

THE INSTITUTE FOR PRIESTLY FORMATION

The Inner Heart of My Faith

INSTRUCTIONS

Take a moment to look over the worksheet. After you have examined it, refer to these instructions for an explanation of the categories found at the top of the worksheet.

To fill out the worksheet ***use a word, phrase, or brief sentence***, which expresses your thoughts and feelings. It is not necessary to fill out the columns in great detail. If you are unable to complete certain segments, just leave them blank. Remember you are doing the exercise for yourself and to facilitate a spiritual conversation with a spiritual director. The enclosed handout entitled "Vocabulary of Feelings" can be helpful as you try to name your thoughts and feelings.

After you have finished your work with the chart, spend some time thinking about your life as a whole. Try to feel its movement and its flow, its continuities and discontinuities, its desolations and consolations. As you look at the worksheet, let yourself imagine your life as a drama or a play. Where would the division of it naturally fall? If you were to divide it into chapters or episodes, how would these be titled?

Please complete first 3 columns then return it to the IPF office. DO NOT write in the shaded columns.

#1 Chronology: Starting at the left column of the worksheet, number down the column in three-year intervals from the year of your birth to the present year.

#2 Basic Philosophy of Life and Key Relationships: Provide a basic description of how you looked at your life experience. Key relationships can be any relationship that you feel had a significant impact on your life at the time. The persons mentioned need not be living now, and you need not have known them personally. (That is, they could be a person who influenced you through your reading and hearing about them, etc.)

#3 Major Experiences of Gratitude and Thanksgiving: What living memories of persons, objects, institutions, events, etc. recall experiences of special gratitude and thanksgiving? Describe simply these heartfelt experiences.

#4 Major Experiences of Sorrow: What living memories of persons, objects institutions, events etc. recall experiences of real sorrow? Describe simply these heartfelt experiences.

The following portion of the table will be completed during the first days of the summer program.

#5 Major Experiences of Anxiety and Fear: Refer to #3 and #4 above.

#6 Major Experiences of Joy and Love: Refer to #3 and #4 above.

#7 Image of Self: Here you can record how you thought and felt about yourself in the environments in which you lived, played, worked, etc. It may be helpful to describe how you spent your time and/or what you thought you were doing at the time.

#8 Icon of God: This is an invitation for you to record in a phrase or two what your thoughts or images of God were (positive or negative) at different times in your life. If you had no image of God or cannot remember one, answer appropriately.

#9 Heartfelt Revelations, Healings, Teachings: Here mention any pertinent learning that dawned for you and which significantly affected your growth in faith. Healings should be understood as any experience that significantly enlarged your heart's capacity to receive and to give love.

Once completed, this is what James Fowler calls an "unfolding tapestry of life." With permission, IPF adapted his reflection instrument to illuminate interior affections active in human experience. Reflection on this experience helps a person become aware of how God's Spirit is active in his life. In the coming days or months you may want to return to this, "The Inner Heart of My Faith," for deepening reflection or to add things that may come up to you later. Some people find that this exercise is a good beginning for keeping a regular spiritual journal or diary. If you come back to this exercise after some time has passed, you may find that the chapters and titles in your life of faith will be different as you look at them in the light of new experiences.

The Institute for Priestly Formation
The Inner Heart of My Faith
worksheet

Name: _____

Complete the first 3 columns then return with your application. DO NOT write in shaded columns.

Chronology	<i>Basic Philosophy of Life and Key Relationships</i>	<i>Major Experiences of Gratitude and Thanksgiving</i>	<i>Major Experiences of Sorrow</i>	Major Experiences of Anxiety and Fear	Major Experiences of Joy and Love	Image of Self	Icon of God	Heartfelt Revelations, Healings, Teachings
Birth - 3 years								
4-7 year								
8-11 years								
12-15 years								
16-18 years								
19-21 years								
22-25 years								

The Vocabulary of Feelings

Levels of Intensity	Happy	Caring	Depressed	Inadequate	Fearful	Confused	Hurt	Angry	Lonely	Guilt-Shame
STRONG	thrilled on cloud nine ecstatic overjoyed excited elated sensational exhilarated fantastic terrific on top of the world turned on euphoric enthusiastic delighted marvelous great	Tenderness toward affection for captivated by attached to devoted to adoration loving infatuated enamored cherish idolize worship	desolate dejected hopeless alienated depressed gloomy dismal bleak in despair empty barren grieved grief despair grim	worthless good for nothing washed up powerless helpless impotent crippled inferior emasculated useless finished like a failure	terrified frightened intimidated horrified desperate panicky terror-stricken stage fright dread vulnerable paralyzed	bewildered puzzled baffled perplexed trapped confounded in a dilemma befuddled in a quandary full of questions confused	crushed destroyed ruined degraded pain(ed) wounded devastated tortured disgraced humiliated anguished at the mercy of forsaken rejected discarded	furious enraged seething outraged infuriated burned up pissed off fighting mad nauseated violent indignant hatred bitter galled vengeful hateful vicious	isolated abandoned all alone forsaken cut off	sick at heart unforgivable humiliated disgraced degraded horrible mortified exposed
MODERATE	cheerful light-hearted happy serene wonderful up aglow glowing in high spirits jovial riding high elevated neat	caring fond of regard respectful admiration concern for hold dear prize taken with turned on trust close	distressed upset downcast sorrowful demoralized discouraged miserable pessimistic fearful deficient weepy rotten awful horrible terrible blue lost melancholy	inadequate whipped defeated incompetent inept overwhelmed ineffective lacking deficient unable incapable small insignificant like Casper unfit unimportant incomplete no good immobilized	afraid scared fearful apprehensive jumpy shaky threatened distrustful risky alarmed butterflies awkward defensive	mixed-up disorganized foggy troubled adrift lost at loose ends going around in circles disconcerted frustrated flustered in a bind ambivalent disturbed helpless embroiled	hurt belittled shot down overlooked abused depreciated criticized defamed censured discredited disparaged laughed at maligned mistreated ridiculed devalued scorned mocked scoffed at used exploited debased slammed slandered impugned cheapened	resentful irritated hostile annoyed upset with agitated mad aggravated offended antagonistic exasperated belligerent mean vexed spiteful vindictive	lonely alienated estranged remote alone apart from others insulated from others	ashamed guilty remorseful crummy to blame lost face demeaned
MILD	glad good contented satisfied gratified pleasant pleased fine	warm toward friendly like positive toward	unhappy down low bad blah disappointed sad glum	lacking confidence unsure of yourself uncertain weak inefficient	nervous anxious unsure hesitant timid shy worried uneasy bashful embarrassed ill at ease doubtful jittery on edge uncomfortable	uncertain unsure bothered uncomfortable undecided	put down neglected overlooked minimized let down unappreciated taken for granted	uptight disgusted bugged turned off put out miffed irked perturbed ticked off fed up teed off chagrined cross dismayed impatiant	left out excluded lonesome distant aloof	regretful wrong embarrassed at fault in error responsible for blew it goofed lament