

Below are rites of passage activities with step-by-step instructions for you and your child to follow.

Activity 1

If you have never had the opportunity to share your faith story with your student, now is your opportunity to do so! Find a time where you can be alone with your student. This might be a good time to take them to get dinner or ice cream. Make this a special night, where just the two of you have time to spend together. Begin by explaining to your student why you feel as though sharing your story is important to the relationship that you share with one another. Remember that in order to develop relationships, we must be willing to be vulnerable and authentic with one another. Each one of us has a story that has affected who we are. This is your opportunity to share this with your student.

Here, at the Orchard, we use the following guidelines in sharing our stories, just to make it a little easier:

1. What are three people, places, and events that have brought you to where you are in your relationship with God today?
2. How have the previously mentioned people, places, and events still shape you today?

If sharing your story aloud is particularly uncomfortable for you, you will also have the option of writing down your story and presenting your story as a letter to your student. You can give it to them to read by themselves or you can read the story aloud to them at a certain time. However, the more vulnerable you are in sharing your story and the way God has moved in your life, the more responsive your student will become. At the end of this parent's guide is a simple outline to help you begin to sketch out your story.

Activity 2

After you have taken the time to share your story with your student, we will ask you to write a letter to your student. Throughout your time in ROPE, you have been asked to have different people write letters to your student. This will be your last ROPE opportunity to write them a letter before they leave for college. In your letter, you will write your hopes and dreams for your student as they leave for college and begin to more fully shape their identity.

- Who do you desire for them to become?
- How do you desire for them to see themselves?
- What do you hope for them as they leave for college, pick a career, and eventually start families of their own?



These are all things we want you to share with them in this letter. You will want to give them this letter before they leave for college. Give them enough time to process it. In other words, do not wait until the day before they leave for college to give it to them. We would suggest giving it to them a few weeks before they graduate. This way, they have time to process what you've said before they graduate and throughout the summer before they leave for college.

Activity 3

While you are writing your letter to them, we will also ask that you instruct them to write a letter to themselves.

- What are some things they desire for their lives as they grow up?
- What do they want to be?
- How do they want other people to see them?
- What do they desire for their relationship with God and their faith in God?

These are all things that can potentially come into question when students enter unfamiliar territory like college. The more positive words we can speak into their lives beforehand, the more secure they become who they are and who they want to be. Before they leave for college or start their career, want them to be sure about the things they believe about God and about themselves.