

Objective: To see how the Ultimate Relationship booklet can be used as an effective tool in evangelization.

“Over the past 25 years I’ve asked hundreds of Catholic college students the question: ‘If you were to die tonight and God asked you why He should let you into heaven, what would you answer?’ The vast majority of them simply don’t know the right answer to this, most important of all questions, the very essence of Christianity. They usually don’t even mention Jesus! They think trying harder, good deeds, good intentions or being nice saves us. Most Catholics... simply do not know how to get to heaven, how to be saved. This may seem like an exaggerated statement, but I know it is true from years of teaching experience... Many Catholics have never been taught the most precious truth of all: that salvation is a free gift of grace, accepted by faith.”

Dr. Peter Kreeft, Justification by Faith, Chapter 44

Over the years, CCO has experienced the same thing that Peter Kreeft describes, many Catholics do not know how to be saved. We believe people do not know that salvation is a free gift because they have not heard the message in a clear and simple way. As an answer to this problem, CCO created a tool called the Ultimate Relationship booklet, which is a concrete way to share the message.

Barriers to sharing the Faith

Do not be afraid to present Christ to someone who does not yet know him... You must do it. Helping a brother or sister to discover Christ... is a true act of love for one’s neighbour.

Message by the Holy Father John Paul II for the 7th World Youth Day, 16

Common barriers to sharing our faith with others:

- Unsure of how to begin
- Unsure of how to explain the faith
- Fear of not being able to answer questions about the faith
- Fear of what the person will think of you
- Fear of saying the wrong thing
- Fear of turning people away from the church

It can be hard to find the courage to share our faith if we do not know how. We worry about sounding stupid or making things awkward. Conversely, when we are confident in the message, we are more likely to take initiative. The Ultimate Relationship booklet helps us overcome these barriers and makes it easier for us to invite others into personal relationship with Jesus.

The Advantages of Using the Ultimate Relationship Booklet

There are many advantages to the Ultimate Relationship booklet as a tool for evangelization. It allows you to proclaim the message in a clear and simple way, it equips people to overcome barriers to sharing their faith, and it even commissions people to greater service and witness.

Here are some of the ways the UR can help us in our mission to proclaim, equip, and commission:

The Ultimate Relationship Booklet Proclaims

- **The UR provides an opening to share the Gospel with someone.**
You could begin by saying, “I would like to share a book with you that explains what I believe.”
- **The UR can assist you in conversations about faith.**
Many people are unsure of what to say about their faith and how to say it, so they keep silent. In conversations about faith, you can use the UR to explain what you believe with clarity and simplicity.
- **The UR condenses the message of the Gospel and presents it in a simple and understandable way.**
In our excitement about our faith, we can sometimes overwhelm people with too much information. Sometimes, we forget how simple the message really is and confuse people with deep theological explanations. The UR provides an easy to follow, clear explanation of the Gospel message.
- **The UR includes an invitation to enter into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.**
The proclamation of the Gospel message is not complete without an invitation to respond; we must make an adult decision to place Jesus at the centre of our lives. However, challenging people to respond to the Gospel can be a scary step. Fortunately, the UR is designed to lead someone to commit their lives to Christ.
- **The UR can help someone grow in their faith even after they take it home with them.**
The illustrations and the concepts in the UR present the Gospel very clearly. Nevertheless, it may be difficult for a person to digest the information all at once. The booklet format makes it possible for people to take it home with them and mull over what they heard.
Furthermore, anyone who responds to Jesus’ invitation can take the UR home and pray the prayer again on their own time.

- **The UR also provides practical advice about how to nurture a relationship with Christ.**

The last page offers a list of steps to take to live-out their new (or renewed) relationship with Christ.

The Ultimate Relationship Booklet Equips

- **Anyone can share the UR.**
You do not have to be a great communicator or have a degree in theology in order to share the UR. All you need is faith in the message and reliance on the Holy Spirit as you read the booklet – the pictures and concepts will keep the person interested in the material.
- **The UR helps keep conversation on topic.**
It is easy to get lost or get off-track when talking about spiritual things. If our message is not clear, we can get caught-up trying to answer many questions that lead discussion away from the principle message of the Gospel.
- **The UR enables us to be brief, prepared and confident.**
In many cases you may only have 30 minutes to chat with someone (e.g. waiting for class to start or on a bus ride home). The UR allows you to maximize that short time-frame to confidently share the basic Gospel message.
- **The UR does not have to be a canned presentation.**
In other words, the UR does not have to be delivered the same way by every person; it can be adapted to suit the presenter. You can put your personality into your presentation once you have become familiar and confident with the message.

The Ultimate Relationship Booklet Commissions

- **The UR provides some basic accountability.**
While giving your heart to Christ is an important decision, a *relationship* with Christ needs care in order for it to grow. The brief material in the UR will provide people with some necessary guidance to assist in their growth. For example, the final page of the UR encourages daily prayer and frequent participation in the sacraments.

- **The UR is transferable**

Often, when someone has a conversion, they are excited and want to tell the world about it. The UR can help these people share their enthusiasm for Christ and the Good News simply and clearly.

The simplicity of the UR allows people who are not directly involved in CCO to use its content. The booklet is set up in such a way that it is easily given to anyone to use.

The UR is also available in multiple languages so that it can be shared all over the world!

- **The UR makes it possible for people to live-out their missionary call even after they have graduated.**

Students may not always have the opportunity to lead a faith study or put on a retreat but they will always have relationships with people. The UR is a tool that can be used to reach the people in their lives. They can store URs in their bags, pockets and desks, ready at all times for the opportunity to share their faith.

The Ultimate Tool for Evangelization

As you can see the Ultimate Relationship booklet is a great tool to help you in your mission. However, the Holy Spirit is really the ultimate tool for evangelization. The UR is not magic; it is God himself that reveals his love to them. Whenever anyone responds to the message presented in the booklet, it is the Holy Spirit that pierces their heart with the Truth and inspires them to accept the gift of Salvation.