

For Junior High

Materials Needed:

- **A large bulletin board or poster board display of the smiles of famous persons with whom the young people would be familiar** (*Church leaders, government leaders, athletes, actors, singers, and so forth*) (*As an alternative, prepare this as an interactive digital display.*)
- **Art supplies** (*paper and glue sticks, modeling clay, paints and paper, colored Markers and poster board, materials for collages, and so forth*)

Faith Connection

Before Telling the Story

1. Invite each young person to recall someone or something that made them smile today.
2. Discuss with the group the power of a smile. (*For example: A smile can cheer us up. It can lift us out of a bad mood. A smile can reassure us. It can let us know we are loved.*)
3. Invite the young people to listen to the stories of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus and Our Lady of the Smile.

Telling the Story

Tell in your own words the stories of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus and Our Lady of the Smile.

After Telling the Story

1. Invite the young people to recall what they previously said about the power of a smile.
2. Invite volunteers to describe the power of the smile as told in the story of Our Lady of the Smile. (*Our Lady's smile helped heal Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus.*)
3. Invite volunteers to share further thoughts about the power of a smile and how a smile can help heal others' suffering and sorrow.

Putting Faith into Action

1. Invite the young people to name those they know who need a smile today. Encourage them to think globally as well as locally. List their thoughts on a flip chart or whiteboard.
2. Create a Litany to Our Lady of the Smile by naming those mentioned in #1 (*above*) in a prayer of petition, and by responding, "Our Lady, smile upon your children." (*For example: For children who live in poverty and fear, we pray: Our Lady, smile upon your children. For those in our community who do not have enough food to eat, we pray: Our Lady, smile upon your children. For our parents, we pray: Our Lady, smile upon your children.*)

Curriculum Connection: Social Studies and Art

Before Telling the Story

1. Display the faces you have gathered. Assign a number to each face. (*See Materials*)

2. Place beside the display numbered slips of paper and pencils or pens.
3. Invite the young people to write in the names of those whose smiles are on display.
4. After all of the young people have completed writing their guesses, reveal the correct names.

(Note: If you have prepared the above as an interactive digital display, adjust the directions accordingly.)

After Telling the Story

1. Invite the young people to choose art materials (*see Materials*) to create their own images of Our Lady of the Smile.
2. Ask volunteers to show and explain their creations to the group.

And Furthermore . . .

1. Display the Our Lady of the Smile creations with a sign that reads, "Our Lady of the Smile, pray for us!"
2. Introduce the young people to or invite them to research two international efforts that help restore smiles to the faces of children: Operation Smile (operationsmile.org) and Smile Train (smiletrain.org). If the young people research these organizations, invite them to share their findings with the group.
3. Invite the young people to close their eyes and to quiet themselves. Ask them to imagine that they are looking at the face of Our Lady of the Smile, and she is smiling upon them. Invite them to think about what Our Lady of the Smile would say to them today. What would they say to her in return? After several moments of quiet reflection, conclude by praying, "Our Lady of the Smile, pray for us!"