

INTRODUCTION

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.”

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. Even further, Catholics are being lost at an alarming rate to fundamentalists, sects and cults, 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. This is the call to the New Evangelization.

While there can be various ways of responding to the call, one particular response is Live Christ, Share Christ (LCSC). This manual focuses on a particular methodology of LCSC, which is a program 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 laypeople to participate in the work, based in parishes.

It is hoped that through the Live Christ, Share Christ (LCSC), 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

(5 sessions)

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 course has several basic ingredients: prayers, songs, teaching, group discussion and fellowship.

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?

The topics of the 5 sessions are as follows:

- #1 -- Jesus the Messiah
- #2 -- Called to Witness
- #3 -- Repentance and Faith
- #4 -- The Gift of the Holy Spirit
- #5 -- Growing in the Spirit

These topics are based on the sermon of Peter on the day of Pentecost, when he proclaimed the gospel and 3,000 people accepted the message of salvation.

What is each session about?

Jesus the Messiah

"Jesus the Nazorean was a man commended to you by God" (Acts 2:22a)

This talk speaks about the dire situation in the world today. The world has turned away from God. Only God can make things right. Thankfully, God has His wonderful plan for us, not for woe but for a future full of hope. This is why He sent His Son Jesus.

We need to look to Jesus and accept him as Savior and Lord. In Jesus we experience the fullness of God's love for us. It is Jesus who helps us overcome the enemy who is an evil being. In Jesus we have our salvation.

Called to Witness

"of this we are all witnesses." (Acts 2:32b)

This talk speaks about what is expected of us, if we are to truly experience the fullness of life in Jesus. An authentic Christian is one who has met and knows Christ, is living Christ, and shares Christ. We must enter into a personal

relationship with Jesus. We must respond to his call to holiness and discipleship. We must witness to him and proclaim the gospel.

Further, to be authentic witnesses, we must strive to live out the two greatest commandments--love of God and love of neighbor.

Repentance and Faith

"Repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:38a)

This talk speaks about our response to God's call. As we fall far short of the authentic Christian life, we need to repent and put our faith in Jesus.

Repentance involves a turning away from sin, wrongdoing and running our own lives, and a turning to a life of obedience to God. Faith, in turn, is belief in Jesus as our personal Savior.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

"you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38c)

Aside from the talk, this is a prayer session. The call to the Christian life is difficult, not to be done on our own strength. We need the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit provides the power from above that enables us to live a normal Christian life.

Then there is praying over for baptism in the Spirit. We pray for a renewed infilling of the Holy Spirit, to enable participants to manifest a renewed outpouring of the same Spirit in their lives.

Growing in the Spirit

"They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers." (Acts 2:42)

This talk speaks about the five tools to growing in the Christian life. These are prayer, study, service, fellowship and the sacraments. This paves the way for people to become witnesses who can credibly share the gospel.

The participants are invited to continue their journey, as they make a commitment to "Live Christ, Share Christ" through a covenant.