

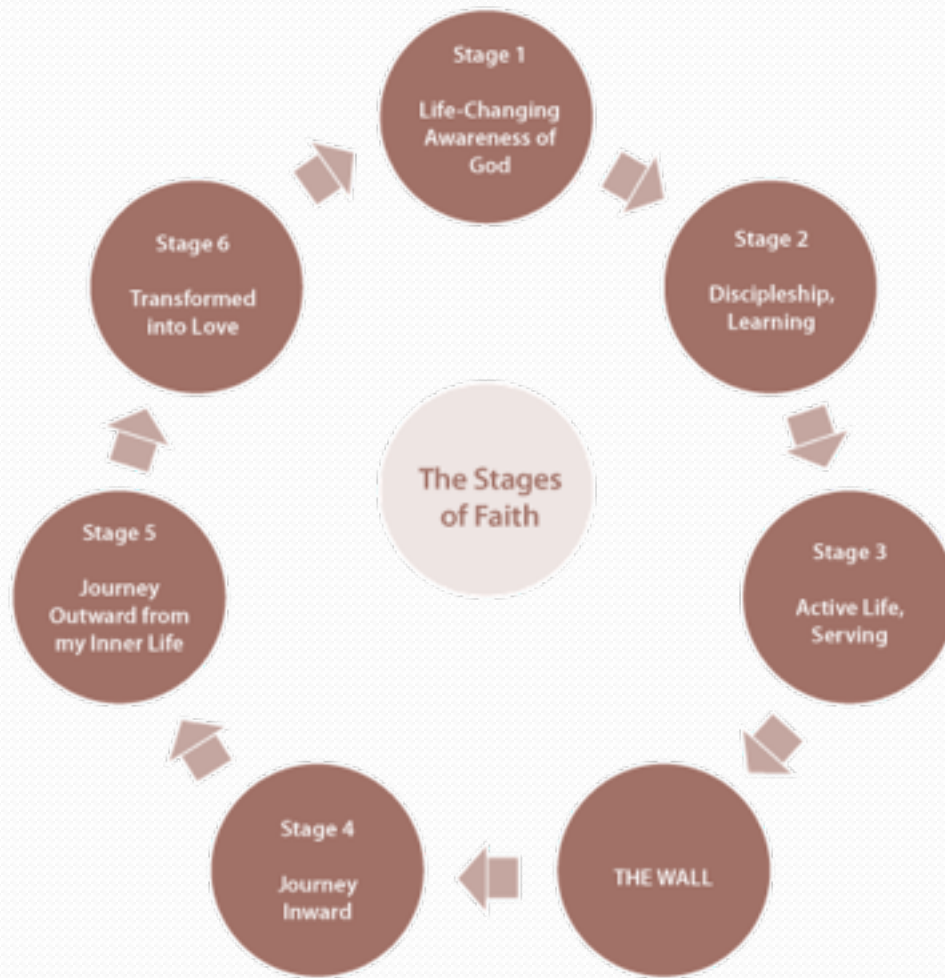
DRAWING NEAR AND WALKING WITH-PART II

DESIRE FOR THIS SESSION:

Presenting and Engaging more “Tools” which help reinforce the proposal for an Incarnational-Apostolic Spirituality for CPPS Candidate Formation



Stages of Faith



* Adapted from *The Critical Journey* by Hagberg and Guelich

STAGES OF FAITH	CHARACTERISTICS	HOW WE GET STUCK	HOW WE MOVE TO THE NEXT STAGE
STAGE ONE: recognition of God "I need God" faith as awareness, recognition and belief	a sense of awe & need for God and greater meaning in life.	if we stick to a sense of worthlessness or ignorance and don't believe we are really worth "more"	become part of a strong group; find and follow good teachers/teaching that provides direction
STAGE TWO: life of discipleship "I want to learn about God" faith as learning, growing in knowledge	meaning and identity come from belonging to a group; learning about our belief system; sense of rightness and security in our faith	if we become rigid in righteousness and following the rules; develop a "we against them" attitude; keep switching churches	recognize our uniqueness; identity, and giftedness; recognize what we can contribute to our group, church, system, etc.
STAGE THREE: the productive life "I want to do things for God" faith as doing, as serving	developing life and ministry skills as followers of Jesus; growing in the stewardship of our gift mix; added responsibility in service and in love of God and others whether at home, at work, or at church	if we become overly zealous in "our way" or become weary in well-doing; if we are self-centered or view our lives as performance; if we refuse to keep learning	let go of our need for success; allow for a sense of uncertainty (things we thought worked don't anymore); accept our vulnerability; don't rush to avoid the discomfort of this time; look for direction and seek guidance
THE WALL: doubts and uncertainties "Things just aren't working anymore... there's got to be more" faith as wrestling with God	RESISTANCE AT THE WALL: strong egos, self-deprecators, guilt/shame-ridden, intellectuals, high achievers, doctrine-focused, people-pleasers, unwillingness to admit secrets, mental and emotional laziness	GOING THROUGH THE WALL INVOLVES: discomfort, surrender, healing, growing self-awareness, humility, forgiveness, risk, acceptance of self and others, love, closeness to God, discernment, solitude & reflection, opening up to others	
STAGE FOUR: the journey inward "I need to figure out a new way to do this relationship with God & others" faith as rediscovering God, self, and life purposes	life or faith crisis, loss of certainties; the things that worked aren't working anymore; search for direction, not answers; pursuit of personal integrity in relationship to God; God is released from the box, sometimes looks and feels like losing faith; moving from "doing" to "being"	if we always question everything and are consumed by self-assessment, become immobilized, don't keep moving; if we refuse to be transparent with trusted others	let go of self-centeredness; accept God's purposes for our lives; seek wholeness through personal healing & pilgrimage; be willing to commit to whatever it takes; accept desire to slow down and rest and to have a deeper connection with God
STAGE FIVE: the journey outward "I am learning to live out of a totally different place" faith as surrender to God's will	surrender to God; a renewed sense of God's acceptance; a sense of deepening relationships; sense of calling, vocation or ministry; concern and focus on others' best interests; a deep calm or stillness	not really stuck at this stage but others may view you as: seemingly out of touch with practical concerns, careless about "important" things, not diligent in certain areas	not striving, just evolving; growing deeper; seeing God in all of life; being God's person; letting go
STAGE SIX: the life of love "I am able to love as God loves" faith as intimacy	living in obedience to God; wisdom gained from life's struggles; compassionate living for others; detachment from things and stress; life abandoned; utter gratitude and deep joy and contentment	not really stuck at this stage but others may view you as: separate from the world; neglecting yourself or "wasting your life"	

SPIRITUAL NARRATIVE

TELLING ONE'S SACRED STORY

“HOMO NARRANS”

“The universe is made of stories, not atoms.” -Muriel Rukeyser

“All sorrows can be borne if you put them in a story.” -Isak Dinesen

- To be human is to tell stories; we are *homo narrans*
- Narration is a “SENSE-MAKING” activity; brings some coherence to the experiences that daily bombard us
- We live in a “story-shaped world”...and those stories propose and illustrate particular cultural values
- Our very IDENTITY is a narrative, a story we tell ourselves and others about who we are/are not

EFFECTS OF SPIRITUAL NARRATIVE

- Nurturing Spiritual Identity
- Reveal person's attitudes toward God and others
- Reliving significant experiences with greater appreciation of God's activity in one's life
- Surfaces the “unsaid/unwritten” in the “saying/writing”
- Spiritual narratives have the capacity to THICKEN a person's faith story—to put more “flesh on the bones”

TIME FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & PRACTICE

SELECTING A “STAGE” IN THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH
WHEEL PRESENTED EARLIER AS A “SEED BED,” WRITE A
“STORY” OF A PARTICULAR EXPERIENCE OR PASSAGE
THROUGH THAT STAGE OF YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY