

Magis Center's Solution

What is the credible contemporary scientific evidence that can effectively reverse millennials' decisions to move toward unbelief? The Magis Center of Reason and Faith (www.magiscenter.com) has tested several areas of evidence among high schoolers (of all grades) and college students, and determined that seven areas are particularly positive (if not essential) for reinforcing students' faith and reversing the direction of those who were considering unbelief -- 43% of the students responded that the information was "positive" and 54% indicated that it was "very positive" for maintaining their faith and responding to doubts. The college students who were given this evidence indicated that it would have made a significant difference to their faith lives if they had learned it earlier. We have found the material to be quite effective even in the 7th and 8th grades (though it has to be modified to meet the less developed critical and logical capacity of those students). Presenting the material in the following order helps students appropriate and integrate the information in all seven areas:

1. Proof of a soul from contemporary peer-reviewed medical studies of near death experiences, medical studies of terminal lucidity, as well as the 5 transcendental desires.
2. Evidence of an intelligent creator from contemporary science, including the Borde-Vilenkin-Guth Proof, entropy, and the fine-tuning of universal constants at the Big Bang (explained below).
3. An explanation of six prevalent questions about faith and science—"the Bible and science," evolution, aliens, why some scientists are atheists, Galileo, and the "God particle."
4. The evidence for the historicity and resurrection of Jesus from recent scientific studies (post 1998) of the Shroud of Turin.
5. Contemporary scientifically validated miracles (including three Lourdes cases, analysis of the Guadalupe Tilma, and the Eucharistic miracle overseen by Archbishop Bergoglio in Buenos Aires).
6. Four levels of happiness and purpose in life.
7. Why would an all-loving God allow suffering—and how to suffer well.

Readers may be asking, "Isn't it a little excessive to dedicate 5 of these areas to proof and evidence?" In a word, "no"—this is precisely what the students want and need. Even though they may not directly confront a teacher with, "prove it!" or "do you have any proof for that?" over 60% of the class are thinking it. They want proof for themselves and for their peers to defend their intellectual integrity amidst accusations of being naïve, unscientific, and wishful thinkers. Without this evidence, the faith of the majority will begin to falter and eventually fade away. I will review a few highlights in four of these areas below. For readers desiring technical explanations and original sources to scientific studies, please go to www.magiscenter.com, and view or download the multiple free articles and videos.

Though this material may seem somewhat technical, the Magis Center has prepared two sets of seven modules with age-appropriate content, voiceover power

points, and embedded videos for presentation to seventh through ninth grade confirmation, catechism, and middle school classes, as well as tenth through twelfth grade confirmation, catechism, and high school classes. The latter set are appropriate also for college students and adult education. We have beta tested the effectiveness of the 10th through 12th grade modules in 9th grade, 11th through 12th grade, and in university Catholic centers. The response is overwhelmingly positive – 97% ranked the modules as either “positive” or “very positive” for maintaining faith and responding to doubts.

These modules are free of charge and can be viewed or downloaded from <https://www.crediblecatholic.com> (simply click on PROGRAMS – the 7 Essential Modules will be the top program). Magis Center instructors are available to train diocesan and parish directors and educators (for both youth and adults) free of charge. Please contact our coordinator mentioned below.

