

STAGES OF CONVERSION & DISCIPLESHIP

Relationship with God and His Church is a life-long journey. Hopefully, you have learned by now that God loves you totally and completely. It doesn't matter where you are on your journey, He loves you just the same. However, in order for us to live life according to the plan He has in store for us, it is important for us to make steps everyday toward holiness. Often in the spiritual life, if you are not moving forward, you are moving backward. All growth in the Christian life is done through God's grace which we accept with our free will.

Below are the different stages that you might find yourself on this journey. It is very likely that you may not fit a description completely but find yourself in multiple stages. This is only a tool to help you pray and discover where you are and make specific commitments to grow towards the next stage in your relationship with God.

POINT OF CONVERSION

I MAY BE IN THIS STAGE IF:

Faith and spiritual growth is not a main priority in my life.
I do not incorporate Mass and other church activities into my weekly schedule.

I MAY BE IN THIS STAGE IF:

I try to participate in other church opportunities when my schedule allows.
I consistently attend Mass on Sundays.

I MAY BE IN THIS STAGE IF:

I have a lot of questions about the faith and I seek out the answers.
I am an active participant in the Church both on Sundays and other church associated activities.

I MAY BE IN THIS STAGE IF:

I have accepted Jesus Christ as my savior and choose to make him the center of my life.
I understand that I need God in my life and I am striving to avoid sin.

I MAY BE IN THIS STAGE IF:

I am focused on keeping God at the center of my life by developing the habits of a disciple.
I am striving to live a moral life and regularly go to confession to overcome sin.

I MAY BE IN THIS STAGE IF:

I have decided to take part in the mission of the Church by sharing my faith and serving others in need of hope and healing.
I am consistent in the habits of a disciple – prayer and sacraments.

I MAY BE IN THIS STAGE IF:

I am currently mentoring others in the habits of a disciple and teaching them to do the same (spiritually multiplying).
Prayer and the mission of the Church are the biggest priorities in my life.

DISENGAGED

PARTICIPANT

SEEKER

INTENTIONAL DISCIPLE

GROWING DISCIPLE

MISSIONARY DISCIPLE

SPIRITUAL MULTIPLIER

WAYS TO ENCOUNTER JESUS:

If not already attending Sunday Mass, make a plan to go every week.
Find opportunities at the Church that might fit your personal interests.
If there are others in the community that you connect with, reach out and build upon that relationship.

WAYS TO CULTIVATE OPENNESS AND SPARK CURIOSITY:

Make a list of questions that you have about life and faith and bring them to someone (a priest or fellow parishioner you trust) who might be able to help you seek answers.
Find an opportunity, such as a bible study or Alpha, at the Church that will help you learn more about God and yourself.
Stay connected with others in the community that you connect with who will support you as you grow in your faith.

WAYS TO BECOME A DISCIPLE:

Invite Jesus to be the center of your life through prayer, ideally in front of the Eucharist.
Attend a retreat that is being provided by the parish or go on a personal retreat.
If you have not already, join a small faith sharing community or bible study.
Ask God for clarity in the ways that you might need to be spiritually healed.

WAYS TO GROW:

If you haven't already, join a small faith sharing community or Bible Study.
Find a spiritual mentor.
Begin developing the habits of a disciple – daily prayer, formation in Church teaching through Bible study, involvement in the community, and regular participation in the sacraments – Mass and confession.
If not already, receive sacraments of initiation – baptism, first communion and confirmation.

WAYS TO GROW:

Seek accountability and guidance in staying firm in your faith and the habits of a disciple.
Begin to seek opportunities for service and sharing your life and faith with others. (1 Thes 2:8)
If you have a spiritual mentor, discuss with them the big picture of the Church and her mission and how you fit into that.
Consider starting your own small faith sharing community or bible study to reach others in need of healing and seeking formation in the faith.

WAYS TO GROW:

Make a plan for spiritual multiplication – consider those who you are investing in that may be called to dive deeper into the mission of the church and how you may be called to “teach them to teach” 2 Tim 2:2
If you have not already, consider forming a small faith sharing community or bible study to invite others that God may be calling you to personally care for.
Pray with your spiritual mentor for those that you are feeling called to personally reach out to.

WAYS TO GROW:

Stay consistent and continue growing in the habits of a disciple recognizing that your own relationship with Jesus takes priority over all things
Continually surround yourself with the community of the Church for support and prayer against temptation.
Pray deeply for those you are mentoring.



STAGES OF CONVERSION & DISCIPLESHIP SELF-EVALUATION

Where do you place yourself right now in your faith journey? Are you disinterested, a participant, a seeker, a beginning disciple, growing disciple, missionary disciple, or a spiritual multiplier?

What is the next stage (a participant, a seeker, a beginning disciple, growing disciple, missionary disciple, or a spiritual multiplier) that you feel God is calling you to right now? Why?

What things do you need to do or change or sacrifice to make strides towards your goal?

Why do you place yourself there?

What is it going to take to get you there?

Are you willing to do these things?

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

Lord Jesus Christ, you said, "I came that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

I want to belong to you from now on.

I want to know what it means to live life abundantly.

Teach me what it means to be a Christian.

Teach me how to follow you.

I ask you to forgive me and to free me from the sins that keep me from living the life that you have for me.

I commit myself to you. Jesus, I trust in you.

Amen.