



CHRISTLIFE™

# WORSHIP

*IN THE CHRISTLIFE PROCESS*

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### Introduction

In our mission of helping people to discover Christ, follow Christ and share Christ, we believe it is vitally important to lead them into an encounter with Jesus through worship. The courses are not meant to be educational programs that only impart information; they are meant to be pathways of conversion to a life-giving personal relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. The act of entering into worship together with other believers and encountering the living person of Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit is an essential part of that relationship and is at the core of the ChristLife process. While for Catholics the word “worship” naturally calls to mind the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the Mass is not the only legitimate form of worship and is not always the best venue for evangelization. A less formal type of worship can be helpful to those who are new to the Church or fallen away, and can be far more practical for use in a weekly meeting led by laypeople.

We recommend a popular form of worship that is both simple and powerful—combining spiritually expressive songs with conversational or spontaneous prayer. This form of worship is accessible to everyone, yet profound and potentially life-changing in its effects. Moreover, we find that people tend to grow in worship—enjoying it more and praying more deeply—as they progress through the three ChristLife courses. But this kind of worship does not happen automatically. It takes a certain kind of leader, ideally someone with both musical talent and pastoral ability, using good materials in the grace of God, to facilitate rich experiences of worship. This guide, for the benefit of those who are new

to ChristLife, will explore the basic meaning of worship, the particular form of worship we recommend for the courses, the progression of worship through the three courses, the qualities of a good worship leader, and some practical guidance for the person who serves as worship leader.

### What is Worship?

First of all, what is worship, and why do we do it? A common dictionary definition of worship would be something like “reverence or devotion offered to a divine being.” This implies a posture of subordination to one who is superior, a humbling of oneself before God. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) defines worship as “adoration and honor given to God.” Broadly speaking, worship includes giving praise and thanks, asking forgiveness, pledging fidelity, and rendering service. Across cultures and history, worship has taken many forms—from the offering of animal sacrifices by ancient Israelites to the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy by modern Catholics. But it can also be as simple as saying “Praise the Lord” or taking a quiet moment to say grace before dinner. Any act that expresses one’s dependence on God can be a form of worship. Ultimately worship is as much a state of mind and heart as it is an outward action.

As for why we worship, it seems to be a natural response and a universal practice among all people who believe in a Supreme Being. As Christians, we can be more specific. We worship God because He is the Almighty Father, the Creator of all things, infinitely holy and perfect, and because in the person of Jesus Christ He has become our Savior and Lord, who redeems

us from sin and gives us eternal life. Simply by virtue of who He is, God deserves our praise, adoration and thanksgiving.

We also worship God because worship is good for us. Worship draws us into communion with God, which is the very reason we exist—to share in the love of the Blessed Trinity (CCC Prologue I.1.). Further, because this is God’s will for us, we are commanded and frequently exhorted by sacred scripture to worship the Lord. Hence, worship is one of the marks of a faithful Christian. As stated in many of the Eucharistic Prefaces, “It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere” to give thanks and praise to God. This is something we hope to instill in our participants through the ChristLife process.

### Worship as an Act of Love

Christian worship is more than just a duty to an impersonal higher power. Scripture teaches us that God created us so He could love us, and He loves us so much that He gave His only begotten Son to suffer and die for our salvation (Jn 3:16). Likewise, Jesus taught us to love God in return. Echoing the law of Moses, Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength (Mk 12:30, Deut 6:5). Our whole life should be oriented toward loving God. This implies having a relationship with God.

Of course, there are many ways to love God—studying the Bible and the Catechism, doing God’s will, keeping the commandments, caring for our neighbors. But these actions might be characterized as indirect expressions of love, as

when a child honors his parents by listening to them, obeying the rules, and doing the chores. Another aspect of love involves affection, as when a child sits on her father's lap and clings to the warmth of his embrace. Two close friends might express their love for each other simply by spending time together in conversation, enjoying each other's company. Newlyweds express their love with a special affection and intimacy. This kind of love uniquely and directly express the quality of a close relationship between two individuals. Indeed, the Bible speaks of the relationship between the Lord and His people as analogous to the relationship between a groom and his bride (Is 62:5; Jer 2:2; Mt 9:15; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev 21:2).

Similarly, Christians seeking intimacy with God spend time with Him in worship. This can be done quietly or vocally, in solitude or in the company of many. In this sense, worship can be understood as a direct expression of love for God—involving heart, mind, body, and voice—using words and actions to lift one's heart to the Lord and opening oneself to His presence to receive His love in return. It is a way of seeking communion with God through the Holy Spirit. We praise Him, thank Him for His gifts, declare our love and express our need, and He pours out mercy and grace, joy and peace. When Jesus gave us the greatest commandment, He knew that loving God is the most important thing we can do for our own happiness and fulfillment.

### Forms of Worship

There are many ways to worship the Lord. As Catholics, of course, we believe that the highest form of worship is the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at Mass. Indeed, the Second Vatican Council called the

Eucharist “the source and summit of the Christian life.” The priest at the altar offers to God the Father the holy sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world, and the congregation shares Holy Communion in his sacred Body and Blood. This is the most profound, most formal and most structured way for a community to worship together—celebrating the sacrament in a church with vested ministers following an official script. But the Eucharist is only for those who have been fully initiated into the Catholic Church, and the liturgy is not necessarily the best format for evangelizing newcomers.

In the ChristLife process we are aiming for something less formal and more easily accessible, a form of worship that is more relaxed and perhaps more personal and engaging, yet still Christ-centered. The goal is for lay people in a casual setting to have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ by singing songs of praise and worship. Ultimately, as we progress through the three courses, we try to lead people further and deeper in worship, to the point where they are learning to offer spontaneous prayers, to listen for God's inner voice, and to rest in contemplative silence. Let's consider each of these items in turn.

### Lay People

While it is important to have the support of the parish pastor, and the presence of a priest at meetings is always welcome, it is not necessary that a priest be the leader of worship in ChristLife courses. Every course is designed to be run by lay people, and nowadays it is especially important for Catholics to understand that prayer is not just the domain of the clergy. All Christians are called to pray and

worship. Personal communication with God is how we grow in relationship with God and the lay members of the Church have a vital role to play. They need to know that prayer is something they can do, out loud, without a script and without a priest.

### A Casual Setting

ChristLife courses are normally held in a parish hall or other meeting place, rather than in the church proper. When we are in church, we are conscious of the real presence of Christ in the tabernacle. We often feel a deep sense of reverence are taught to maintain a respectful silence. But these important attributes of the church, which are so conducive to prayer and solemnity, can actually inhibit the dynamics of our courses, where there tends to be a lot of talk and frequent laughter in an atmosphere that is meant be light, friendly, and unthreatening. So we usually meet in a more casual setting and we try to help people relax as we draw them into worship through singing and prayer.

### Singing

First, let's address the basic question of why we sing at our meetings. After all, some people are not musically gifted and may not enjoy singing. So why not just pray without music? The Church has always worshiped God in song. For one thing, there is the aesthetic beauty of music, its ability to lift our spirits and move our hearts. For another, a song can have a powerful ability to draw people together. When a set of individuals begins to sing the same words to the same tune, they are instantly connected in a kind of community. Whether it is a family singing “Happy Birthday to You,” a group of friends singing their favorite song at a party,

or even a stadium full of sports fans singing “Take Me Out to the Ballgame,” people become more united when they sing together. Even random strangers who come into a meeting without knowing anyone can feel like part of the group when they sing. Group singing can help people to loosen up, lower their inhibitions and feel more connected with each other. But the thing that makes the singing so special in the ChristLife courses is the kind of songs we sing.

### Songs of Praise and Worship

When we sing a hymn or spiritual song with genuine faith and a sincere desire to honor the Lord, the song can become an authentic prayer, which can draw us closer to God. That’s the goal here. We want our songs to be reverent and prayerful, to express our love for God, to lead us into a personal encounter with the Lord, and to enable us to worship in His presence. There are many different styles and songs to choose from.

#### *Traditional Hymns*

In the long tradition of sacred music, there are many hymns that declare the glory of God and there are different levels of devotion expressed in the various hymns. For instance, some hymns are more objective than subjective. That is, they are written in the third person and talk more about God than to Him. For example, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” proclaims God’s greatness but is not addressed to God as a prayer. Other hymns give first person testimony about the great things God has done, such as “Amazing Grace” and “I Sing the Mighty Power of God.” Still others are exhortations to praise the Lord, as in “Alleluia,

Sing to Jesus,” “Crown Him With Many Crowns,” “Praise to the Lord the Almighty,” or “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow.” These are all wonderful, reverent hymns, but they don’t necessarily acknowledge the fact that God is present and we are addressing Him in person.

Some hymns are personally directed to God as prayers of invitation, like “Come Holy Ghost” and “Come Thou Almighty King.” But the deepest and most personal level of worship is found in hymns that use the second person (“you” or “thou”) to express adoration and praise directly to the Lord, as from one person to another, for example: “Holy, Holy, Holy,” “Holy God We Praise Thy Name” and “To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King.”

#### *Contemporary Hymns*

Traditional hymns like the ones described above are not always ideal for use in the courses. Some use older language (Thee, Thou, Thy), which can be an obstacle for some people, and most were written for pipe organ or piano and don’t translate well to guitar, which is a more convenient instrument for the kind of informal worship we use and recommend. Of course, there are many more recently published Catholic hymns with contemporary language and style and we have used some of them successfully in our courses. For example, “Glory and Praise to Our God” is well known and easy to sing. This genre also includes songs in which the Lord speaks to us, such as “I Am the Bread of Life,” “I Will Raise You Up on Eagles’ Wings,” and “You Are Mine.” But again, when looking for songs with which we can express our praise and love directly to God, in the context of a personal relationship with God, the choices are limited.

### Balancing Familiar Songs with New

When selecting songs for worship, it’s important to take familiarity into account. It is good to teach new songs, but less likely for people to sing them the first time around. Balancing your song choice is ideal for creating a fruitful environment of worship. For example, try using a familiar song like “Holy God We Praise Thy Name” with a newer song like “Lord I Need You.” Doing this allows participants of various backgrounds and ages to sing praises together.

We also encourage repeating new songs over the sessions. For example, if you introduced “10,000 Reasons” one week, it would be wise to revisit the song the next week. This helps new songs to become familiar ones.

#### *Contemporary Praise and Worship Music*

There is a large and growing body of contemporary songs that are playable on guitar and fit very well within our purpose of singing directly from our hearts to the Lord. Many of these songs were composed outside of the Catholic tradition and frequently can be heard on popular evangelical Christian radio stations. In our experience, most of these songs are based on Sacred Scripture and contain nothing objectionable to the Catholic faith. Many Catholics already know them, and most others can learn them

without difficulty. These songs express themes of faith, trust, praise, thanks, and adoration, in a subjective way, with reference to personal experience and feelings that naturally resonate with others. Many people report that they are able to connect with the lyrics and feel closer to God as a result. This is the collection of songs we use most often and recommend for our courses. (More about this later.)

## Personal Encounter With Christ

When people sing a worship song reverently, focusing on the meaning of the words and taking them to heart, the song can become a prayer and the people can become more aware of God's presence. They can break through from their ordinary state of mind to a consciousness of the divine. Psalm 22:30 teaches us that the Lord inhabits the praises of His people, and Jesus himself said he would be present wherever two or three are gathered in his name (Mt 18:20). In worship, we become aware that God is truly with us—loving us, listening to us, and drawing us closer to Himself.

This awareness of God's presence can happen in different ways. One person might see an image of Jesus in his mind. Another might feel energized and elated. There might be feelings of warmth, stillness, and peace. Sometimes there is an emotional response of joy or a sense of deep and profound awe. These heightened physical and emotional sensations are not the goal of worship, but they can be indications that something is happening spiritually. Often we simply become more deeply aware that we are not alone, that we are in the presence of the Holy, the Divine, the Most High. We may feel loved, we may feel humbled,

or we may feel convicted of our sins. Whatever we are feeling, or even if we are feeling nothing special at all, the most important thing is that we become attentive to God's presence and that we respond accordingly. We need to be in relationship with God.

## Spontaneous Prayer

One way to respond to the Lord, especially in a group setting after singing a worship song, is to pray spontaneously from the heart. These kinds of prayers can be said by one person at a time, in a voice loud enough for everyone to hear, or they can be spoken quietly by several people all at once. Many people will simply pray silently and inwardly, but no less devoutly.

Another natural response to God's presence is thanksgiving. The Lord has given us so much, and done so much for us, that we may feel like thanking Him as we come into His presence. Giving thanks to God is one of the best ways to grow in the spiritual life.

Some people may be moved by God's presence to say prayers of intercession—for the Church, for the world, for the lost, for the suffering, etc. This can be very appropriate when ending a time of worship together—especially for Following and Sharing Christ.

## Listening to God

When we enter into worship, we can expect that God will speak to us. Sometimes His word comes to us directly through the lyrics of the song we are singing, such as a Psalm or other scripture passage set to music. Or a modern song like "You are My All in All" could make us aware that God truly wants to be our "all in all" and that we are being called to embrace Him more fully. We may also find

thoughts and ideas coming to mind, which seem to be telling us something important. We might remember a scripture verse or a homily that strikes us. Sometimes God can even speak to us directly in the form of words or an intuitive sense. It is important to be open to hearing from God during worship. Sometimes it can be helpful to share God's word with the rest of the group by speaking it out loud. In general, when we gather in the Lord's name, we should expect to draw closer to God and hear His word.

## Contemplative Silence

Sometimes we reach a point in worship where we are deeply aware of God's presence and have no more need for songs or words. We simply need to rest in the Spirit, trust in God's love and enjoy His presence. Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God." It is possible for our heart to be silent and still and serene in a way that is rich and full of life. Naturally, everyone doesn't always experience God's presence in the same way, and some people may grow restless or uncomfortable with silence, but when a roomful of people pauses long enough after singing and praying for the room to get completely quiet, and the sense of God's presence is almost tangible, it can be a powerful, life-changing experience. Silent adoration and contemplation are highly regarded in the rich tradition of Christian prayer.

## The Significance of Posture in Worship

As Catholics, we are familiar with the use of different postures for the different parts of the Mass. Each posture has its own significance. We stand up for prayers and the reading of the

Gospel. We sit down for the other readings and the homily. We bow before receiving Communion, when passing in front of the altar, and when reciting the part of the Creed that describes the Incarnation. We genuflect before the real presence of Christ in the tabernacle, and we kneel in adoration before the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. In the Catholic Church, posture always has meaning and purpose.

### ***Standing, Sitting and Kneeling***

In the ChristLife courses, we normally ask people to stand at the beginning of worship (excluding, of course, those who need to remain seated for reasons of health or age). Standing helps people to know that we are about to do something important. Engaging their bodies in a posture that requires more effort than sitting can help them to engage their minds and hearts more fully in worship. And if only one song is to be sung, people will normally remain standing until after the closing prayer, when they are asked to be seated. For longer worship times, we tell people in advance that after we get started they can feel free to assume any other posture that helps them to pray. Naturally, some will want to sit down after the first or second song. But others may feel led to kneel, and the worship leader should let them know ahead of time that this is okay, that kneeling in worship is a natural response to the presence of God and is a good thing to do.

### ***Lifting Hands***

Another posture frequently used in worship is the lifting of hands. As Catholics, we have all seen priests lift their hands in prayer, but most lay people don't pray this way at Mass (although in some parishes it is not unusual

to see people reciting the Lord's Prayer with hands raised). This is a traditional biblical custom, which is familiar to charismatic Catholics, but since it is not prescribed at Mass it can be new and even strange for some people.

For this reason we advise the worship leader to talk about it at some point, usually during Following Christ and Sharing Christ. The worship leader can help people to understand and get comfortable with this posture by demonstrating various ways to raise one's hands and inviting them to try it, though being careful to avoid implying that this is a superior way to pray or that people must do it during worship.

## **Progression from One Course to Another**

As we move through the three courses of the ChristLife process, the way we lead worship changes and progresses, because, at least in theory, the participants themselves are changing and progressing in their spiritual lives as they grow in personal relationship with Jesus and open their hearts more fully to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

### ***Discovering Christ***

This first course is a basic proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ, aimed at people who do not yet have a personal relationship with the Lord. They might be nominal or lapsed Catholics or former members of another church, or they might be completely unchurched or agnostic. The point is that we cannot assume very much about their faith and spiritual practice. They are seekers, and we are trying to help them discover the One they have been seeking.

When it comes to worship music, we assume that the participants in Discovering Christ are not familiar with the more contemporary songs and probably are not ready to sing about their love for God. They may not want to sing at all. So we try to begin with familiar traditional hymns or with newer songs that are easy to learn, and we might lean toward songs that are more objective than subjective. That is, at the very beginning of the process, it may make more sense to sing about God than to God. We also limit the number of songs in the beginning. On the first night of the course, one song is enough, followed by a short, simple prayer by the worship leader. For weeks two through five, two songs are fine, with a closing prayer. For the retreat and the last two weeks of the course, when participants are intentionally choosing a relationship with the Lord, we have slightly longer times of worship.

One important note about Discovering Christ: typically, a number of participants will be devout Catholics who already have a relationship with the Lord and know the songs and are comfortable praying out loud in front of others. This may include members of the volunteer team, people who invited their friends to the course, and others who simply tend to show up for everything the church offers. Some of these folks may be enthusiastic singers who love to pray aloud and raise their hands when they worship. Some may be experienced in the charismatic tradition of prayer and may be accustomed to speaking or singing in tongues. All of that is fine, except that we want to consider the effect it may have on our guests of honor—those who have not yet discovered Christ—who may have come to the course reluctantly and may be looking for an excuse to leave. We want to

avoid anything that might distract them from the central figure of Christ or “scare them away.” The radical message of the gospel can be challenging enough without tangential issues. For this reason, we recommend speaking to the volunteer team in advance and asking them to use restraint in the way they express themselves in worship, at least until we get a feel for the spiritual make-up of the group.

### ***Following Christ***

The second course is about growing as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Here we assume the participants have made a basic commitment to Jesus as Lord of their lives and are growing in personal relationship with him. Obviously, prayer and worship are important elements in the life of any disciple, but group worship can be especially helpful to a new believer who may experience difficulty praying alone. So in this course we usually plan for about twenty minutes of worship at each meeting. That is enough time for three or four songs (depending on length) plus time for group prayers, silence, and a closing prayer.

In Following Christ the role of the worship leader becomes more critical. With more time for worship, it is important to use the time wisely so it does not become just a sing along. We want it to be an opportunity for people to encounter the Lord personally. For this reason, the worship leader may want to take a brief moment each week to teach, encourage or inspire the participants in the ways of worship. Rather than just announcing the opening song, the worship leader might give more of a call to worship. This could begin with a scripture reading, perhaps a Psalm or a passage from one of the daily Mass readings. Or it could begin with a personal

anecdote that invites people to trust in the Lord and praise His name. The worship leader may also want to discuss the biblical foundation for raising hands in prayer.

Another point that becomes more important in Following Christ is the choice of songs. With a set of three or four songs, it is both typical and helpful to follow a certain kind of pattern. In a general sense, worship songs usually proceed from objective proclamations of praise to subjective expressions of love, from upbeat songs to slower, more meditative songs, from songs that make people want to dance, to those that bring people to their knees or even prostrate on the floor. This kind of sequence can help people to go deeper in worship. A common illustration of this pattern is the temple of Jerusalem, with its outer court, its holy place, and its inner sanctuary—the holy of holies. Psalm 100 says to “enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.” But we don’t want to stay in the outer court; we want to go further. The holy of holies was the room in the back of the temple where the priests kept the Ark of the Covenant, the most sacred object in Israel, which was regarded as the throne of God and the dwelling place of His presence. Figuratively speaking, this is where we want to go in worship, where “deep calls to deep” (Psalm 42:7).

Another analogy is human conversation. People usually begin with small talk about external things before they progress to more personal sharing, and only after a while do they expose their most intimate thoughts and feelings. Remember, the goals of worship are twofold: to give honor and glory to God, and to draw near to Him in loving communion. Our times of worship in Following

## **Lifting Hands in Prayer**

Lifting hands in prayer is a biblical custom. For reference, here are some of the scripture verses that mention this posture:

- “And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God; and all the people answered, ‘Amen, Amen,’ lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.” (Neh 8:6)
- “So I will bless you as long as I live, I will lift up my hands and call on your name.” (Ps 63:4)
- “Every day I call upon you, O Lord; I spread out my hands to you.” (Ps 88:9)
- “Lift up your hands to the holy place, and bless the LORD!” (Ps 134:2)
- “Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice!” (Ps 141:2)
- “Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven.” (Lam 3:41)
- “I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling...” (1 Timothy 2:8)

Christ can be profound and life-giving moments of personal encounter with the living God, which can help us to grow and develop as disciples of Christ.

### ***Sharing Christ***

The third course is about learning how to bring others to Jesus. This is a course for believers who are growing in a faith relationship with the Lord and who want to share what they have discovered and received, but who might be feeling a little sheepish about the prospect of becoming an evangelist. Such growth requires conviction, courage, grace and especially the power of the Holy Spirit. Again, as in *Following Christ*, about twenty minutes of worship are scheduled for each meeting. Hence, all of what was said above applies equally here. In addition, however, the worship leader might also want to lead the participants into the realm of intercession—not necessarily praying for specific individuals they are reaching out to, but rather asking God for the gifts they need to serve as messengers of the good news. Corporate intercession can be a powerful way of approaching the “throne of grace” to obtain God’s blessing (Heb 4:16).

### **The Worship Leader**

When recruiting volunteers to present a ChristLife course, it is important to find the right person to serve as worship leader. While this role may seem less critical at the beginning of *Discovering Christ* (when the evening worship is limited to one song and a brief closing prayer), it becomes more important as the course progresses, especially at the retreat. And for *Following Christ* and *Sharing Christ*, where the worship time typically runs for fifteen to twenty minutes, the role

of worship leader becomes much bigger. A really good worship leader may not be easy to find.

The worship leader should be a person who loves music, loves the Lord, and loves people. Obviously, he or she should be a competent musician and singer, if possible someone with real talent that others enjoy listening to. But equally important is that he or she be a prayerful person who loves the Lord and has the sensitivity to God’s presence that comes from a devout spiritual life. A conversational knowledge of scripture and Catholic doctrine is also very helpful.

In addition, the worship leader should have some pastoral ability to care for the needs of others. He or she should be comfortable in front of an audience, able to establish an easy rapport with the guests, and able to teach and explain as needed. Yet they should see themselves as more of a servant and minister than performer, and should be comfortable praying in their own words. It probably goes without saying, but the worship leader should be someone who enjoys worship. In the event that no one can be found with the right qualities to serve as worship leader, it may be possible for the emcee or another person to lead worship using recorded music. Some parishes have had success using CD players or MP3 players to support the singing of worship songs. Since music and worship are integral parts of the ChristLife courses, this option is better than doing without.

### **Leading Worship with Songs**

I rarely play a song straight through from beginning to end. Instead, I tend to treat each part of a song almost like a separate

prayer. Sometimes I repeat the first verse before going to the chorus. Sometimes I repeat the chorus over and over. And other times I come back to the beginning of a song after reaching the end. The point is to find the parts of the song that resonate in my spirit and draw me deeper into worship and closer to the Lord. My reasoning is that if I am sincerely entering into worship and experiencing God’s presence, chances are good that other people may be led in the same direction.

Another thing I often do, when the group will be singing more than one song, is to continue to strum the guitar between songs. As a kind of musical interlude, this can allow people to enter into spontaneous prayer and meditation. It can allow their awareness of the Spirit’s presence to grow. I may also pray out loud and encourage others to do the same, while I am still strumming the guitar. Then, as we move further into worship, and especially when we reach the end of the last song, if I feel the Lord’s presence very strongly, I usually allow a time of silence and suggest that we simply be still before the Lord and wait upon Him quietly. After a while I say a closing prayer.

### **Instrumentation**

In general, simpler is better. We have had a lot of success with one person playing an acoustic guitar or keyboard and singing. This avoids some unnecessary stresses: the need for extra equipment, set-up time, organization, communication, rehearsals, and so on. At times we have used two guitarists, especially when one is training the other. We have also had accompaniment on the violin, which can be very beautiful, or



percussion instruments like a djembe or cajon (box drum), and even both at the same time.

Keeping the music and instrumentation simple also avoids the tendency to focus on the performance. If you have a full band leading worship, it might begin to feel like a concert. Since our goal is to draw people into a personal encounter with the Lord through singing and worship, we wouldn't want to do anything that might encourage the course participants to become passive spectators. But some parishes have used this model successfully. Ultimately, this is a matter for the pastor or main leader to discern.

### Song Lyrics

With regards to lyrics for songs, its important that everyone has them and you have the license you need to print/display.

### Display

We recommend that song lyrics be projected onto a screen rather than printed on paper sheets or in booklets. This approach has several advantages. For one, it allows the singers to keep their hands free during prayer. It also allows a great deal of flexibility for the worship leader. Songs can be lined up in the order they will be sung on any given night, and there's no confusion about which page to turn to. Old-fashioned transparencies shown with an overhead projector are one option, but we normally use PowerPoint. Short songs can be displayed on a single slide, while longer songs may require as many as five slides. The initial set up

of PowerPoint files will probably require the same amount of time and effort it would take to produce a song booklet, but then they can be edited and revised more easily without the need for reprinting.

### Copyright

Since all of the songs we use are copyrighted, it is necessary to obtain permission to use them. In the past, when churches were first beginning to use contemporary folk music at Mass, some parishes were actually sued for printing their own songbooks without paying for the right to use the songs. One copyright subscription service that is very popular among users of the songs we sing is called Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) - [www.ccli.com](http://www.ccli.com).

Another license (One License) covers OCP and many other traditional and contemporary hymns found in most Catholic hymnals - [www.onelicense.net](http://www.onelicense.net). When displaying the songs (from CCLI or One License), the correct copyright information should be included beneath the lyrics.

Some hymns are old enough to be in Public Domain. Therefore they can be played, sung, printed, and displayed without a need for a copyright license. You can use [Hymnal.net](http://Hymnal.net) to search for hymns and find chord sheets.

Many churches have music licenses for their main church services and pay based on their overall church attendance. (If your parish already has the correct licenses you do not need to obtain a new one).

For the ChristLife process, a subscription for your entire congregation is not needed. Both services mentioned allow special pricing for events or groups like ChristLife. If you have, for example, 75 on average who attend the course, you would pay the annual fee based on your average attendance (not your overall church attendance). For 25-99 attendees, that would come out to roughly \$124/year or \$10.33/month for a CCLI license.

### Now... Let Us Worship!

We've explored the basic meaning of worship, the particular form of worship recommend for ChristLife courses, the progression of worship through the three courses, the qualities of a good worship leader, and some practical guidance for the person who serves as worship leader.

Do not be overwhelmed with all of the information and don't be mechanical in your implementation of it. Remember, as a worship leader your job is first to worship God with your whole heart and this will help create space for others to personally encounter Jesus Christ through singing songs of praise and worship.

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# WORSHIP IN THE CHRISTLIFE PROCESS

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