



TAKING THEIR FAITH TO THE STREETS

I was searching for a program to help evangelization in our parish when I came across ChristLife. Upon looking into it, I found a program that includes a meal, DVD teachings, small groups, and reflection questions to guide the discussion. I thought to myself, "Why keep knocking your head against the wall? Look into this!" I went to the ChristLife National Conference and brought a few people with me. When our team came back from the conference, we put into practice the things we had just learned.

Holy Apostles is a small parish with about 300 registered families. Prior to ChristLife, we were thrilled if 15-20 people came when we offered spiritual programs. The number of people who came to ChristLife quadrupled anything we had done before. 70 people signed up for Discovering Christ. It was truly amazing.

Since then, we've gone through three cycles of the entire ChristLife process. First, you go to Discovering Christ where you fall in love with Jesus Christ. Once people are in love with Jesus, don't they want to follow Him? Now they're following Him, don't they want to help others fall in love with Him, too, by sharing Him?

About a third of our active parishioners have now attended ChristLife. What did they say about their experience?

"Participating in ChristLife has drawn me closer to the Lord and given me a feeling of self-worth. I have learned to love Christ more and to respect my life and those of others more."

"My life has gotten so much better when I brought Christ into my life on a daily basis. Good things have just started happening. When I turned the command over to Him, He did better with it than I was doing."

"Discovering Christ was helpful in strengthening my faith. It's pretty simple. It wasn't life-changing, but it might have been life-saving. I'm a better Catholic and a better person."

This is a tiny sliver of hundreds of evaluations and testimonies we have received. As a pastor, I have found that those who've gone through ChristLife are now the basic pool of people who are actively volunteering in all the other ministries in the church and entering into leadership roles within the church. It's a solid group of people that I can now turn to.

After the first time we ran the ChristLife evangelization process, I decided to test out how it really worked. I asked a small pilot group of people if they would be willing to walk the neighborhood with me once a week through the summertime and approach anyone on the street by saying, "We're from Holy Apostles Church. Is there anything you would like prayer for?" Well, we did that and there was a tremendous response from the neighborhood.

We went through the ChristLife process again. I asked this new group if they would be willing to do the same thing. I got 15 people who joined me once a week through the summer.

We went through ChristLife a third time. And again, I

asked the group if they would be willing to take prayer into the streets. Last summer, I had 20-30 people from Holy Apostles Church going out into the streets in several neighborhoods asking people, "Is there anything you would like prayer for?" The conversations that came from those encounters were truly amazing.

ChristLife had a tremendous impact!

I feel ChristLife is moving us towards the essence of what a parish is really about—a community of faith that is able to help each other along the way to grow closer to the Lord; to be able to pray and share with each other in a very practical and heartfelt way. Through ChristLife, Holy Apostles Church is progressing toward our goal of becoming and making disciples.



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