



CHRISTLIFE™
CATHOLIC MINISTRY FOR EVANGELIZATION

PRAYER MINISTRY IN FOLLOWING CHRIST

Three sessions during Following Christ include a time of prayer after the DVD teaching and before small groups: Forgiving One Another, The Spirit-Empowered Life, and We Are At War: The Devil. The opening time of worship is shortened because additional time is needed for these prayer times.

This information is meant to supplement Following Christ's How To Run the Course Guide. **Anyone who leads these prayer sessions is encouraged to attend a ChristLife conference for training.**



FOLLOWING CHRIST PRAYER MINISTRY

SESSION 4: FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER

The time of forgiveness prayer ministry gives participants a chance to enter into the Lord's grace to forgive others as we are forgiven. You will lead participants through the prayer of forgiveness, found below. The prayer leader will lead participants through a list of common categories of people we need to forgive.

Facilitating the Prayer Time

At the conclusion of the Forgiveness talk, a screen appears with a "Prayer of Forgiveness." Pause the DVD and lead the participants in the prayer that follows below.

Sample Script

As Dave said, we are now going to enter in the Forgiving One Another prayer time.

Jesus commands us to forgive, so forgiving others is an act of obedience to the Lord. Unforgiveness can be a barrier to our relationship with the Lord. It can bind us, and weigh us down. It can even make us physically sick. As Dave said in his talk, "it's like drinking a poison hoping the other person will die."

During Dave's teaching, you may have thought of someone you need to forgive. Some of you have gone through terrible things and you might think to yourselves, "I don't want to forgive, it's not fair." But Jesus says in Matthew 6:12 "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." All the Lord asks of us is to choose to forgive and He will give you the grace to forgive the other person. This is a decision of our will, it's not based on our feelings.

We are going to have a prayer time in a few moments where you will be given the opportunity to choose to forgive someone.

- *The prayer has blanks where we will insert persons who have hurt us. I will name categories of persons, and then offer a few questions that may help you realize people you need to forgive.*
- *We will have a moment of silence to help you think of someone in that category.*
- *Then we will insert the person we thought about and we will say the prayer out loud.*
- *It's important during this time to actually speak the name of the person who hurt you, even if it is just a barely audible whisper. You can say it so quietly that the person next to you can't hear you. But it's important for us to speak it out loud. Scripture says "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9-10). The spoken word is significant because it externalizes the decision of our will.*
- *We will repeat these steps for each category.*



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Please stand.

[The Leader should begin by praying the following prayer or a simple conversational prayer, which invites the Holy Spirit to come.]

Holy Spirit we invite you to be with us during this prayer time. We need you to help us choose to forgive so that we can be set free from unforgiveness. Come with your grace to free us from the pain and hurts we have experienced. We want to honor you and obey your command to forgive. Where we fall short in our weakness, give us your grace and strengthen and empower us to choose to forgive.

Prayer of Forgiveness

(This is the prayer on the DVD screen which you have paused)

Father, I choose to forgive [INSERT NAME HERE]

I lay down my judgment at your cross.

Lord Jesus, I give [INSERT NAME HERE] a free gift of forgiveness.

I forgive them just as you forgave me.

I choose to live in the freedom Jesus has given me. Thank you, Father, for your mercy. Amen.

Categories:

The 1st category is **parents:**

When you were growing up, were one or both of your parents physically or emotionally absent? Was your father who you needed him to be? Was your mother who you needed her to be? Were they physically or emotionally abusive? Maybe they favored a sibling over you or you were compared to sibling. Were you loved as you needed to be loved? Were you encouraged? Did your parents ever tell you they loved you and were proud of you?

Spouse or ex-spouse: Has your marriage not turned out to be what you expected? Has your spouse verbally, physically or emotionally abused you? Has your spouse been unfaithful to you? Have they struggled with substance abuse? Have they contributed to household finances the way you had expected?

Siblings Do you have a brother or sister who you fought with regularly? Did they say or do things that got you in trouble? Was there competitiveness between you instead of a bond of love? Is there ongoing resentment and bitterness between you?

Grandparent's/Relatives Did you have relatives, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, who terrified you or abused you? Were you rejected by them?



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Teacher/Coach While you were in school or on a sports team, did you look up to a teacher, a professor or a coach? Were they unusually tough on you? Did your teacher ever say to you that you would not amount to anything? Did your teacher unfairly grade your papers and exams? Did your coach tell you that you weren't good enough?

Friends Were you physically or emotionally bullied? Did you share a deep confidence with a friend you thought you could trust, only to have them betray you? Did your friends turn others against you?

Boyfriends/Girlfriends Did you ever have a boyfriend or girlfriend who physically or emotionally hurt you? Were you rejected by someone you loved? Did this person cheat on you?

Boss/Manager Has someone at your job or in a position of authority over you at your job ever mistreated you? Have you been passed over for promotions or raises? Have you ever been targeted for your beliefs?

Children Have your children disappointed you by getting involved with drugs or alcohol? Have they abused you physically or emotionally? Have they rejected you after you have given them many years of love and monetary support? Are they not living a lifestyle that you expected as you raised them? If you are divorced from their other parent, have they chosen the other parent over you?

Pastor or Church People Were you abused in any way? Was your offer to help your parish rejected? Did you confide in someone at church who betrayed you? Were you gossiped about?

Yourself Often times, we look back on things we have done or things we have said and say "why did I do that? How could I have let myself do that?" Maybe you are thinking to yourself "*you don't know what I have done*" abortion, broken up family, addiction, sexual promiscuity, stealing. I encourage you to leave it all at the cross. Christ carried all our sins and nothing is too horrible because He has seen it all. To forgive ourselves is simply a declaration that we are in agreement with God, that we will not hold to higher standards than God, and we will not demand of ourselves more than He does. Let's take a bit longer to reflect and ask the Lord to give us the grace to forgive ourselves.

God. God is not in need of our forgiveness, because he has committed no sin. However, when we've experienced major suffering in our lives, often we blame God. Let's take another minute or so of silence to lay down any anger, pain, resentment or mistrust which we have held toward God at the foot of the cross [do not lead people through the prayer of forgiveness for this category].



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Ending prayer:

We thank you Lord for your forgiveness of our sins and your grace so that we can forgive others. Help us to make forgiving others a normal part of our lives as your disciples. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

I encourage you to take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation to confess these areas of unforgiveness and any resentment you have had toward God. Forgiving one another is intended to be a normal part of life as disciples of Jesus, and this prayer time is something you will want to incorporate in your daily life.



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SESSION 5: THE SPIRIT-EMPOWERED LIFE

The Holy Spirit prayer time is very important, giving participants the opportunity to act on what they heard in the teaching. The prayer ministry for this session is split into two parts: 1) The Father's Love and 2) Spiritual Gifts (optional).

Part 1: The Father's Love

There are two goals to this prayer time. First, to simply and expectantly pray for the person to receive a new awareness of God the Father's personal love and second, for participants to learn to pray for others. In this form of prayer, we lay our hands on the person.

Modeling it for the participants.

A leader with two other people model how we pray for others (two people act as the prayer team and one acts as the person receiving prayer). The leader models a simple conversational prayer, for example:

"Father, we ask you to fill (name of person) with the presence of your love, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

The other person on the prayer team can offer a similar prayer. Then the prayer team expectantly waits for the action of the Holy Spirit in response to our prayer. After a period of time you may ask the person, what they are experiencing. Encourage and tell them the truth of God the Father's love for them.

Switch to pray for one of the other persons.

Release people to pray in groups of 3.

In prayer ministry we encourage men to pray with men, and women to pray with women. Though married couples are welcome to pray with either a man or woman. Not always possible but preferred.

This time of prayer should be brief (maybe 2-4 minutes) for each person receiving prayer. Expect the Lord to answer your prayers!

During this time, consider playing a CD with quiet worship music in the background.

Is it okay for the laity to lay their hands on others while praying for them?

Yes! It is acceptable in the Catholic Church for the laity to lay hands on others while praying for them. This is a non-liturgical, non-sacramental form of prayer and should not be confused with liturgical/sacramental prayer.

This distinction is found in the Church's document "Instruction on Prayers for Healing" by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In clarifying the difference between sacramental prayers for healing and other non-sacramental prayers, the document makes the distinction between **Liturgical** (an official act of worship by the Church carried out according her official Rites) and **Non-Liturgical** times of prayer. This form of praying for one another is non-liturgical, non-sacramental prayer.



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Part 2: The Spiritual Gifts (optional)

The Church encourages openness to the charisms (CCC#799-801) under the care of our pastors.

Few people regularly operate in the spiritual gifts because they do not understand them and there is no opportunity to practice the gifts. The Following Christ course can be a venue where the spiritual gifts are introduced, encouraged, and exercised.

To do this effectively requires having people who are experienced with the charisms and able to instruct and pray for others to be empowered in their use. Additionally, there needs to be a context to grow in exercising them.

“Whether extraordinary or simple and humble, charisms are graces of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefit the Church, ordered as they are to her building up, to the good of men, and to the needs of the world.”

- Catechism of the Catholic Church, 799

“Charisms are to be accepted with gratitude by the person who receives them and by all members of the Church as well. They are a wonderfully rich grace for the apostolic vitality and for the holiness of the entire Body of Christ, provided they really are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit and are used in full conformity with authentic promptings of this same Spirit, that is, in keeping with charity, the true measure of all charisms.”

- Catechism of the Catholic Church, 800



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RETREAT SESSION 8: WE ARE AT WAR – THE DEVIL

At the conclusion of the devil talk there is a screen that appears with a “Prayer of Renunciation.” Pause the DVD at this point. The prayer ministry for this session is split into two parts: 1) Renewal of Baptismal Promises, and 2) Renunciation Prayer.

Facilitating the Prayer Time

Sample Script

Dave mentioned that we would have an opportunity to go through a process of renunciation. We're here because we want to follow Jesus, to become his disciples. In Discovering Christ, we decided to place Jesus at the center of our lives. However, conversion is a process, which requires on-going surrender to Jesus. In a previous session of Following Christ, we addressed the area of forgiveness. We identified areas of unforgiveness in our lives and prayed for healing in those areas.

In the talk Dave mentioned another area that we must deal with - the area of renunciation. Accepting Jesus as Lord is just the beginning, it puts us on the right path. But there is more. We still have a lot of baggage that we've accumulated all of our life. Some of that baggage includes areas of influence where the devil has gained a foothold to oppress and pull us into sin, areas in which we are in rebellion with God. Often we say, "I can't help it. That's just me. It's habitual sin."

Renunciation means that you want no more to do with this influence in your life; it is over! You want no more lies, no more empty promises. Renunciation is an expression of repentance that many believers rarely use. As we renounce these areas we say, "It is over! I am done with it! I will not fellowship with you anymore."

This is how we'll go about it. First of all, we'll renew our Baptismal promises, rejecting Satan and all his works. If you haven't accepted Jesus as Lord, if you have never ratified the commitment that your parents and godparents made for you at Baptism, you can do it now. You can make a personal, adult commitment to Jesus as Lord. Do it as we renew our Baptismal promises! Second, I will mention various areas where we are vulnerable to the devil's influence, and then we will pray the on-screen prayer together for each area mentioned.



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Part 1: Renewal of Baptismal Promises

Brothers and sisters, let us renew the promises we made at baptism when we rejected Satan and his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in his Church.

Short Version

V. Do you reject Satan?

R. I do.

V. And all his works?

R. I do.

V. And all his empty promises?

R. I do.

Long Version

V. Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

R. I Do.

V. Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?

R. I do.

V. Do you reject Satan, the father of sin and prince of darkness?

R. I do.

V. Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

R. I do.

V. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

R. I do.

V. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

R. I do.

V. God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ forever and ever.

R. Amen.

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Part 2: Renunciation Prayer

Now lead people through the specific areas of renunciation with the following formula.

Like the forgiveness prayer, invite people to pray the prayer along with you out loud, pausing at the blank in the prayer. Specific areas in need of renunciation should be said audibly, but in a quiet voice, under your breath. As the leader you should say each area aloud.

***In the name of Jesus, I renounce
a spirit of _____.***

Specific areas:

Pride, anger, envy, fear, lust, doubt, self-righteousness, abandonment, depression, marital infidelity, slander, impurity, gossip, judgment, prejudice, control, self-sufficiency, disunity, occult practices, insecurity, hatred, addiction – alcohol, drugs, gambling, pornography, etc.

Next, the leader should take authority and say:

In the name of Jesus, we break the power of every spirit we have renounced and command them to leave right now in Jesus' name.

The leader should end with a prayer of thanksgiving. Sample closing prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Your Son Jesus into the world to destroy the work of the devil. Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for opening our eyes to the ways the devil has been influencing our lives. Holy Spirit, we thank you for freeing us to live under the lordship of Jesus our Savior. We praise you Holy Trinity for your victory this day in our lives. We pray all of this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Remember - "Greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). What we did is real. It has power.

***Can a lay person pray for deliverance?
What is the difference between exorcism
and deliverance?***

*Through baptism all Christians are given authority to overcome the work of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Exorcisms are rarely needed whereas deliverance is the ongoing work of growing in freedom as baptized Christians. Neal Lozano explains in his book *Resisting the Devil: A Catholic Perspective on Deliverance*:*

"Exorcism is the liturgical rite of the Church, a sacramental provided for those cases where spiritual bondage has grown into possession. The person, no longer able to resist the enemy's control even with the prayer and support of others, needs a priest to step in and do battle against the enemy on his or her behalf. Exorcism is an unusual, extraordinary rite that should be used in only extreme cases of bondage.

Deliverance prayer, by contrast, should be a normal part of evangelization ... Deliverance is the effort through prayer, counsel, or spiritual direction- to help someone take hold of the authority he has been given in Christ, defeat the enemies lies, and break free of the oppression that afflicts him."