude where our faith is strong  
and to ask for your assistance where it is weak.  
We need your guidance today  
to be the Church you have called us to be.  
Amen.

**Leader:** Let us thank the Holy Spirit for the times when our faith is strong, as was the faith of the woman in this story from the Gospel of Matthew:

**Reader 1: Mathew 9:18-26**

*Your faith has healed you.*

**Leader:** Let us ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen our faith when our faith requires support, as did the faith of Thomas in this reading:

**Reader 2: John 20:24-29**

*Have you believed because you have seen me?*

**Leader:** Let us ask the Holy Spirit to restore our faith when our faith is weakest, as was evident among the people of Nazareth in this story from the Gospel of Matthew:

### **Reader 3: Matthew 13:54-58**

*He did not work mighty deeds there because of their lack of faith.*

#### **Reflection/Journaling**

**Leader:** At this time in your life, what is your level of faith in God, in Jesus, in the Holy Spirit, in the Church? Is it strong that like of the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment, is it doubtful and in need of proof like Thomas's, or is your faith struggling like that of the Nazarenes? Spend some time now honestly reflecting on your own faith or lack of faith. Write about it, especially what has worked to strengthen or weaken your faith. Then, speak directly to the Holy Spirit about your faith, asking guidance or offering thanks.

*Soft music plays during reflection time (10 minutes).*

#### **Faith Response/Closing Prayer**

**Leader:** Acknowledging our struggles to be people of faith, let us pray the Apostles' Creed. Your response to each question is, "I believe; help my unbelief."

**Leader:** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe that Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried, descended into hell and on the third day rose again?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe that Jesus ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe in the holy catholic Church?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe in the forgiveness of sins?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe in the resurrection of the body?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

**Leader:** Do you believe in life everlasting?

**All: I believe; help my unbelief.**

Leader: Holy Spirit, continue to guide us always.

**All: Amen.**