



# LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR

FOR YOUTH IN THE PARISH SETTING

AN INITIATION COURSE & MANUAL FOR  
MAINSTREAMING CATHOLIC LAY EVANGELIZATION

presented by



A lay response movement to the call to the New Evangelization

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# CH 1: ORGANIZING A LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR



# INTRODUCTION

The world is hurtling toward global disaster. Wars. Famine. Massacre of the unborn. Destruction of the family. Economic collapse. Environmental disaster. Demographic winter. Global terrorism. Threat of nuclear war. Assault on religious freedom. Satan and his demons are rampaging throughout the face of the earth. A tsunami of evil is overwhelming the entire world.

Is there hope?

The world has turned away from God. Even many Christians have turned away from authentic faith. The Church that Jesus Christ established is being assaulted from every side, and even from within. Modernism. Liberalism. Dissent. Pro-choice. Assault on faith. Clergy sexual abuse. Disunity. Wolves among the sheep.

Only God can make things right. God has His wonderful plans not for woe but for a future full of hope. Jesus has already won our salvation and brought restoration to the Kingdom. The Holy Spirit dispenses bountiful grace and empowers the Church to bring hope and peace to a darkened world.

But the struggle in the world continues. The forces of evil wage war against God and His Church. This struggle will be until the end of time, until Jesus returns in glory. In the meantime, God entrusts His work to us His people, with the assurance that He will be with us to the end. We need to respond. We need to stand and be counted. We need to become God's co-workers.

This is the call to the New Evangelization.

While there can be various ways of responding to the call, one particular response is the Live Christ, Share Christ (LCSC) Movement. This manual focuses on a particular methodology of LCSC, which is a seminar called a Life in Christ Seminar (LCS).

It is intended for Catholics to meet Christ, live Christ and share Christ. It is designed for rapid and massive evangelization, accompanied by the systematic empowerment of lay people to participate in the work, based in parishes.

It is hoped that through the Live Christ, Share Christ (LCSC) movement, the Church will be able to mainstream Catholic lay evangelization, that will work for renewal and revival in the Catholic Church.

# THE LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR

The LCS is an integrated course intended to lead seminar participants into a renewed understanding of God's call to them as Catholics. It comprises a total of 5 separate sessions. The sessions have basic ingredients: prayers, a teaching, a group discussion and praise and worship.

The LCS has one basic purpose: bringing participants to a personal relationship with Jesus, and getting them started on living a truly Spirit-filled Christian life. It is about transformation in Christ and renewal in the Spirit. It is about bringing nominal or lapsed Catholics back to God and back to the Church.

## WHAT IS THE CONTENT OF THE LCS?

1. **Jesus the Messiah** - To meet Christ and to know the truth that God loves us and has a plan for our welfare.
2. **Called to Witness** - To understand what it means to live Christ as a living witness to him.
3. **Repentance and Faith** - To start to live Christ by repenting of sin and turning to a renewed faith in Jesus.
4. **The Gift of the Holy Spirit** - To understand the role of the Holy Spirit and to pray for openness in receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit .
5. **Growing in the Spirit** - To learn the basic tools to growth and maturity as Christians.

## THE LCS CAN BE PRESENTED IN THREE DIFFERENT FORMATS:

**TWO DAY EVENT**  
(Preferably Saturday and Sunday)

Saturday  
**Jesus the Messiah**  
**Called to Witness**  
**Repentance and Faith**

Sunday  
**The Gift of the Holy Spirit**  
**Growing in the Spirit**

**TWO WEEK SEMINAR**  
( Two consecutive Saturdays )

1st Saturday  
**Jesus the Messiah**  
**Called to Witness**  
**Repentance and Faith**

2nd Saturday  
**The Gift of the Holy Spirit**  
**Growing in the Spirit**

**FIVE WEEK SEMINAR**  
(Five consecutive Saturdays in congruence with CFC LCSC for the first 5 weeks )

1st Saturday  
**Jesus the Messiah**

2nd Saturday  
**Called to Witness**

3rd Saturday  
**Repentance and Faith**

4th Saturday  
**The Gift of the Holy Spirit**

5th Saturday  
**Growing in the Spirit**

# HOW TO START & GROW LCSC

Live Christ, Share Christ (LCSC) is grassroots, parish-based re-evangelization. Its basic purpose is to bring Catholics into an active life in the parish, by bringing them into a personal relationship with Jesus, through the LCS and continuing formation. LCSC will not replace any parish program, activity, group, ministry, etc.

## HOW TO START LCSC IN A PARISH

1. Review the Parish Mission Statement if available. Research all current parish programs and analyze how LCSC will fit in with these programs. Understand how LCSC will help fulfill the Parish mission.
2. Prepare to discuss this to the Parish Pastor and members of the Pastoral Council. Get the Parish Pastor's commitment to embrace LCSC as an official parish movement.
3. If necessary, present LCSC to the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and get these parish leaders on board (make sure to present how the LCSC will help fulfill the parish mission.)
4. Set up a follow-up meeting and get confirmation from the Parish Pastor to follow through with the LCSC.
5. Confirm schedule/dates when the LCSC will happen.
6. Assign a point person/liaison/support from the Parish and create an action plan with the Parish liaison on announcing and pushing for Parish attendance.

## HOW TO GROW AND SUSTAIN LCSC IN A PARISH

1. Schedule LCS on the parish calendar for the whole year (select one of the suggested LCS schedule templates in the manual).
2. The follow-through after the LCS is a monthly prayer assembly. This is a time of (a) worship, (b) teaching and/or Bible study, with or without discussion groups, and (c) fellowship, with or without refreshments.
3. Identify an LCSC coordinator in the Parish to facilitate communication in order to encourage and gather LCS graduates for continuing LCSC activities.
4. Offer formation programs as needed or desired. These can be marriage retreats for couples, youth camps for youth, migrants program, etc. Offer also the 4 LCSC pillars: Live Pure (youth chastity), Live the Word (Liturgical Bible Study), Live Life (pro-life advocacy), and Live Full (work with the poor).
5. Invite the LCSC members to the CFC-FFL Family Assembly.
6. Continue inviting parishioners to the LCS through weekly bulletin, announcement before or after mass and mailing formal invitation letters.
7. Propose to the pastor to pray over all recently LCS graduates during mass.
8. On-going training for LCSC members as LCS speakers, LCS facilitators, LCS service teams, music ministries, prayer assembly leaders, Batch Coordinators, Chapel Coordinators and Parish Coordinators.

# HOW TO START AND GROW LCSC

## NOTE

\*\* The following plans are optional until LCSC has grown larger than the Parish Model.

## \*\*HOW TO START AND GROW LCSC IN A VICARIATE/DEANERY

1. Once a parish LCSC is ongoing and fairly well established, offer the LCSC to the vicariate, with the help of the parish priest in whose parish LCSC is already established. Meet with the vicar general and the parish priests of the vicariate and explain LCSC.
2. For all those parishes that decide to participate, mount a week-end LCS for parish leaders whom the parish priests will send. After the LCS, have the monthly prayer assembly. Continue with these regular week-end LCSs for parish leaders of the vicariate.
3. At a certain point, a particular parish that feels confident in mounting its own parish-based LCS should do so.

## \*\*HOW TO START AND GROW LCSC IN A DIOCESE

1. Once a vicariate has experienced LCSC through its various parishes, offer the LCSC to the bishop, with the recommendation of the various parish priests already involved. Meet with the bishop to explain LCSC. With the bishop's approval, it would be good to also explain LCSC to all the parish priests of the diocese, at one of their monthly gatherings with the bishop.
2. When the bishop decides to adopt LCSC as a diocesan movement, mount a week-end LCS for leaders of the various parishes, with participants nominated by their parish priests. This can be a large LCS with hundreds of participants. After the LCS, have the monthly prayer assembly, considering practicality of attendance by LCS graduates from far-flung areas. Continue with these week-end LCSs for parish leaders of the diocese.
3. At a certain point, a particular vicariate or parish that feels confident in mounting its own vicariate-based or parish-based LCS should do so. Then #s (5) to (9) above follow.

## NOTE

All the above is an approach that is from the bottom up. There is nothing to prevent LCSC from starting immediately with a vicariate/deanery or with a diocese, as this just necessitates the acceptance and approval of the vicar general or the bishop.



# AFTER THE LCS

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER LCS?

The LCS is the beginning of a long journey in our life in Christ. The LCS establishes the fundamentals and points the way to live a Christian lifestyle. Now there is a need of direction to those that underwent the LCS program in order provide the continual growth

After the LCS, those who finish and make the LCSC covenant become part of the LCSC movement. These individuals will be provided with continuing formation, and they will be taught how to become evangelizers in their community.

There will be a monthly prayer assembly in the parish, so that all LCS graduates can continue to walk and grow together in Christ. The prayer assembly will have three basic components, already experienced through the LCS. There will be worship, then teaching and/or discussion and/or personal testimonies, and then fellowship.

LCSC members are also encouraged to become involved in parish life and service, according to their particular inclinations and gifts. To further their nourishment and foundation, these youth can partake and offer their time, talent and treasures to the parish youth group, join movements endorsed by the parish, serve in liturgy as acolytes, ushers, choir or lectors, and/or other ministries the parish provides.

## WHAT ELSE WILL LCSC OFFER THE PARISH AND ITS PARISHIONERS?

LCSC as a movement is focused on basic and grassroots evangelization. It is not intended to replace or “compete” with existing parish groups or ministries. After the LCSC LCS, graduates can partake of the wonderful variety of parish offerings, as their needs dictate.

However, depending on the maturity and variety of offerings of the parish, LCSC stands ready to provide further formation as needed. LCSC offers, youth camps, Bible studies, chastity formation for youth, pro-life modules, templates on building integrated communities among the poor, financial stewardship program, various formation modules, cell groups, etc.

# RESOURCE PERSONS FOR THE LCS

All volunteers and servants over the age of 18 MUST be **Virtus / Shield / Safe Environment** trained before serving ANY youth! Please check with your local diocese for more information.

## TEAM LEADER:

- Oversee the whole LCS.
- The First LCS Team leader is suggested to be a person from the existing YFL. The subsequent LCS events can be led by Parish members.
- Assign speakers.
- Prepare facilitators.
- Form the service team.
- Lead the team meeting after every session (or after every module or after whole LCS, depending on the schedule chosen).
- Report the results of the LCS to the parish priest.
- Submit formal LCS report to the LCSC Moderator (including e-mail addresses of participants).

## SPEAKERS:

- Study and present the talks.

## MUSIC MINISTERS:

- Decide on appropriate songs for each session.
- Provide the music.
- Teach participants the songs.

## FACILITATORS:

- Handle the discussion groups.
- Follow up and encourage their group participants to persevere through the LCS.
- Encourage reading of the Bible, especially the daily readings per session.

## PARISH & CFC FFL SUPPORT:

- Arrange the facilities.
- Prepare Participant's Handouts.
- Handle registration of participants. Keep information sheets.
- Record the talks (if desired).
- Keep record of attendance at the sessions.
- Arrange for food and snacks.
- Prepare graduation kits.
- Clean up the venue after the LCS.
- Other Miscellaneous tasks

### NOTE

A "Graduation Kit" must be prepared and provided to the participants containing the following:

- Covenant Card
- LCS ID
- Daily Bible Reading Guide
- Paper on the Live Christ, Share Christ logo
- Certificate of Completion

# NOTE TO THE TEAM LEADER:

1. The Contents within this manual are meant to guide, prepare and assist the execution of the LCS Program.
2. The schedules created per format are subject to change due to venue, parish, and participant commitment.
3. It is up to the discernment of the LCS Team leader, Parish Representative, Pastor, CFC Representative, and others involved in the event on which format will be the most effective for their respective Parish. *Constant communication is highly encouraged between these persons.*
4. The talks must be fleshed out by each speaker, but must hit the objective points listed in the outlines..
5. An all-day team preparation should be arranged prior to the LCS involving mock LCS, discussion group leader training, dry-runs and screenings for the session leaders and sharers, and a service team empowerment.

## PARENT LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The parents of the participants must be included when allowing their children to attend the retreat. Upon parent's approval for their child to attend, the Team Leader, Parish Representative, or CFC Representative must communicate to the parent's the importance of writing a letter to their children. A brief description of the letter writing/exchange portion must be explained to them so that they are aware of what they will write and share with their children through the letter. (The participants will read the letter from the parents during the last segments of the LCS.) Team Leader and servants are responsible for collecting letters from the parents prior to the last session of the LCS.

# LEADING A DISCUSSION GROUP

## WHY HAVE DISCUSSION GROUPS?

- To help the participants to understand and digest the material presented.
- To allow them to express their thoughts and feelings, and to give them a chance to ask questions.
- To help people to open up and respond to God's invitation and grace.
- To develop friendships among the participants, which are a big encouragement for them to continue and finish the whole LCS.
- To provide a place for them to begin to experience Christian fellowship, preparing the way to participation in the parish community after the LCS.

## SOME POINTERS:

1. The discussion groups form and begin right after the talk. The men meet separately from the women.
2. Establish a relaxed atmosphere. Don't be overly serious, but maintain control. Inspire confidence in others. Remember that many people have never been in this type of discussion group. Be clear about instructions.
3. Start and end every discussion with a short prayer. Moving into session two and session three, you may ask others in your group to lead the prayer if they seem ready, but don't put them on the spot.
4. For the first session, start with introductions and let everyone get to know one another.
5. Assure them that the principle of confidentiality is at work in your discussions. Whatever is shared remains only within the group. General reports during team meetings maintain the anonymity of sharers.
6. Let the group know that they are free to ask relevant questions or bring up relevant problems.
7. You may have to begin the sharing yourself. This also is a good way of showing them how the discussion/sharing is to be handled.
8. If the group is eager to respond to the talk, allow them to, without bothering with the discussion starter.
9. Encourage shy people by asking them general questions at first, then work your way up to more specific things about themselves. Make sure everyone gets to talk during the discussion. Don't allow anyone, including yourself, to take too much time and dominate the discussion.
10. One way to control dominant people in discussion groups is to speak to the person before the session begins. Encourage their sharing but let them know that time is limited and the need for everyone to share.
11. Don't let the discussion get off the subject. Gently but authoritatively tell them that it is time to stop this line of conversation. Suggest another time or place for such discussion to the people involved.
12. It is usually best to open up the discussion to any questions only after you are sure they have understood the main points of the talks, or if they won't share.
13. When answering questions, you don't need to offer everything on the subject, but only what will help the person most at this time in his/her life. On the other hand, be willing to say "I don't know" and/or "I'll find out."
14. Don't take up serious theological issues in the discussions.
15. Don't talk down to people or appear to be an expert on something you are not.
16. Avoid Christian jargon. There is a way in which new people cannot enter into the meanings of the phrases we know so well.
17. Take notes and write down significant details of conversations in your group so that you can keep track of your people's progress and also as a basis for the team meeting afterwards.
18. As you listen to the talk, discern which points your people especially need to hear and try to bring those out in your sharing or in theirs.
19. Keep your eye on the time. Make sure that there is enough time for everyone to share.



# CH 2: THE LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR SESSIONS



# THE EXPANDED LCS TALK OUTLINES

## OPENING REMARKS

The Roman Catholic Church has issued the call to the New Evangelization. Pope John Paul II desired “to undertake the Church’s evangelizing mission with renewed enthusiasm.” Pope Benedict XVI stressed its new character, given the social and cultural changes in the world today and the widespread de-Christianization of baptized Christians. The Church looks “to devise new tools and new expressions to ensure that the word of faith .... be heard more and be better understood, even in the new deserts of this world.”

Europe has become such a desert. The secularized Western world is such a desert. All the nations of the world are under threat by this continuing desertification.

The reality is that few Catholics actually truly live out their Christian faith. Many do not go to Sunday Mass. Many go but do all sorts of sinful things outside of the Church. For those who do good, many do not go deeper in their faith life.

As such, the Church is ill-equipped to attain to its God-given destiny to be light and leaven in the world, much less to be effective witnesses to the gospel. On top of this, there are the anti-family and anti-life forces promoting the culture of death that are overwhelming the world. Many dissident Catholics are supportive of reproductive health (RH) and even divorce and same-sex marriage. We are being swamped by this tsunami of evil. Even further, Catholics are being lost at an alarming rate to sects and fundamentalists, all antagonistic to the Catholic Church.

Thus there is a dire need to re-evangelize Catholics. Catholics need to meet Christ, live Christ, and share Christ.

Many Catholics, even those who go to Church regularly, do not really know Jesus. They do not have a personal relationship with him. They have not experienced the transforming power of his Spirit.

Many who may know Jesus have not gone deeper in their relationship with him. They are not living Christ. They are unaware of the call to true discipleship, to holiness, to Christian perfection.

And most lay Catholics do not share Christ, that is, they do not evangelize others so that these might meet Christ and start to live Christ. They are not aware that every Christian is supposed to be an evangelizer. Thus, even for a good Catholic, if he does not share Christ, then he becomes the most selfish of people.

This LCS is intended to bring many more Catholics to meet Christ, live Christ and share Christ. This is the true Christian life.

Join us now for an exciting journey, as we move together proclaiming Christ to the world!

# JESUS THE MESSIAH

**GOAL** To meet Christ and to know the truth that God loves us and has a plan for our welfare.

## METHODOLOGY

- Talk proper - 30 Minutes with Activity in the beginning (5 Minutes)
- Sharer(s) - 10 Minutes
- Discussion Groups - 30 minutes

**SHARER'S PROFILE** Someone who will share an experience where he/she felt God's love and

## "CRAZY DREAM" ACTIVITY

### MATERIALS

- Papers
- Pens, Pencils, Markers

### PROCESS

- The participants each get a piece of paper and something to write or draw with.
- The speaker asks the participants to write or draw their craziest dream or ambition. They will be given 1 minute.
- Ask 3-5 persons to share theirs.

### NOTE

The 'Crazy Dream' activity is done so that the speaker may have an amusing way of making the participants realize God's tremendous love for them. Just as the participants have their own 'crazy dreams', their nearly impossible hopes of things that are better, God has

His own seemingly impossible dream for us, 'a plan for a future and a hope' in union with Him. It is this plan for us that may be used to introduce God's love to the participants.

## INTRODUCTION

**Even God has a crazy dream.**

All of us have our own crazy dreams, but even God has His own 'crazy dream' for us. I say this, because like many others, our dreams may seem far out, hard to believe. But then again, He is God, and nothing is impossible with Him. Let's see what God's crazy dream is (Isaiah 65:17 25)

This is God's crazy dream, for us to live in joy and this is His plan for us, "a plan to give us a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11). *Read the entire verse and a background of Jeremiah and his desires to know his future.* This is all because of His great love for us.

You may be asking, “If God loves us so much, why are our lives and situations so different from what He says are His plans for us?”

## A. THE SITUATION IN THE WORLD TODAY

*The goal is to paint a picture to the participants that society chooses to turn to worldly desires and temporary pleasures as a means to satisfy their hearts, when in reality there is only one source of wholeness, and that is God.*

### NOTE

Mention specific experiences to bring your point across. Personal examples can help the audience relate to the points shared above.

1. The world is hurtling toward global disaster.
  - a) On a larger scale
    - There are countries at war and in famine.
    - There is poverty and starvation.
    - There is social injustice.
    - There is a constant assault on family, life and religious freedom.
  - b) On a local scale
    - There are environmental disaster, street crimes, law offenders and corruption.
  - c) On a personal scale
    - There are broken families, drug addictions, teenage pregnancies, etc.
  
2. The world has turned away from God.
  - a) When our first parents chose to disobey and rebel against God's commands, they chose to turn away from God, the source of all life.
    - In doing so, they chose death and suffering.
    - From the moment this happened, our world that was full of life and blessing began to experience difficulties, pain, suffering, and even death. (Gen. 3:1-21)
  - b) Even many Christians today have turned away from authentic faith.
    - Whenever we choose to go against God, (or the authorities He has placed over us, e.g. parents, government and school authorities), we continue to choose the suffering and death that our first parents chose. (Romans 6:23)
  - c) The Church that Jesus established is being assaulted from every side, even from within.
    - Modernism, liberalism, dissent, disunity.
  
3. Only God can make things right.
  - a) The good news is that God has His wonderful plan for us (Jer 29:11) even though we continue to follow our own preferences by choosing to turn away from this promise.
    - God could have just as well chosen to turn away from us, destroy us as we deserve, and create a more faithful people who would gladly accept His love and the life that He offers. Instead, He decided that His love and His mercy should prevail.
  - b) He began by sending His prophets to the Israelites. God wants to show us the way. (Is 48:17)
  - c) Finally, He sent His only Son to die for us because He did not want to see us suffer in our sin and die forever. (John 3:16)

### NOTE

The speaker at this time shows the video “The Bridge” (video clip available on youtube).



d) God sent His own Son to save us. This is the greatest manifestation of His love.

## B. WE NEED TO LOOK TO JESUS

*Looking to Jesus gives us a sense of direction that supersedes what the world tells us. After sharing where the world is as of now, explain how looking to Jesus can give us hope for a life that has been promised to us by God and how important it is to embrace the unknown through faith.*

1. We need to accept Jesus as Savior and Lord. (Rom 10:9.)
  - a) Only Jesus is able to save. (Acts 4:12.)
  - b) Accepting Jesus as our Lord brings us the gift of faith allowing us to believe that there is something more than the lives we live here on Earth.
2. Who is Jesus?
  - a) Jesus is a truly impressive person.
    - Billions today claim to be His followers.
    - Thousands have been martyred for their faith in Him.
    - The book about Him, the Bible, is the No. 1 best seller of all time.
  - b) Jesus is an absolutely unique figure in human history.
    - He was pre-announced and his coming was expected. Because of Old Testament prophecies, people were waiting for the Messiah, which saw its fulfillment in Jesus. Hebrews 1:1-2
    - Once he appeared on the scene, he struck history with such impact that he split it in two, dividing it into two periods: BC (before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini or *in the year of the Lord*).
    - Every other person who came into this world came into it to live. Jesus came into the world to die. His death was the goal and fulfillment of His life.
  - c) Most important of all, Jesus is God.
    - Time and again throughout his public ministry, Jesus claimed to be God. Jn 8:58. Jn 10:30.
      - It was unmistakable to the Jews that Jesus was claiming to be God, because in both instances their reaction was to try to stone Him for blasphemy.
    - As proof of His divinity, Jesus forgave sin. Mk 2:3-12.
      - To the Jews, only God could forgive sin.
    - As further proof, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Jn 11:41- 44.
      - To the Jews, only God had the prerogative to give life or to take away life. Jn 5:21.
  - d) Jesus himself was raised from the dead. He lives!
    - Matthew 20:17-19
    - Mark 16:5-7
    - Luke 24:6-7
    - John 20:16-18

## C. TO OVERCOME THE SERIOUS DISORDER IN THIS WORLD, WE NEED JESUS

1. Behind what is wrong in the world is an evil being.
  - a) The Bible tells us about the reality of Satan. Eph 6:12.
    - We are not just confronted with particular wrongs in society. Behind all these is something bigger. Satan is orchestrating all these evils.
    - On our own we cannot overcome Satan.

- b) Our human efforts apart from God will prove useless. Jn 15:5.
  - On our own strength we cannot overcome the challenges in our Christian life

2. And so we need Jesus.

- a) He is a spiritual being more powerful than Satan.
- b) He is the vine from which we draw life, strength and power.
- c) In Jesus we experience the fullness of God's love. Jn 3:16.
  - When you are tempted to doubt God's love, just look at the crucifix and see Jesus hanging on the cross for you.

## D. WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

1. Never forget the reality.

- a) God loves you. God sent His own Son Jesus.
  - In Jesus we are saved and restored to our relationship with God, with the fullness of life that He intended.
- b) God does not want you to live lives of pain, poverty or injustice.
  - God wants the world to be a place of peace, justice and happiness. A place where He would reign!

2. We are given a choice: to live under the dominion of darkness, a life of slavery under Satan, or to live in the kingdom of God, a life of freedom, dignity, peace and happiness.

3. Let us accept Jesus the Messiah as our Savior and our Lord.

## SHARER(S)

## CONCLUSION

This is how limitless the love of God to each and every one of us is. As St. Augustine has said "God loves every one of us as if there was but one of us to love." God has an immense love for us; a love that would suffer even death on a cross. Even if you were the only one who needed to be saved, God would do it all for you. Let us respond to this love. Let us decide to love God back by accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior!

### NOTE

End with a prayer and a slow, reflective song that speaks about God's love.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is Jesus Christ to you? How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ now?
2. What can you do to respond to His invitation of having a personal relationship with Him?

# CALLED TO WITNESS

**GOAL** To understand what it means to live Christ as a living witness to Him.

## METHODOLOGY

- Talk proper - 30 Minutes with Activity in the beginning (5 Minutes)
- Sharer(s) - 10 Minutes
- Discussion Groups - 30 minutes

**SHARER'S PROFILE** Someone who will share on his/her personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

## "TAGLINE" ACTIVITY

### REQUIREMENTS

- Flashcards with printed brand logo on one side and brand's tagline on another
- Example : Nike - "Just Do It"

### PROCESS

- Participants will be divided into their discussion groups.
- The speaker will flash the side of the card with the tagline.
- The first group to guess the brand name earns a point.
- The speaker may give a prize after the game to the winning group.

## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations to our winners! You have done a good job! Now for the last time I would like to show to you a symbol and tell me what it represents.

### NOTE

At this point the speaker will show a flashcard of a Cross. Then the speaker will ask the participants what the Cross represents. Encourage a variety of answers.

In the first talk, we have heard that the greatest expression of God's love is Jesus Christ crucified on the cross. The cross since then becomes the greatest symbol of God's love for us. It has also been the symbol of our identity as Christians. But do we really understand what it means to be a Christian?

## A. WE NEED TO RESPOND

God has done everything to enable us to experience salvation. But we need to respond. We need to live out the good news that is Jesus in our lives. It means becoming true to our identity as Christians.

## B. WHAT IS AUTHENTIC CHRISTIANITY?

To be a real Christian is all about meeting Christ, living Christ, and sharing Christ.

1. To meet and know Christ is to be in a personal relationship with him.
  - a) Jesus is alive and wants to be intimately involved in our lives.
  - b) It is being a friend of Jesus.
2. To live Christ is to respond to the call to holiness and discipleship.
  - a) We are to be holy as God is holy. 1 Pt 1:15-16
    - We are called to Christian perfection. Mt 5:48.
  - b) We are to be true disciples. Lk 9:23.
    - Self-denial.
    - Embracing the cross.
    - Following Jesus.
3. To share Christ is to participate in witnessing to Jesus and proclaiming the gospel in the normal day-to-day circumstances of our lives.
4. Further, we are to love God and neighbor. Mk 12:28-31.

## C. LOVING GOD

1. What it means to love God with all our heart.
  - a) To love God with all our heart is to be totally committed to Him.
    - It is a decision to put God first, to be loyal to Him, to place His will and interest above our own.
  - b) How do we put the Lord first in our life?
    - It requires a decision to obey Him. Jn 14:15.
    - We need to develop a personal relationship with Him.
    - We need to spend regular time with Him in prayer.
2. What it means to love God with all our mind.
  - a) To love God with all our mind means to serve Him with the use of our mind, or simply to make available our minds for His purposes.
  - b) Using our minds can have incredible consequences for society.
    - It can be applied to contribute to world progress (e.g., science, neurosurgery).
    - Or it can become an instrument for destruction (e.g., nuclear bomb, biological warfare).
  - c) How do we love and serve God with our mind?
    - Keep your mind clean and holy.
    - Be very discerning in the use of TV, the Internet and other media, which can expose our minds to inputs not consistent with Christian living.
    - Let your mind be preoccupied with the things of God.
      - How you can please God
      - Fill your mind with thoughts of God.
      - Read the Bible, Christian books and other helpful Christian literature that can help form your mind.



3. What it means to love God with all our strength.
  - a) This means making *all* our resources available to God—time, money, energy, possessions, gifts, abilities.
    - We are God's creation. He owns us. What we call "ours" is not really ours but His. We are mere stewards.
    - We have a responsibility to manage and use well the resources given to us. We must act according to God's interests.
  - b) Concrete steps we can take:
    - With money:
      - Tithing, resource sharing, almsgiving.
    - Time and talent.
      - Use it not just for ourselves, but for others.
      - Volunteer to do Christian service.
4. What it means to love God with all our soul.
  - a) We are to love God with our whole being (Lk 10:27)—emotional, spiritual, mental, physical. The love of God must engage the total person.
  - b) We are God's creation, called to be holy, intended by Him to spend eternity together with Him. While in this world, we are to love God with all our soul.

## D. LOVING NEIGHBOR

1. Loving God and loving neighbor go together. 1 Jn 4:20-21. Thus it is clear: no love for others, no Christianity.
2. What Christian love is not.
  - a) Love is not only having positive feelings. - Love is often equated with feelings of sexual attraction, personal affection. - But feelings change and thus cannot be the sole basis for love.
  - b) Love is not always saying "yes." - To serve others or to put them first does not mean never turning down opportunities to serve. Sometimes you are unable. Sometimes you should not, even if able. - We have the wrong concept of a loving person as a nice guy who tries to please everybody.
  - c) Love is not self-seeking. - The focus in loving is not ourselves but others. By its nature, Christian love is ready for self-denial.
3. So what is Christian love?
  - a) Jesus spoke of a love that is connected with keeping God's commandments. Jn 15:9-10. There can be no Christian love apart from righteousness.
    - Loving is not compatible with sinning.
    - The world's experience shows that love apart from God has become convoluted with sin (e.g., sex outside marriage).
  - b) Jesus was specific about how we are to love one another. Jn 15:12.- We are not free to change or dilute Jesus' direction.
  - c) How does Jesus love? Jn 15:13. With a self-sacrificial love.
    - It is not just giving our time, imparting our wisdom, praying for others, etc., but it is being willing to die for others.
4. But most are not called to actually die for others. How then do we translate love into practical everyday terms?

- a) The answer is in Jn 13:1-5 (the foot-washing episode).
    - What Jesus did was most unusual, because it was the task of the youngest slave. Thus Peter objected.
  - b) Thus, dying on the cross was not the only example Jesus gave. He demonstrated Christian love as service love.
  - c) When he finished, Jesus told them to do likewise. Jn 13:14-15.
    - Later he commanded them to love each other according to his example. Jn 13:34.
5. And who is our neighbor? Can you choose whom to love?
- a) The answer is in the parable of the good Samaritan. Lk 10:29b-37.
    - The Jews hated the Samaritans, who had inter-married among the gentiles. Thus it was remarkable for this Samaritan to help the Jew who was robbed and beaten.
  - b) The implication for us: all persons in need of our help are our neighbors.
6. How do we love in *everyday* life?
- a) Characteristics of Christian love. 1 Cor 13:4-7.
  - b) Read the passage yourself but substitute “I” for “love.”

### SHARER(S)

### CONCLUSION

God has loved us. Jesus has saved us. We are to respond by witnessing to God’s love and salvation by giving our all in loving God and neighbor!

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. How have I loved God in a concrete way?
- 2. How have I loved my neighbor?

# REPENTANCE AND FAITH

**GOAL** To start to live Christ by repenting of sin and turning to a renewed faith in Jesus.

## METHODOLOGY

- Talk proper - 30 Minutes
- Sharer(s) - 10 Minutes
- Activity - 5 Minutes to lead into time for Confession
- Confession - 30 Minutes to 1 Hour

**SHARER'S PROFILE** Someone who will share on his/her struggle with past sins and how God's grace has helped him/her to overcome this.

## INTRODUCTION

We can see that we fall far short of the authentic Christian life. We are now called to respond to God's love, grace and fellowship. Our proper response is repentance and faith.

Jesus Christ began His preaching ministry with these words,

***"The right time has come and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe in the Gospel." (Mark 1:15)***

He used these words because repentance and faith are the first steps we need to take to truly respond to God's love and His invitation for us.

Repentance and faith go together. It is a double-action response. It is inadequate just to have one without the other. To just reform our lives is an inadequate response to God. Even pagans can be good. We need to also believe in Him and in His plans and promises. To simply believe in God without doing anything to reform our lives to become pleasing to God is also inadequate. Faith necessarily needs to be connected to morality. In other words, faith without works is dead.

## A. REPENTANCE

Sinfulness in our lives and the hurts we've experienced are hindrances in coming to Jesus Christ and receiving His spirit. This is the reason why He called those who came to Him to repentance.

### 1. What is Repentance?

- a) The Greek word for repentance is 'metanoia', which literally means a change of mind.
- b) An act of the will; a decision. Hence, Repentance is a decision to turn away from sin and look towards God.

### 2. Misconceptions about repentance. You are repentant only when you:

- a) Feel terrible about yourself
  - Some people believe that repentance is sincere only when you despise yourself because you are a hopeless sinner.

- Repentance does not depend on feelings
- Rather, it depends on an objective decision to accept only God's righteousness into one's life and reject anything not compatible with this
- b) Feel regret
  - Sometimes repentance is brought about due to the negative consequences of what was done and the regret that comes after, not because the sin was evil. (Feeling sorry you were caught cheating in an exam. If you weren't caught you wouldn't have been as sorry).
  - We should not confuse sorrow for sin with sorrow for the consequences of sin.
- c) Get rid of all tendency to sin
  - Some people think that true repentance can only happen when we are able to rid ourselves of the tendency to sin. But that will never happen.
  - What we can do, however, is to say no to temptation.
  - This is also the reason why many Catholics don't go to Confession, saying, *"Why will I confess when I'm just going to sin again?"*
  - All of these may be effects of Repentance but are not repentance in itself. All of these focus on feelings; Repentance is much more objective and concrete than feelings.
- 3. Some sins to repent from:
  - a) Rebelliousness to parents, authorities and society, such as answering back, vandalism etc.
  - b) Cheating, lying, stealing, cursing, green jokes, slander and gossip.
  - c) Abuse of alcohol, using illegal drugs.
  - d) Sexual sins: necking, petting, pornography, masturbation, homosexual acts, etc.
  - e) Horoscope, superstition, spiritualism, non-Christian religions.

## NOTE

Give examples that are appropriate for the participants. The speaker should be able to explain why these sins are actually wrong. These sins have been so widely accepted that people do not see them as immoral anymore.

The speaker must also be able share how to turn away from these sins, helping the participants to realize that what is important is for them not to feel terrible about themselves for past sins, but for them to decide to turn away from these sins.

- 4. What must we do to repent? (4H : Attitudes to take in repentance)
  - a) Honesty
    - Call sin a sin. Some say sin is a growth experience or that cheating during exams is sharing.
  - b) Humility
    - Admit you fell into sin because you are weak and that you need God to overcome your sins.
  - c) Hate the sin
    - Hate sin and not the sinner. If you hate sin you'll stay away from it and you won't make any justifications for doing it ("I am just human" or "somebody else made me do it").
  - d) Have a good confession.
    - Go to confession and ask God for forgiveness. Confession allows us to be humble, showing God that we need Him.

## B. FAITH

We need to place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, believing that when we come to Him in repentance, He will conquer all our sinfulness and that He will forgive us and heal us of our sins.

### NOTE

Several Gospel readings are used as examples here to show Jesus personally teaching us about having faith in His words and power. It is recommended that these stories be truly reflected on by the speaker while preparing for this talk. Matthew 14:22-33 Matthew 8:5-13

1. Faith that believes in what God says
  - a) Faith is belief in the gospel, which is the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.
  - b) When Jesus Christ told Peter that he could walk on the water, although he knew it was humanly impossible, he still believed. Matthew 14:22-33.
    - In the same way, when Jesus Christ promises that He will save us from our sins, we should believe that He can and He will.
  - c) The same kind of faith is also seen in Matthew 8:5-13. When a Roman Officer approached Jesus Christ and told Him that his servant was lying at home paralyzed and suffering dreadfully,
    - Jesus Christ said that He would come to his house to cure his servant.
    - At this, the Roman Officer expressed humility saying *"Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed."*
    - The Roman Officer, who has the authority to command a hundred men, expressed faith in the power of Jesus' words; "You may go; as you have believed, let it be done for you."
2. Faith is a personal act and decision. It has several aspects Rev 3:20.
  - a) It is a definite act. We must open the door if Jesus is to come into our lives.
  - b) It is an individual act. We need to open the door to our own heart. No one can do that for us.
  - c) It is a deliberate act.
    - We do not have to wait for a supernatural light to flash upon us from heaven (like Paul's experience) or an emotional experience to overtake us.
    - We already know that Jesus came into this world and died for our sins. He is now standing outside the door of our hearts and is knocking. The next move is ours
  - d) It is an urgent act. The future is uncertain and time is passing away.
  - e) It is an indispensable act.
    - It is part of our double-action response.
    - It is the step needed to receive all God has promised. Faith is relying on all God has said.
3. God has promised us new life. Faith is accepting that life and letting God show us how to live it. We must be willing to do whatever God wants of us and actually do it. Our actions are the greatest expression of faith.

## C. CONSEQUENCES OF REPENTANCE & FAITH

1. Acts 16:31 - "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."
  - a) A promise of salvation from sin, Satan, death.
  - b) A promise of forgiveness and eternal life with God.
2. Luke 11:9-13 - "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."
  - a) A promise of new life in the Spirit
  - b) We can pray for a greater release of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

## D. FORGIVENESS

In the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant found in Matthew 18:21-35, it is said that the kingdom once had a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. We are the servants in the story. We have debts to the king who is God in the form of our sins.

1. The parable tells us:
  - a) God is a forgiving God. He forgives those who confess their sins and genuinely ask for forgiveness. (Matthew 18:26)
  - b) God is a compassionate and kind God. He is willing to forgive us even if we cannot repay for our sins. (Matthew 18:25-27)
2. We are also being asked to forgive those who have sinned against us.
  - a) What Christ demands from us is limitless forgiveness. (Matthew 18:22)
  - b) We have received the great forgiveness of God; therefore, we must not refuse to forgive others. (Matt 18:28-30)
  - c) Whom must we forgive?
    - One's own self
    - Our parents, brothers or sisters, relatives
    - Our friends, schoolmates, teachers
    - Others

And when God forgives us, He never makes any record of our wrong doings, He sees us as new creations. He will cleanse us and heal us from all the wrongs we have done. (1 John 1:9)

## D. HEALING

We all know that Jesus Christ is the Great Healer. He cured many illnesses and diseases during His ministry here on Earth. Up to now, He still heals people. He heals us from our sinfulness and our hurts from our past experiences. Jesus Christ fully understands that we need healing from our sinfulness and hurts because these are obstacles from totally receiving God's grace.

1. Healing Occurs:
  - a) When we humbly approach God for healing. (Matthew 8:5-6, Mark 5:27)
  - b) When we put our faith in Him. (Matthew 8:8, Mark 5:28)
  - c) When we ask for forgiveness – because God forgave our sins, we also learn how to show great love for others. (Luke 7:47)
  - d) When we forgive – when we forgive others, we gain inner peace, we thus gain inner healing.
  - e) When we serve others – when we focus on helping others "heal" instead of focusing on ourselves.



### 2. Healing through Forgiveness

- a) Healing will not be complete if we haven't forgiven ourselves and those who have hurt us.
- b) Hurts in different areas of our lives - within ourselves, from our family, from our friends- can hinder us from drawing near to God
- c) In spite of this, forgiveness begins the process of healing because we are called to fully surrender all these into God's hands.

### SHARER(S)

### CONCLUSION

God wants us to experience the fullness of life in His love by knowing Him personally. However, our sins and hurts block much of His blessings for us.

Jesus Christ wants to remove these hindrances and extend His mercy towards us, but we have to do our part and repent from these sins. We need to believe that He will forgive and strengthen us and bring us healing.

2, 000 years ago, Jesus sounded the call to repentance and faith. It is the same call to us today. We are called to turn away from sin and all obstacles to God, and to accept Jesus as Lord. Only then can we fully receive God's blessing, His Holy Spirit which strengthens us and allows us to live lives truly pleasing to Him.

#### NOTE

Session 3 ends with a reflection and activity that leads the participants to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The team leader and other organizers must coordinate with the parish in order to arrange for a priest to be present for this, if possible. A guide for this activity is found on the next page.

**"LETTING GO" REFLECTION & ACTIVITY****REQUIREMENTS**

- Pens & Paper
- Envelopes
- Soft, reflective music may be played throughout the activity.
- A priest for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

**PROCESS**

- After the session, each participant is given a piece of paper and a pen. Ask the participants to fold the paper in half, lengthwise.
- On one side, they are to write down things they have done to hurt others or themselves from which they need forgiveness. On the other side, they are to write down hurts that others have caused them. Let the participants know that these are all confidential and will not be shared with others.
- The team leader, then, leads everyone into a short prayer, asking God for

**NOTE**

The team leader must mention in the prayer that the participants are letting go of these things that they have written down, and are lifting these up to God. This symbolizes the rejection of all the sins they have written, and their closure from all the hurts they hold from other people.

forgiveness for sins committed and healing for any hurts they may have.

- Once they are ready and have prayed for the resolve to surrender these sins and hurts to God, the participants are then asked to throw away the piece of paper in a trash bin (or something similar) placed in front of the session hall. Keep the activity simple.
- True forgiveness comes from receiving the grace of God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. At this time, the participants are encouraged to receive this Sacrament. If a priest is not available, encourage them to go within the coming week.
- The final part of this activity is a letter-writing session to the participants' parents, thanking them and asking them for forgiveness for any hurts they may have caused. The participants will be handed a new piece of paper and an envelope. They will keep these letter until the end of the LCS.

# THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**GOAL** To understand the role of the Holy Spirit and to pray for openness in receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit .

## METHODOLOGY

- Talk proper - 30 Minutes
- Group pray-over session - 30 Minutes
- Intro to Worship - 15 Minutes
- Worship - 15 Minutes

## INTRODUCTION

If you compare the Christians of today with the early Christians, you will find that they were very much different.

### **Christians today:**

Christians today can't seem to live as they should; they seem weak and they lack conviction.  
(Give examples / illustrate)  
However, Christians were not always like that.

### **Christians before:**

The Christians in the early Church possessed certain strength and boldness of character. They had this power that attracted many from all races and walks of life to join this group of mere fishermen, slaves, Gentiles and Jews.

What was this power that transformed 12 insignificant men and their brethren into the pillars that established Christendom? It wasn't human might or intellect but it was the Power of the Holy Spirit; the same Spirit that continues to fill and transform the lives of so many Christians today. Do you want to be like the early Christians and make a difference?

## A. THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Misconceptions:
  - a) "The Holy Spirit is just God's messenger."
  - b) "The Holy Spirit is just the dove in Jesus Christ's baptism."
  - c) "There is no such thing as a Holy Spirit; there's only God."
2. The Holy Spirit is God, the 3rd Person in the Blessed Trinity.
  - a) As the Catechism of the Catholic Church notes, "We firmly believe and confess without reservation that there is only one true God, eternal infinite (immensus) and unchangeable, incomprehensible, almighty and ineffable, the Father and the Son and

the Holy Spirit; three persons indeed, but one essence, substance or nature entirely simple - Lateran Council IV. (CCC, 202)

### 3. God's promised Spirit

To overcome sin, to reform our lives, to be holy, to be true disciples to love our neighbor, all these are very difficult. We cannot do this on our own strength. We need a power outside ourselves. That is the Holy Spirit.

#### a) A new heart and a new spirit

- Many people during the prophet Ezekiel's time were enmeshed in sin and spiritual lifelessness, like many Christians today. This is what God said to them
  - Ezekiel 36:26 God's promise of the Holy Spirit
  - Ezekiel 36:27 God's promise of help and power to do what is right. The Holy Spirit gives us power.
- God's Spirit brings about:
  - Union with God
    - When we receive the power of the Holy Spirit, we begin a personal and intimate relationship with God. God's word becomes alive in us as we read scripture. We hear Him speaking to us in our hearts and we experience Him touching our very lives.
  - A new nature (Galatians 5:22 - 23)
    - As we grow in our personal relationship with God, He slowly molds us into His likeness, removing the selfishness in our hearts, making us more loving, more like Jesus.
  - Power to serve (Acts 1:8)
    - God's Spirit empowers us to serve, giving us the boldness to speak His words and making us willing to face the challenge of bringing others closer to Him despite the many difficulties and trials we may face.

#### NOTE

The Valley of the Dry Bones  
(Ezekiel 37:1-14)

This story illustrates to us what the power of His Holy Spirit can do. In scriptures, wind is often used to refer to God's Spirit.

#### b) The Spirit that God promised through Ezekiel, Jesus gives to His disciples, to us.

- First, Jesus stressed the Spirit's importance. (John 16:7)
- Then Jesus told them He would send them the Spirit so they can be true witnesses (Luke 24:48:49)
- We need to know the Holy Spirit not just as a doctrine but as a Person who truly affects our lives
- Such life in the Spirit was normal for the early Christians. They truly experiences the Holy Spirit at work.
  - In the book of Acts, we see the Holy Spirit among them, guiding them, speaking to them, giving them gifts and sending them on mission.

#### c) God wants all men to have this new life. This new life in the Spirit is available to all who turn away from a life of sin and receive Jesus as Savior and Lord.

## B. RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

### 1. The experience of the early disciples

- a) Jesus promises the Holy Spirit and tells them to wait. (Luke 24:49)
- b) On the day of Pentecost (a Jewish holiday), the Holy Spirit came. (Acts 2: 1-8)
  - An exciting event! Noise like a strong wind, fire, speaking in different tongues.

- Pilgrims from all over were amazed.
  - Peter proclaims the gospel to the people present and 3,000 are converted!
  - The Holy Spirit created bonds of love and unity among the new Christians. The Church was born.
- c) Others as well received the Holy Spirit
- Acts 8: 14-17 (Samaria). Acts 10:44-46 (Cornelius). Acts 19:6 (Ephesus).
  - Those who received the Holy Spirit knew the Lord more personally and more experientially.
2. What does receiving the Holy Spirit mean for us today?
- a) We can experience the same power and gift of the Spirit that the early Christians did.
- Same relationship with Jesus. Same transforming power. Same deep worship. Same power for speaking the Gospel
- b) We can receive the same spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-11)
- These are gifts or charisms of the Holy Spirit are used to gather, sanctify and minister life in the Church throughout the world. Briefly explain each gift (see reference below).
- |            |             |                             |
|------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| • Prophecy | • Knowledge | • Discernment               |
| • Healing  | • Miracles  | • Praying in Tongues        |
| • Wisdom   | • Faith     | • Interpretation of Tongues |

## NOTE

*Additional reference from Charisms © 2009 The National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the United States, Inc. This is how each spiritual gift is classified according to its purpose.*

**Gifts of Grace (Power to Speak)**

- **Tongues** (glossolalia) are God's messages spoken through an individual. Tongues, individually or in a group, as a personal prayer resource without needing interpretation, is akin to the language of lovers, or of a parent to a child. Yielding to tongues opens us up to receive and use the other gifts. There is the phenomenon of speaking publicly in tongues and having someone else understand and express the meaning of tongues. This includes the charism of interpretation.
- **Interpretation of Tongues** is the ability to interpret (not translate) a message given in tongues. Tongues along with interpretation amounts to prophecy.
- **Prophecy** is God's message spoken through an individual to the community. Prophecy does not necessarily mean predicting the future. Paul says the purpose of prophecy is for the "upbuilding and encouragement and consolation" of God's people (1 Cor 14:3).

**Gifts of Service (Power to Know)**

- **Wisdom** is the facility to offer a solution to a problem or to give insightful teachings that opens the hearer to God's wisdom.
- **Knowledge** is the ability to clearly communicate God's word or doctrinal truths, or to know how God is working within an individual or in the community at a particular time.
- **Discernment** is the capacity to know whether a gift or inspiration has at its source the Holy Spirit, is of human origin, or of evil influence.

**Gift of Works (Power to Do)**

- **Faith** is a supernatural infusion to know with full certainty that God will bring something about.
- **Miracles** are God's supernatural interventions into the natural realm to demonstrate divine power. Miracles help strengthen faith or bring about faith.
- **Healing** is the manifestation of God's power to restore a person's spiritual, psychological, or physical well-being. This may be instantaneous or gradual, and often through the use of natural means.

- c) A word on the gift of tongues.
  - It is a gift of prayer
    - It is a prayer that only God can understand and only we can speak. Because of this spiritual gift, one's soul is able to communicate what it really wants to express to God.
  - This spiritual gift pleases God.
    - We humble ourselves when we pray in a language we don't understand. This total humility pleases God.
  - The gift of tongues becomes a doorway to the other spiritual gifts (mentioned above). It allows us to access and use them in a better manner.

**NOTE**

The speaker must state that all the spiritual gifts are important and must not highlight too much the gift of Tongues.

### 3. How do we receive the Holy Spirit?

- a) Sacrament of Baptism
  - Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we are "plunged" or "immersed" into Christ's death from which we rise up as a new creature, regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit (CCC, 1213-1215. Titus 3:5). This is where we first receive the Holy Spirit
- b) Sacrament of Confirmation
  - Consequently, when we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Church teaches that "the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1285). We then become true witnesses and affirmed of our call to spread the faith by word and deed.
- c) We ask (Luke 11:9-10)
  - Overtime, we may forget that God has given us His Spirit, so we have to ask Him over and over again. In faith, we know that when we ask for it, it will be given to us.
  - We ask specifically for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the spiritual gifts.
- d) We have Faith (Luke 11:13)

### 4. Hindrances to receiving the Holy Spirit

- a) Unrepentant Attitude ("I am never wrong")
  - Sin alienates us from God. When we refuse to be repentant for our sins, we keep ourselves from experiencing God and His Spirit. This is why we need to go to confession.
- b) Feeling of Unworthiness ("Am I worthy?")
  - Everyone is unworthy, what the Lord requires is simply a humble spirit that approaches Him in repentance and asks for forgiveness.
- c) Pride ("I am too cool for this")
  - Pride keeps us from acknowledging our need for God, and asking Him into our lives, but God will keep on knocking until we're humble enough to ask Him in.
  - If we're afraid of looking foolish, we must humble ourselves if we are to receive God's Spirit.
- d) Doubt ("Is this for real")
  - Focus on what is true. God promised His spirit and He never breaks His promises to His people.



## C. THE PRAYOVER SESSION

Our purpose tonight is to ask the Lord for the power of His Holy Spirit that will enable us to live as true Christians. To do this, we will first have to come before our Lord, believe and accept Him as our personal Lord and Savior and commit our lives to Him. After this, we will pray with one another for the Holy Spirit

1. Explain the procedure briefly
  - a) First, we will be having a 'Commitment to Christ Ceremony' where you will be given the opportunity to decide for yourselves if you want to follow Jesus Christ.
  - b) After this, we will start to pray over you as a group.
2. Commitment Ceremony
  - a) After the explanation, the speaker asks the participants to meditate about all the sessions, especially Session 4.
  - b) While the participants are meditating, a meditative song may be played (Here I am to Worship, Lord I Give You My Heart, God Alone, etc.)
  - c) After the song is sung, the speaker asks those who want to make a commitment to Christ to stand up. Then, the Prayer of Commitment will be recited together.
3. Commitment to Christ prayer \*\*
4. Praying over for the Holy Spirit \*\*: sing Spirit of the Living God or similar song.
5. After the praying over have the Intro to Worship segment \*\*.
  - "We encourage you to continue to be in an atmosphere of prayer."
  - The worship leader talks about the main points of worship.
6. Worship

### NOTE

The following are further explained and found in the Appendices section, in order from page 40-42.

**\*\*Commitment to Christ Prayer**

**\*\*Praying Over for the Holy Spirit**

**\*\*Intro to Worship**

## CONCLUSION

Recall Ezekiel 37:1-14. Living the Christian life is very difficult. But we have hope in God's promised Spirit. This Spirit is the one which strengthens us and gives us the gifts we need in order for us to live, as true sons and daughters of God.

Do not expect all your problems to go away all at once, though many will. The Holy Spirit will make a big change in you and you will see it. But not everything will change right away. Some things will take a while to get worked out, but now you have a new power to use in working them out.

# GROWING IN THE SPIRIT

**GOAL** To learn the basic tools to grow and mature as Christians.

## METHODOLOGY

- Talk proper - 30 Minutes
- Letter opening with parents - 30 Minutes

## INTRODUCTION

We heard and did so many good things in this seminar. First, we heard how great God's love is, and because of this love, we responded to His invitation for us to have a personal relationship with Him. Furthermore, we lifted up all our sins and hurts to God, through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, as these are obstacles that hinder us from receiving God's grace. We even received His Holy Spirit. Everyone here, in one way or another, has experienced God's goodness this weekend/past few weeks. Now, after all these, when we go back to our homes and schools, what is in store for us?

In this session, we'd like to share with you how best to sustain our renewed relationship with God.

### A. HOW CAN WE GROW AS SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD?

We know, undoubtedly now more than ever, that God's love for us is great; that His Holy Spirit is real and that He is truly within us. God is truly great and all His plans for us are really for our own good.

However, when we leave this venue, what is in store for us, after this seminar? What will happen once we go back and be with our old friends and classmates? Most of them will certainly not understand what we have gone through this weekend. They might even brand us as weird, when we share to them our experiences.

Because of these reasons, it is very important for our hearts to take on the right posture.

1. We have God's gift of salvation. (Eph 2:8)
  - a) When we leave this place, we should be convicted that what we experienced was truly a gift from God for our salvation.
  - b) The way to God through Jesus is the **only** way and we should resist any idea that tells us otherwise.
2. We have God's Spirit. (Acts 1:8)
  - a) We now have God's Spirit within us; to strengthen, protect and help us overcome all obstacles that may hinder us to grow more as men and women of God.
3. We need to grow in our Life in the Spirit. (James 1:23)
  - a) We must do our part in order for us to grow in our relationship with God. Everything we have heard in this seminar will be of no help to us, unless we start practicing it in our own personal lives. Hence, we need to invest time and effort for our spiritual growth.

## B. TOOLS FOR CHRISTIAN GROWTH: THE FIVE SPOKES

We have the different tools needed for Christian spiritual growth. All of these tools are available for us and would help us nurture the graces we have received and will allow us to receive so much more.

### NOTE

*You can illustrate this portion by relating the tools for Christian growth to the five spokes of a wheel. The wheel's outer rim represents our Christian life, which draws power from the hub or center of the wheel; which in turn represents Jesus Christ. The power is transmitted through the four spokes of the wheel. If any one of the four spokes is missing, the wheel will not function properly.*

### 1. Prayer

Prayer is the primary means for establishing and maintaining a deep and loving personal relationship between ourselves and God.

- a) Our prayer must be faithful
  - Decide to spend time with the Lord everyday. Start with 15 minutes.
  - Decide on the practical details.
    - When? Decide on a specific time of the day and protect that.
    - Where? Mt 6:6. A place where you will not be disturbed or distracted.
    - How long? Begin with 5 to 10 minutes, and increase later.
  - Adopt a format to begin
    - ACTS. Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, Supplication.
    - Use daily prayer guides.
- b) Our prayer must be led by the Holy Spirit.
  - Scheduled and structured prayer is helpful, but could make our prayer dry and mechanical. Be open to changing your format as the Spirit leads.
- c) Our prayer must be centered on a relationship with Jesus.
  - Prayer is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Our goal is not “to pray” or even “to pray well,” but to grow in our relationship with the Lord.
  - People can get wrapped up in techniques. While these can help, prayer is really very simple. It is a matter of loving God and being loved by Him.
- d) Praying the rosary
  - In our Catholic faith, the intercession of Mother Mary is a very powerful tool. Devotion to Mother Mary is an essential part of what we believe in. She is the foremost disciple of Jesus and we can grow by imitating her and asking for her intercession.

### 2. Study

We need to know God and understand Him and His ways. Study is a deliberate, focused exercise of the intellect, not referring only to scholarly or academic endeavor but to the wider process of understanding more about God so we can love and better serve Him.

Three ways we can learn more about God:

- a) The Bible.
  - This is the most important, because this is the very word of God. It teaches us who God is, what He has done, and what He wants us to do.
  - We should read the Bible *daily*.
    - Start with 10 to 15 minutes.
    - Pursue a more deliberate study of portions of the Bible.
    - We should make it a goal to read the whole Bible.

- We should attend seminars that help us learn more about the Bible and Bible methodologies.
- b) Spiritual reading.
  - After reading what God has said of Himself (Bible), we can read what men have said about God. We can draw on spiritual insights and study done throughout the life of the Church.
  - This includes reading spiritual books, magazines, articles, etc.
- c) Teachings and preachings.
  - Our teaching and formation program in the parish.
  - The word of God spoken in the Sunday homily, in parish events, in conferences, etc.
  - The Catechism of the Catholic Church, YouCat

### 3. Service

Young people are endowed with a lot of gifts and talents that oftentimes are not utilized productively, especially in serving God. We believe that with God as motivation, young people, like us, will be able to share their gifts and talents in serving God and others.

Ways we can serve:

- a) We serve God by the way we live. We give witness to our faith in Jesus Christ; by the way we live our lives. (James 2:14-17). Be aware of opportunities to share your faith, either through words or actions, to your family, friends, neighbors, and classmates.
- b) We serve God by fulfilling the responsibilities He gave us in our life; as sons and daughters, as brothers and sisters, as students, etc.
- c) We serve God by making our resources and ourselves available for His work.

The parish youth ministry is an evangelistic and missionary community of young adults. Our mission is to bring God to other teenagers.

By doing this, we develop a sense of mission. We share our time, talent and treasure to make a real effort to serve God through whatever service; as speakers, facilitators, music ministry etc.

### 4. Sacraments

The most important tool for spiritual growth are the sacraments. They are the main channels of God's grace for our lives.

- a) We recommend frequent confession (Penance) and communion (Eucharist).
  - Though confession is required only once a year, we should avail of this more often. We of course should immediately go to confession if we have committed mortal sin.
  - Though communion is required only once a year during the Easter season, we should receive communion, with the proper disposition, whenever we go to Mass, which should be at least every Sunday.

### 5. Fellowship

Fellowship refers to everything that we do together as a parish youth ministry. It is being one as brothers and sisters in Christ through fun and friendship.

- a) Why is fellowship important?
  - It is in our nature to enjoy the company of people our age. It is for this reason that teenagers have their own groups in the neighborhood, and fraternities and sororities in school.
  - We do not become complete Christians by ourselves. We must be joined to others in order to experience the fullness of Christian life.
    - We need the support of others. We need their wisdom and strength.
    - We need to do things together. Fellowship is not an optional extra.

- b) Some ways to experience Christian fellowship.
  - Worship in liturgies, prayer meetings, conferences.
  - Coming together for teaching and formation.
  - Serving together (like the team in this LCS).
  - Parish events.
  - Social gatherings.

## C. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. In this LCS we have met Christ, we have are learning how to live Christ, and we are empowered to share Christ.
  - a) We need to enter more deeply into a life in Christ. Deeper transformation. Greater empowerment. More zeal for the gospel.
  - b) We need to help mainstream Catholic lay evangelization. We must help bring Catholics back to God and back to the church.
  - c) All this can happen through the LCSC movement in our parish.
2. We invite you to be part of the Live Christ, Share Christ (LCSC) movement.
  - a) We have a responsibility to encourage and support each other in the Christian life. We need to grow together as Catholics. We need to serve Christ and his Church.
  - b) You become part of the LCSC movement through a commitment embodied in a covenant.

### NOTE

Read the LCSC covenant and explain briefly. This is found in the Appendices section on page 43.

- c) We provide parish support.
  - Monthly prayer assembly.
  - Formation courses as needed (growth courses, marriage enrichment, youth camp, etc.).
  - Resource materials for further growth (books, CDs, etc.).
  - Other activities such as Family Days, conferences, social events.

## Conclusion

God calls us to live a life that is pleasing to Him. He loved us first and He even died for us. He even gave us His Holy Spirit. But more than all these things, God gives us tools for us to grow in our relationship with Him. Now, the ball is in our hands.

We're not saying that after going through this seminar, we'll be living perfect Christian lives. Chances are, we'll probably still fail, but it's our decision to stand up again and that is what's important. God died for us. Now it's time for us to live for Him!

# LCS SCHEDULES : FORMAT 1

*The one weekend schedule is suggested to have over a Saturday and a Sunday with Mass being celebrated as the first event on Sunday. The one weekend schedule is as follows:*

## SATURDAY

8:00 am	Arrival and Registration / Breakfast
9:00 am	Ice Breakers
9:30 am	Camp Introduction Gathering / Song Teaching / Opening Prayer
10:00 am	Session 1: Jesus the Messiah
10:45 am	Discussion Group
11:15 am	Session 2: Called to Witness
12:00 pm	Lunch with Discussion Groups
1:00 pm	Gathering / Ice Breakers / Worship Introduction
1:30 pm	Session 3: Repentance and Faith
3:00 pm	Confession
4:00 pm	Break (1-1) / Ice Breakers
5:30 pm	Dinner
6:30 pm	Gathering / Worship
6:45 pm	Session 4: Gift of the Holy Spirit
7:30 pm	Pray Overs
8:00 pm	Closing Worship
8:30 pm	Fellowship

## SUNDAY

8:00 am	Mass (or the earliest Mass)
9:00 am	Gathering / Breakfast
9:45 am	Common Prayer Time
10:00 am	Session 5: Growing in the Holy Spirit
10:30 am	Letter Opening
11:00 am	Closing Ceremonies
11:30 am	Closing Worship

# LCS SCHEDULES : FORMAT 2

*For the 2-week schedule, the LCS is recommended to take place on Saturdays, with the first presentation consisting of 3 sessions over a 9-hour time frame and the second presentation consisting of 2 sessions over a 5-hour time frame. The two-week schedule is as follows:*

## FIRST SATURDAY

8:00 am	Arrival and Registration / Breakfast
9:00 am	Ice Breakers
9:30 am	Camp Introduction Gathering / Song Teaching / Opening Prayer
10:00 am	Session 1: Jesus the Messiah
10:45 am	Discussion Group
11:15 am	Session 2: Called to Witness
12:00 pm	Lunch with Discussion Groups
1:00 pm	Gathering / Ice Breakers / Worship Introduction
1:30 pm	Session 3: Repentance and Faith
3:00 pm	Confession
4:00 pm	Break (1-1) / Ice Breakers
5:00 pm	Gathering/ Worship
5:30 pm	Closing / Fellowship

## SUNDAY

8:00 am	Arrival and Registration / Breakfast
9:00 am	Icebreaker
9:30 am	Gathering / Opening Prayer + 1 Song / Recap
10:00 am	Session 4: Gifts of the Holy Spirit
10:45 am	Pray-over Session
11:30 am	Worship
12:00 nn	Lunch
1:30 pm	Gathering / Worship
2:00 pm	Session 5: Growing in the Holy Spirit
2:30 pm	Letter Opening
3:00 pm	Closing Ceremony
3:30 pm	Closing Worship
4:00 pm	Fellowship



# LCS SCHEDULES : FORMAT 3

*The 5-week schedule is recommended to coincide with the 9-week Couples LCSC schedule. The sessions will occur once per week over a 3-hour time frame.*

## FIRST SATURDAY

8:00 am	Arrival / Gathering / Icebreakers / Song Teaching / Opening Prayer
9:00 am	Session 1 : Jesus the Messiah
9:45 am	Discussion Group
10:15 am	Closing Prayer
10:30 am	Fellowship

## SECOND SATURDAY

8:00 am	Arrival / Gathering / Icebreakers / Worship Intro / Opening Prayer
9:00 am	Session 2 : Called to Witness
9:45 am	Discussion Group
10:15 am	Closing Worship
10:30 am	Fellowship

## THIRD SATURDAY

8:00 am	Arrival / Gathering / Icebreakers / Opening Worship
9:00 am	Session 3 : Repentance and Faith
9:45 am	Confessions
10:15 am	Closing Worship
10:30 am	Fellowship

## FOURTH SATURDAY

8:00 am	Arrival / Gathering / Icebreakers / Worship Intro / Opening Prayer
9:00 am	Session 4 : Gift of the Holy Spirit
9:30 am	Pray-over Session
10:15 am	Closing Worship
10:30 am	Fellowship

## FIFTH SATURDAY

8:00 am	Arrival / Gathering / Icebreakers / Worship Intro / Opening Prayer
9:00 am	Session 5 : Growing in the Holy Spirit
9:45 am	Letter Opening
10:15 am	Closing Worship
10:30 am	Fellowship



## CH 3: APPENDICES

# LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR INFORMATION SHEET

DATE : \_\_\_\_\_

(LAST NAME)	(FIRST NAME)	(MIDDLE NAME)	(NICKNAME)
_____	_____	_____	_____

HOME ADDRESS : \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE : \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE : \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS : \_\_\_\_\_

GENDER : \_\_\_\_\_ AGE : \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH : \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE LEVEL : \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF SCHOOL : \_\_\_\_\_

HOBBIES & INTERESTS : \_\_\_\_\_

LANGUAGES SPOKEN : \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PARISH : \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION : \_\_\_\_\_

ALLERGIES : \_\_\_\_\_

ANY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS : \_\_\_\_\_

# COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

**LEADER** : Do you renounce Satan and all wrongdoing?

**PARTICIPANT** : Yes, I do.

**LEADER** : Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died to free you from sins and that He rose from the dead to bring you new life?

**PARTICIPANT** : Yes, I do.

**LEADER** : Do you choose to follow Jesus as your Lord, to love Him, honor Him and obey Him?

**PARTICIPANT** : Yes, I do.

## PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Ask the participants to repeat after you

*Lord Jesus Christ, / I want to belong to you from now on. / I want to be free / from the dominion of darkness / and the rule of Satan, / and I want to enter into your kingdom / and be part of your people. / I will turn away from all wrong doing, / and I will avoid everything / that leads me to wrongdoing. / I ask you to forgive / all the sins that I have committed / I offer my life to you, / and I promise to obey you as my Lord.*

Everyone is then asked to be seated for the group pray over session.

# PRAYING OVER FOR THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

## NOTE

The pray over is done with the participants seated and the service team members surrounding them, with their hand(s) raised toward them. The participants are prayed over *as a group*. The team members pray silently in their hearts with the one doing the verbal praying over. The one praying over can use the guide below, prayerfully reading it, or he can pray spontaneously, but incorporating the different elements.

**Lord, we praise and thank You** for this time when you gather us in Your name. Thank You for bringing us together in this seminar, where we have met You and have been learning about Your way of life. We know that You desire so much more for us, because of Your great love for us and Your wonderful plan for our future. We are here now to receive the continued blessings that You have already prepared for us.

**Lord, we pray for your protection** first of all. We know the evil one is not happy with what You are doing in our lives, and would like to keep us from drawing closer to You. In Your name we bind all the evil forces that are hovering around this place. We ask You to direct your angels to draw their fiery swords and keep the enemy away for this place. Lord, keep us safe and secure in Your love and care.

**Lord, we are sinners. We acknowledge our failures before You.** We truly repent of how we have fallen short of Your righteousness. We confess our weakness and lack of resolve in living the Christian life. We truly appreciate how time and again you have forgiven us and brought us back to Yourself. We ask that You continue to deliver us from sin and evil. Strengthen us in our weakness. Keep us persevering despite obstacles. Keep us always in Your tight embrace.

Lord, we are a wounded people. We have undergone experiences in life that pained us, scarred us, and kept us in bondage. We have memories of events that discourage us, weaken us, and keep us from moving forward. Lord, You know what in our past bothers and afflicts us. [(Addressing the participants) Brothers and sisters, take a few moments to present your own pain to God (pause for 7 seconds).] **Lord, we ask for Your healing hand upon our hearts and minds and souls.** Remove the poison that lingers. Make us whole in spirit. Thank You, Lord, for the inner healing that only you can bring.

Now we come to You, Lord, for your most important promise. You said that we only need to ask and we will receive, knock and the door will be opened, that you would give Your Holy Spirit to those who ask. We are before You now as a people who are asking. **Lord, we need Your Spirit in our lives.** We need your Spirit in order to attain the victory that You have already won for us. We need your Spirit so that we might truly know You and live Your way of life. **Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in us the fire of Your love.**

[(Addressing the participants) Brothers and sisters, in your hearts, in silence, ask the Lord to give you the Holy Spirit, as we continue to pray for you.] **Lord, we ask that you pour out your Holy Spirit upon your people here.** You promised, they have asked, and so we pray for a renewed outpouring of Your Spirit in their lives. Just as on Pentecost, fill them and empower them with your Spirit. Pour Your Spirit upon them. Baptize them with Your Holy Spirit.

[(Addressing the participants) We will now sing "Spirit of the Living God." Continue to ask God for a renewed infilling of His Spirit.] (Sing "Spirit of the Living God." At the end of the song, the guitarist continues to strum, while the service team members praise God aloud, leading to singing in tongues. During the praising and singing in tongues, encourage the participants to do so as well.)

**Thank you, Lord, for the outpouring of Your Spirit upon Your people. Thank you, Lord, for Your great blessing. Thank you, Lord, for Your faithfulness upon us all.**

Lord, now that we have received Your Holy Spirit in a new way, we look to living a more vibrant Christian life. We desire to love You and serve You more. We know you are there to help us, by Your abundant grace, and also through gifts You give us. Help us in our weakness. [(Addressing the participants) Brothers and sisters, you know what you need or what you desire. Ask God for these. (Pause for 7 seconds)]. **Thank You, Lord, for hearing the prayers of Your people. Bless them with everything they need to live for You.**

**Lord, please continue to grant Your people the grace to be strong Christians, committed to Your way of life and to the service of Your Kingdom. Keep them always in Your loving embrace. Fill their hearts always with Your peace and joy.**

**All these we ask and pray, in the mighty name of Jesus our Lord, Amen.**

## INTRO TO WORSHIP

How great our God is! Our experience in this seminar is all about God loving us immensely. Now, our response is to love him back through praises and thanksgiving. This calls for a celebration of God's love. We are to worship him.

### WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Worship is being able to come into the loving, healing and mighty presence of God and being able to acknowledge that HE ALONE IS GOD – loving, healing and mighty! Worship is not about us it is all about Him.

### HOW DO WE WORSHIP?

Come before God's presence focusing on Him alone. We sing praises and thanksgiving to the Lord. (St. Augustine once said - "He who sings, prays twice.") First, we utter all our praises to Him spontaneously. Then we sing songs of praise and worship to God. After doing these, we sing in the spirit and pray in tongues. Afterwards, we voice out our prayers to Him by following A.C.T.S. flow of prayer-Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving and Supplication.

Feel free to raise your hands, jump, sing aloud, dance, pleasing and glorifying the Lord. Cite examples. (E.g. Worship is just like a concert or serenade for God.)

"Let's all praise and worship our God!"

#### NOTE

Worship leader must be different from the speaker. Have a smooth transition after the pray over session, maintaining the atmosphere of prayer while exhorting about

#### NOTE

The Line-up of worship songs should include three songs only - two fast and one slow. Remember that it will be the participants' first worship, it should not take long.

# THE LCSC COVENANT

Trusting in the Lord's help and guidance:

- 1. I shall live as a follower of Christ.**
  - \* Pray and read the Bible daily.
  - \* Strive for holiness and Christian perfection.
- 2. I shall be a committed and active member of my parish community.**
  - \* Love and serve my parish.
  - \* Relate in love, loyalty and respect with all parishioners.
  - \* Actively participate in parish events.
  - \* Support the parish with my time and finances.
- 3. I shall be a witness to the world of God's love.**
  - \* Build a strong family for Christ.
  - \* Actively evangelize.
  - \* Live out and defend the culture of life.
  - \* Love and care for the poor.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, with the intercession of our blessed Mother Mary, help me to faithfully live this covenant, for His greater honor and glory and for the good of my brothers and sisters. Amen.

## NOTE

### The importance of having a covenant is as follows:

The LCS is just the first step in living Christ and sharing Christ. It is embarking on a path that is for life. As such, the covenant reminds LCS graduates of what God has started in their lives, and the need for a continuing response on their part.

Having a covenant reminds us of the seriousness of God's call, and the new covenant we live in Christ.

We as Church are journeying as a people, and the covenant gives us a common framework for our journey.

Having a covenant provides us with a tool by which we call on each other to live the Christian life as we have committed to do. It helps us become our brother's keeper, and ensures that no one is left behind.



# LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR REPORT

NAME OF PARISH : \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE : \_\_\_\_\_

PARISH PRIEST : \_\_\_\_\_ DIOCESE : \_\_\_\_\_

DATE(S) OF LCS : \_\_\_\_\_ BATCH NUMBER : \_\_\_\_\_

## GRADUATES:

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE BEGINNING OF LCS : \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO COMPLETED LCS : \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF MEN : \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF WOMEN : \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER BY GRADE LEVEL

6TH - 8TH GRADE : \_\_\_\_\_

9TH - 10TH GRADE : \_\_\_\_\_

11TH - 12TH GRADE : \_\_\_\_\_

COLLEGE : \_\_\_\_\_

LCS TEAM LEADERS : \_\_\_\_\_

## ASSISTED BY :

☐ PARISH PRIEST : \_\_\_\_\_

☐ PARISH YOUTH MINISTER : \_\_\_\_\_

☐ CFC FFL AND/OR YFL COORDINATORS : \_\_\_\_\_

☐ OTHER : \_\_\_\_\_

REPORT SUBMITTED BY : \_\_\_\_\_

DATE SUBMITTED : \_\_\_\_\_

# PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

## ON A SCALE OF 1-5 HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOLLOWING?

SESSION 1 SPEAKER	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 1 CONTENT	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 2 SPEAKER	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 2 CONTENT	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 3 SPEAKER	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 3 CONTENT	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 4 SPEAKER	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 4 CONTENT	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 5 SPEAKER	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION 5 CONTENT	1	2	3	4	5
SESSION ACTIVITIES	1	2	3	4	5
ICE BREAKERS, FELLOWSHIP, MEAL TIMES	1	2	3	4	5
SONG SELECTION	1	2	3	4	5

1 : Non-effective 2 : Semi-effective 3 : Neutral

4 : Effective

5 : Very effective

### SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS

WHAT WAS THE MOST MEMORABLE PART OF THE LCS?

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SESSION/ACTIVITY AND WHY?

WILL YOU INVITE OTHER TO GO TO LCS? WHY/WHY NOT?

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT LCS?

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU THINK CAN BE IMPROVED ABOUT THE LCS?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS :

# THE LCSC LOGO



THERE ARE 4 BASIC ELEMENTS IN THE LCSC LOGO - THE CROSS, THE DOVE, THE HOST, AND THE STAR.

## THE CROSS

Our task is to proclaim Christ and the salvation he won on the cross. This is the LCSC basic mission of evangelization. Our desire is for all Catholics to know Christ, to live Christ and to share Christ.

Christ and his cross are at the very center of our lives and our mission. We live for Christ and we die for Christ (Phil 1:21).

The color is red, signifying the precious blood shed by Jesus on the cross, and also the call to us to lay down our very lives for the cause of Christ. It is a call to self-sacrificial love and martyrdom.

## THE DOVE

The dove represents the Holy Spirit. We are a people who live a life in the Spirit, and who are empowered for mission by the Spirit (Acts 1:8).

The color is gold. Through the fire of the Holy Spirit, we are purified (Sir 2:5). We are to be sacrificial offerings to God (Wis 3:6). We look forward to wearing crowns of gold in heaven (Rev 4:4).

## THE HOST

The host represents the Eucharist, which is central to our Roman Catholic faith. LCSC is about mainstreaming Catholic lay evangelization.

The white color points to the purity of our lives. We are called to a life of holiness (1 Pet 1:15-16). In fact, we are to be perfect just as the heavenly Father is perfect (Mt 5:48).

## THE STAR

The star represents Mary, who is the Star of Evangelization. She is crucial to our work of evangelization and mission, being there through salvation history, from Genesis (Gen 3:15) to Revelation (Rev 12:1-7).

The star is also a stylized figure of a person leaping and dancing with joy, with Christ in his/her heart and anointed by the Holy Spirit. We reflect the joy of Mary in our life and our mission (Lk 1:47-49).

# EVANGELISTIC SPIRITUALITY

**THE LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR (LCS)** fosters a spirituality that is charismatic (as in Charismatic Renewal). The basic reason is that the spirituality for evangelization and mission is charismatic spirituality.

While there are many different spiritualities in the Church (for example, contemplative, various religious orders), and all are valid and important, charismatic spirituality is intended by God for the work of massive evangelization. How is this so?

The blue color signifies our consecration as a people to Mary.

## **First, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality of empowerment by the Spirit for worldwide mission.**

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, after having commissioned his disciples to preach the good news to all the nations, he told them to wait for the promise of the Father, by which they would be “clothed with power from on high.” (Lk 24:49). Jesus told them that they would “be baptized with the holy Spirit.” (Acts 1:5). Jesus further said, “But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8). This baptism in the Holy Spirit is empowerment for worldwide mission.

As Catholics we of course have received the Holy Spirit in the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. In charismatic renewal, people are prayed with for the so-called baptism in the Spirit, in order that there be a renewed infilling or outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives, and so that they would become witnesses to bring the good news of salvation in Jesus to many others.

## **Second, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality of Pentecost, when the Church was born.**

Jesus had told them to wait, and the disciples did as they were told. They waited in Jerusalem, praying in the upper room. Then, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon them. The manifestation of this infilling by the Holy Spirit was that the disciples “began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.” (Acts 2:4). They praised God and proclaimed “the mighty acts of God” in a loud voice. Some people thought they were drunk (Acts 2:15).

Peter was emboldened and empowered to preach one sermon where 3,000 persons were converted. He explained that what was happening was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel. God pours out a portion of His spirit upon all flesh, and people prophesy, see visions and dream dreams (Acts 2:17). Then God will work wonders and signs (Acts 2:19), so that those who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved, before the second coming of Jesus (Acts 2:20-21).

## **Third, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality of the early Church.**

The early Church was a charismatic Church. The baptism in the Spirit was an integral part of mission. Peter and John prayed for Jews in Samaria to receive the Holy Spirit; “they laid hands on them and they received the holy Spirit.” (Acts 8:17). Through Peter, the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on Gentiles, and they spoke in tongues and glorified God (Acts 10:45-46). Paul went to Ephesus and baptized some disciples in the name of Jesus. “And when Paul laid his hands on them, the holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.” (Acts 19:6).

As the Church grew and became institutionalized, the charismatic dimension was diminished, and even lost. God sought to bring back this essential dimension of Church life and mission, and so the Catholic Charismatic Renewal started in the mid-1970s.

# EVANGELISTIC SPIRITUALITY

## Fourth, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality of our ancestors-in-faith, the Israelites.

God intended Israel to be His light to a pagan world. The people whom God formed as a people, whom He entered into covenant with, whom He taught about worship, were charismatic. Charismatic worship was the norm.

This is evident from their “songbook,” the Book of Psalms. They were exhorted to praise out loud, to shout, play musical instruments (loud ones like horns and cymbals), to lift their hands, to dance.

Even King David, out of joy at the return of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, led the people in procession amid great festivities. David stripped down to a linen apron and danced with abandon, while all Israel gave out shouts of joy and to the sound of the horn (2 Sm 6:14-15).

Christians today are the new Israel. We inherit the promises of God to His chosen people. But what God intended for Israel, in raising them to be His light to the world, is also for us Christians today. This includes our spirituality. We would do well to live out such a spirituality. Even if those close to us become ashamed of us (2 Sm 6:20). Even if people think that we are drunk (Acts 2:15).

## Fifth, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality that more readily brings people, especially nominal Christians, to personal conversion and transformation in Christ.

It touches not just the minds but especially the hearts of people. When Peter preached his sermon on Pentecost, those who heard “were cut to the heart” and were led to repentance (Acts 2:37-38).

From repentance, people continue on their journey, looking to the holiness to which they are called. This is how they become effective witnesses to the faith.

## Sixth, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality that provides spiritual gifts that are essential for mission.

When the Church speaks about spiritual gifts, what is often thought of are the seven gifts in Isaiah: wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord (Is 11:2-3a). These are sanctifying gifts, essential for us to grow in holiness. On the other hand, there are charismatic gifts, intended for service. The main list of such gifts is in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 (there are other gifts in other passages). Sanctifying gifts are for the internal dimension of our individual Christian life, while charismatic gifts are for the external dimension of service, including building up the body.

Many of these gifts are no longer appreciated or even known. But they are crucial to evangelization and mission. For example, faith refers to the faith that moves mountains (or demolishes strongholds). Miraculous healings and mighty deeds are manifestations of the power of the Spirit. Tongues is important for prayer (1 Cor 14:2) and for connecting to the spirit of God (1 Cor 14:14).

## Seventh, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality that builds Christian community.

The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples resulted in Christian community, in the establishment of the Church. The disciples began to live a communal life, characterized by formation, prayers and worship, the Eucharist, sharing of resources, meetings and fellowship, effective witness, massive evangelization (Acts 2:42-47). They even solved the problem of poverty, such that there was no one in need (Acts 4:32-35).

# EVANGELISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Everyone receives a charismatic gift (1 Cor 12:7,11). These gifts are used to build community (1 Cor 12:12,27-30), to prepare the body for service to the larger society. The work of evangelization is the work of the whole Church and not just separate individuals.

## **Eighth, charismatic spirituality is the spirituality of worship in heaven.**

We all want to get to heaven. Now according to the vision of John, worship in heaven will be charismatic. The angels and saints praise and cry out to God in a loud voice (Rev 7:10,19:1). It will be “like the sound of a great multitude or the sound of rushing water or mighty peals of thunder” (Rev 19:6).

It would be good to get used to it while we are still on earth.

One problem in the Church today is that Catholics do not really know the Holy Spirit. They know the Father, who is Creator. They know the Son, who is Savior. But they miss out on the Holy Spirit, who is Sanctifier and who empowers for mission. It may well be that most Catholics today, when asked, “Did you receive the holy Spirit when you became believers?” (Acts 19:2), would answer, “We have never even heard that there is a holy Spirit.” (Acts 19:2).

Catholics first receive the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Baptism. Baptism cleanses us of original sin and makes us children of God. It is “a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” (Acts 19:4). Then, when we have been instructed in the faith and are mature enough to think and decide for ourselves, we receive the sacrament of Confirmation. This makes us soldiers of Christ, tasked to proclaim him to the world.

But how come many baptized and confirmed Catholics are so sinful, lethargic in their faith, not aware at all of the call to evangelize? This is where a renewed infilling or outpouring of the Holy Spirit is needed. This is accomplished through the so-called baptism in the Holy Spirit and entrance into the charismatic dimension of faith.

The Catholic Church is in essence a missionary Church. But how can she accomplish her mission without the active work of the Holy Spirit?

Do all Catholics have to be charismatics, or be part of charismatic renewal? No. But if the Catholic Church is to live up to its essence as a missionary Church, then charismatic spirituality is very helpful. We might even say crucial.

**FR. RANIERO CANTALAMESSA**, the preacher to the papal household, said the following about Charismatic Renewal in his third Advent sermon on December 2011.

"In one of his documents, John Paul II said that the proliferation of sects forced us to ask why, to ask what is lacking in our pastoral methods. My own conviction, based on experience -- and not only in Latin American countries -- is as follows. What is attractive outside the Church are not certain alternative forms of popular piety, which the majority of other churches and sects reject and fight against. It is a proclamation, partial perhaps, but powerful, of the grace of God, the possibility of experiencing Jesus as one's personal Lord and Saviour, belonging to a group of people who personally take care of your needs, who pray over you when medicine has nothing more to say.

If on the one hand we can rejoice that these people have found Christ and have been converted, it is sad that in order to do so they felt they had to leave their Church. In the majority of churches where these brothers and sisters end up, everything revolves around first conversion and the acceptance of Jesus as Lord. In the Catholic Church, thanks to the sacraments, the magisterium, and the wealth of spirituality, there is the advantage of not stopping at that initial stage, but one can reach the fullness and perfection of the Christian life. The saints are proof of this. But it is necessary to take that conscious and personal initial step, and this is precisely where we are challenged and stimulated by the evangelical and Pentecostal communities.

In this respect, the Charismatic Renewal has proved to be, in the words of Paul VI, "a chance for the Church." In Latin America, the pastors of the Church are realising that the Charismatic Renewal is not (as some believed at the beginning) "part of the problem" of the exodus of Catholics from the Church, but is rather part of the solution to the problem. Statistics will never show how many people have remained faithful to the Church because of it, because they found within its ranks what others were looking for elsewhere. The numerous communities that have sprung up from within the Charismatic Movement, albeit with the limitations and at times the drifting that one finds in any human venture, are at the front line of service to the Church and of evangelization."



# BOOK RESOURCES

## PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY

Amazing Truths that will Change your Life  
Focused on Christ  
Following Christ  
Worship

## NEW EVANGELIZATION

BE.LI.EV.E!  
Fishers of Men  
Forty Days of Wonder-Working Faith  
Renewing the Face of the Earth  
The New Evangelization -- A Work of the Divine Family

## FAMILY LIFE

Families in the Holy Spirit

## PRO-LIFE

Forty Days of Life

## BUILDING THE CHURCH OF THE POOR

Bringing Glad Tidings to the Poor  
Forty Days with the Poor  
Freeing the Captives

## ON LEADERSHIP

Servant Leadership

## ON MARY

Forty Days with Mary  
Forty More Days with Mary  
Mary in the Work of Evangelization and Family Renewal

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