

For Junior High

Materials Needed:

- Writing paper and pencils or pens
- Props and costumes (see “And Furthermore” at the end of this lesson)

Faith Connection

Before Telling the Story

1. Use a globe or a map to show the young people where the Canary Islands are located.
2. Invite them to work with partners to quickly research and create a list of five to ten fun facts about the Canary Islands.
3. Ask volunteers to share their findings with the group.
4. Vote on the top three most interesting facts.
5. Explain that the story of Our Lady of the Candles took place on one of the Canary Islands, and invite the young people to listen for the most interesting or unusual details they hear in the story.

Telling the Story

Tell in your own words the story of Our Lady of the Candles.

After Telling the Story

1. Invite the young people to share the most interesting or unusual details they heard in the story.
2. Ask the young people what they feel is the significance of finding Our Lady of the Candles on that particular island. Remind them that the people on that island were not Christian and did not know what a statue even was. (*Welcome all suggestions.*)

Exploring Our Catholic Faith

1. Remind the young people that the Catholic Church uses sacramentals, such as statues, to remind us of God’s love and to help us draw closer to God.
2. Ask the young people if the statue of Our Lady of the Candles helped the people of the island know God’s love and draw closer to God. (*Welcome their thoughts and opinions.*)
3. Recall with the young people that the three types of sacramentals are blessings, sacred objects, and sacred actions. Brainstorm examples of sacramentals that fit into each of these three categories. List examples, by category, on the white board or flip chart. As you do so, invite the young people to name where they have experienced or seen these sacramentals used in the prayer and liturgy of the Church. (*Blessings: for people, places, objects, and special activities; Sacred objects: Bibles, crucifixes, rosaries, medals, holy water, holy oil, blessed ashes, blessed palms, blessed candles, church bells, statues, holy cards; Sacred actions: the Sign of the Cross, the sprinkling of Holy Water, the anointing with oil, the laying on of hands; and so forth*)

4. Invite the young people to name sacramentals they own or their families own, and ask how and when these sacramentals are used in their lives or in their homes.

Curriculum Connection: Language Arts

After Telling the Story

1. Recall with the young people three important characters in the story: the shepherds, the chief, and the statue.
2. Ask each young person to choose one of the three characters and to write a poem, play, song, or story about Our Lady of the Candles from that character's perspective. Suggested titles or focuses for the story might be:
 - The Shepherds: The Treasure in the Cave
Frozen in Place
My Miraculous Healing
 - The Chief: A Treasure to be Shared
I Knew She was Special
I Couldn't Believe what I Saw!
 - The Statue: My Journey to the Island
The Reason I Came
Why I Turned My Back on Them
3. Invite volunteers to share their stories with the group.

And Furthermore . . .

The story of Our Lady of the Candles would be a wonderful story to expand and dramatize for younger children. Consider working with the young people to create a play, or to create several vignettes based on their writings. Use props, costumes, and period music to enliven the play(s), and plan to present your work to younger children and/or to parents.