

Pandemic Opens New Pathways
for the Mission

Young Adults Grow as Disciples
of Jesus Christ

Giving Thanks for Changed Lives
in the Midst of COVID-19



CHRISTLIFE™
CATHOLIC MINISTRY FOR EVANGELIZATION

DEAR FRIENDS,

I don't need to tell you details about the historic shaking of the nations and the Church that we are experiencing.

*We are in a time of judgment and purification.
How are we to respond in the Lord?*

Let me share with you truths from the Gospel of John chapter 14 that are **now words** to encourage and strengthen us.

When his disciples were about to enter the trauma and fear of their own deaths, and the disillusionment of seeing their Master crucified, the Lord prepared them with his direction.

"Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me." (14:1) Jesus tells them: "don't be troubled." He called them to trust God the Father and himself. Jesus, as they will shortly witness, has everything under control. He is the sovereign Lord of history. This is true **right now** in your personal circumstances as well as with world events.

Let us come to him in prayer often, and give him all of our troubles and cares. He is Lord and we are his beloved.

Second, *"And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."* (14:3) The Lord assures them that he is going ahead of them to heaven and will come again to take them to himself. Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father. By his death for the forgiveness of our sins and by his rising, he promises to bring us to eternal life in God's glory!

We don't need to fear death. The Lord has defeated death and promises us resurrected life in him. Our life presently is only a brief time in the light of the eternal life he has in store for us!

Third, when questioned how to get where he was going, Jesus gives them the map of life: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father but by me"* (14:6). Jesus calls us to live the abundant life he offers, now and eternally, by remaining and growing in relationship with him.

On life's journey, we are called to love God above all else (Matt 22:37). All of us, by his empowering presence and our effort, can become fully devoted friends of God.

These months, when many of us have not been able to attend Mass and receive the Sacraments, have highlighted the importance of other disciplines of grace the Lord also calls us to as his disciples.

Take time to ask yourself: How is my daily personal prayer life going? Am I making time daily to read God's word in Scripture and hear him speak? Do I look for opportunities to share the Lord Jesus with others? Do I talk with brothers and/or sisters about what the Lord is doing in my life?

Sharing how our relationship with the Lord is going with friends is essential to growing in holiness and mission.

I would like to suggest that you take some time to prayerfully read John 14 and listen for the Holy Spirit to encourage you personally with the truths and promises that you need today.

Write them down and meditate on them. Read, meditate, memorize, and get his Word into your spirit.

Remember to make time to praise and thank God for his Lordship, his personal love for you, and his desire for all to know his salvation! *"Give thanks in all circumstances, because this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

In these times of judgment and purification, it is imperative that we share the good news the Lord has given us for the sake of those who are perishing.

You are his and you were born for such a time as this. Trust him. Follow him. Live for his praise and glory!



Thanks for your love, prayers, and financial support. We are in this together!

Your brother,

Dave
Founder and Director



DONATE TODAY

Humanity's need for God is magnified during crises. Right now we are seeing the need for disciples deployed on mission, who are boldly inviting all people into a saving relationship with Jesus. We need your help to continue the essential work of evangelization. We currently have very little income from events and resource sales, making us nearly 100% dependent on donations. **Will you give lovingly and generously for the salvation of souls?** Donate now at www.ChristLife.org/donate

PANDEMIC OPENS NEW PATHWAYS FOR THE MISSION

BY: PETE ASCOSI, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



The first night of Discovering Christ at a local university was a success. Our team was energized and excited by how God was already working in the hearts of the students. Little did I know that this would be our last in-person session, due to the coronavirus.

As the pandemic quickly escalated in the following weeks, it soon became evident that all of our ChristLife courses and events would be postponed or canceled. And yet in the months that followed, we have seen the mission flourish in ways we never expected.

Free online videos reach thousands

Making all of our course videos available for free online opened the door for many to start Discovering, Following, and Sharing Christ courses online. Thousands of people from all over the U.S. and beyond watched ChristLife's videos in their homes as individuals and as part of online parish courses. Sheila, a parish leader from Virginia, shared, "We were 3 weeks into our Following Christ sessions when we had to cancel all in person gatherings. After only a week off we resumed... Thank you, thank you, for the work that you do to make your ministry available to all!"

Online Discovering Christ pilot has far-reaching impact

Dianne Davis, ChristLife's Director of Mission Expansion, was quick to help launch the first ever online Discovering Christ course. "At first I was hesitant, as I'm a big believer in the in-person experience," shared Dianne, "However, I was wonderfully surprised at how well the online environment worked. People were even quicker to share on a deeper level."

The 21 participants were split into three separate small groups. Uninhibited by geographic limitations, the leadership team included friends from six U.S. states and even as far away as Lourdes, France!

Among the participants were leaders from FOCUS, two dioceses, and the Sister Servants of the Eternal Word. Bob, one of the leaders, shared "The format and teaching of the course was first rate. I experienced anew the joy of encountering Christ."

The pilot course was so fruitful that diocesan leaders from Birmingham and New York enthusiastically invited ChristLife to present online training for their dioceses. The Sister Servants plan to offer Discovering Christ online for their "retreatant family."

Online evangelization training equips hundreds

Over 300 leaders from far and wide participated in virtual training to learn how to evangelize with the ChristLife courses in an online setting. Through spiritual and practical teachings, participants were inspired to evangelize precisely in the uncertain times of the coronavirus.

Charlotte, a young adult from AL and a recent NET missionary, shared, "I'm so grateful to have gone through this training! [I am] so excited to be able to participate in this ministry and deepen my love and service for our Lord through it!!"

A highlight of the training was the experience of the virtual small groups and the Holy Spirit prayer time. Imagine my sitting at home in Maryland with my prayer partner in Colorado praying with a participant in New York to be filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit! The Holy Spirit knows no boundaries.

New horizons for the mission

One of the unexpected blessings of this time of quarantine is the realization that courses can be even more effective online. People who may not be inclined to go on-site to a parish, can participate online. "I can now bring the ChristLife program to people, over the internet, in their

own homes," shared a parish leader from New York, "This is priceless... No babysitters, busy schedules, can't drive in the dark, etc. I am so excited!"

Martin, a small group facilitator from Maryland, shared a similar sentiment, "Think of all the people that are isolated all the time... Here is an incredible

opportunity... What the enemy intended for evil, God is using for good."

Several months ago we could never have dreamed of these new possibilities for the mission of evangelization. Though there are great challenges that lie ahead, we have hope knowing that "in everything God works for good" (Romans 8:28).

Learn more about how to run ChristLife online at www.ChristLife.org/Online



YOUNG ADULTS GROW AS DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

BY: JENNIFER KING

If you walked into St. Paul's parish hall on a Tuesday evening in February, you would see a lively group of young adults gathered in worship and conversation, seeking to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Why were these young adults gathered? After completing Discovering Christ at the end of last year, ChristLife Young Adults (CLYA) hosted Following Christ in early 2020.

Following Christ was a true experience of community. Young adults stepped up to facilitate conversations about prayer and discipleship with their peers. Some shared their musical gifts as part of a five-person worship team. Each person helped create a hospitable environment where others could encounter the love of God in Jesus Christ. There was even a friendly dessert competition, where a different small group provided treats each week.

Every Tuesday evening, young adults listened to teachings on the basic disciplines of the Christian life. In small groups, they were provided with new challenges to grow as disciples—from starting a time of daily personal prayer, to forgiving people who hurt them, to living in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The highlight of the Following Christ course was the day retreat. Young adults heard about the reality of the spiritual battle every Christian faces. They had a chance to share ways they've encountered the battle against the world, confess sins they struggle with in their flesh, and renounce lies they have believed from the devil. It was truly humbling to pray with young adults as they renounced lies and

untruths they have believed and see them walk in the freedom Christ won for them!

At the final session, everyone was given an opportunity to share their testimony of growing as a disciple of Jesus Christ through the course.

"Following Christ has given me a greater sense of community and personal prayer. It has helped me grow closer to God through Scripture."

"The Lord has brought me deeper into His Love and Mercy through Following Christ, and has helped me forgive some people who hurt me and gave me some solid tools for delving into a deeper relationship with Christ."

"Following Christ has shown me how simple it is to start a personal relationship with Jesus. This has given me ways to continue to grow and share God's love with others."

"The experience of Following Christ has inspired my relationship with God, making it more intimate and personable. Turning me from being a lukewarm Christian to someone who is on fire for God."

The final session was the last time ChristLife Young Adults met before COVID-19 shut down all activity in the archdiocese. Looking back, it is easy to see how providential the timing was. I truly believe our experience of Following Christ has helped maintain our identity as a community throughout these months of quarantine.

From lectio divina on Facebook to prayer and discussion on Zoom,

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Our mission at ChristLife—to help all people discover, follow, and share Jesus—is all the more urgent as people are isolated and struggling with fear, grief, and uncertainty. We created a webpage of resources to help you grow in your relationship with Christ and press into the Church's essential mission of evangelization.

www.ChristLife.org/forsuchatime



ChristLife Young Adults has continued the urgent mission of evangelizing young adults and forming them into missionary disciples for Jesus.



ChristLife Young Adults is an outreach of ChristLife to young adults, ages 18-35 in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Visit www.clya.org to learn more.



James will be greatly missed!

ChristLife recently said goodbye to James Lohrmann after five years as a full-time staff member. James first served ChristLife as an intern. After graduating from Franciscan University, he joined our ministry full-time. James made significant contributions to the mission through leading ChristLife Young Adults, providing customer support to parish leaders, and spearheading multimedia projects—including "Why ChristLife" and the new "Following Christ." James is a gifted worship leader, a true servant of the Lord—willing to help wherever he was needed most—and, most especially, a great brother in Christ. We bless him and his family as he begins a new job at a marketing firm in the Baltimore area.

GIVING THANKS FOR CHANGED LIVES IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19

As Dave wrote in the book *Share Christ*, "It's a natural reaction to share what excites us, much like when we've seen a good movie or a new TV show; we want to tell our friends about it. There is nothing more exciting to share with others than the good news of what Jesus has done for us."

Our team has the continued blessing of seeing this truth in action! People encounter the life-changing love of Jesus Christ and can't help but share all he has done in their lives. People may be meeting around a computer screen instead of a table at this time, but the Holy Spirit is still changing lives.

We give glory to God for all He has done and continues to do through the ChristLife courses.



“ I am so proud of our ChristLife team here at OMGC. They asked me for a list of names and contact info for our senior parishioners. They've been going through this list of almost 200 names and calling to check in and to ask if they have need for errands, and if they have any intentions that we can pray for on their behalf. They are touching people's hearts and helping them feel not as much isolated, and to know that they are connected to the Body of Christ and their local parish.

I believe that this would not have happened had they not experienced [ChristLife]. These are some of the fruits of your work.”

Fr. Liam, Our Mother of Good Counsel in Bryn Mawr, PA

“ Looking back, I couldn't have imagined how much [ChristLife] would change my life by giving me a personal relationship with our Lord Jesus. ... I would encourage anyone to take this spiritual journey. I leave each weekly meeting enthralled, energized. This enriching evening with a dynamic group of people nourishes me with a newfound grace. Without a doubt, ChristLife has filled me with a tremendous gratitude for Christ's sacrifice. ChristLife has not only renewed my faith, it has deepened it; it has not only surprised me, it has inspired me.”

Joe, Most Holy Rosary in Syracuse, NY



“ To prepare for our online Discovering Christ retreat, we sent each person a prayer card and encouraged them to make daily time for prayer to reflect on how the Holy Spirit has worked in their lives. We then scheduled one-on-one Holy Spirit prayer sessions online, which went very well. The only drawback so far has been that I do not have a tissue to hand to the ladies and we could not hug each other when we are finished with prayer.

Although we are at a distance, it continues to have a powerful impact on our participants. One gentleman shared yesterday that because of attending the course he returned to confession for the first time in 30 years! God be praised!”

Jane, St. Rose of Lima in North Wales, PA



ChristLife is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are gratefully accepted in support of the essential mission of evangelization. All donations are tax-deductible.

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