

Overview and Dynamics

Speaker: Fr. Erik Arnold

1. ChristLife is an ongoing evangelization process.
2. What's Next? Following Christ.
 - a. In *Discovering Christ*, participants renew or make for the first time a personal commitment to Christ
 - b. Following this initial commitment to Christ, what is meant to happen next?
 - c. There needs to be a stage of "teaching and maturation."

"Within the whole process of evangelization, the aim of catechesis is to be the teaching and maturation stage, that is to say, the period in which the Christian, having accepted by faith the person of Jesus Christ as the one Lord and having given Him complete adherence by sincere conversion of heart, endeavors to know better this Jesus to whom he has entrusted himself..."

St. John Paul II

3. What is needed? A catechesis in discipleship.
 - a. Being a Christian is about a lifestyle of living in the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Following Christ achieves this goal by putting people into their lives that can model it, live it, and teach it by example and encouragement.
4. How do we do it?
 - a. Key roles in Following Christ that require more than in Discovering Christ:
 - i. Overall Spiritual Leader
 - ii. Worship Leader
 - iii. Small Group Facilitators
 - b. Disciple-Making Small Groups
 - i. Following Christ makes use of disciple-making small groups, which are different than the evangelizing small groups in Discovering Christ.
 - ii. Fostering Christian relationships is an essential part of living in Christ.
 - iii. Group prayer and fellowship in small groups are essential to incarnate the teachings in the participants' lives.
5. Following Christ Overview
 - a. Prayer
 - i. Prayer time consists of singing, worship and learning to pray together. Provides opportunity to:

1. Encounter the Lord
 2. Grow in conversational prayer
 3. Experience regular group prayer
 4. Learn to pray for others
- b. DVD Teaching
- i. Total of nine 30-40 minute practical teachings focused on growing in relationship with the Lord.
 - ii. Includes foundational disciplines to mature in Christ.
- c. Small groups consist of 8-10 people (including a facilitator and helper) and provide participants with time to:
- i. Discuss the teachings and how to apply them to their lives.
 - ii. Build relationships.
 - iii. Weekly review of how and what participants are doing to apply the discipline to their lives.

6. Overall Structure

- a. Seven weekly sessions and one-day retreat after Session 5
- b. Each session includes:
 - i. Formative time of prayer and worship
 - ii. Practical teaching
 - iii. Small group discussion
 - iv. Time of fellowship

7. Session Schedule and Topics

Session	Talk	Topic
Session 1	Intro Talk 1	Intro to Following Christ Daily Personal Prayer
Session 2	Talk 2	Hearing God in Scripture
Session 3	Talk 3	The Power of the Sacraments
Session 4	Talk 4	Forgiving One Another
Session 5	Talk 5	The Spirit-Empowered Life
Retreat	Talk 6	The World
	Talk 7	The Flesh
	Talk 8	The Devil
Session 6	Talk 9	Advancing the Mission of the Church
Session 7		Celebration Session

8. Session Walkthroughs

a. Session 1

- i. Intro to Following Christ: Introduces the Following Christ course and speakers and helps the participants to know what to expect.
- ii. Daily Personal Prayer: Presents Jesus' call to his disciples to a daily personal prayer life with practical's suggestions.

b. Session 2

- iii. Hearing God in Scripture: Emphasizes the importance of how we can hear God speak to us through Scripture and how to read Scripture in daily personal prayer.

b. Session 3

- i. The Power of the Sacraments: Helps people embrace the sacraments as the essential means of grace for us, in particular the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- ii. Announce the Retreat

c. Session 4

- i. Forgiving One Another: Establish the necessity of forgiving others in order to remain in and grow in our relationship with God.
- ii. Following the talk is a 15-minute forgiveness prayer time.

d. Session 5

- i. The Spirit Empowered Life: Makes the participants aware that the Church teaches that the Holy Spirit is giving a renewed Pentecost. He reveals our identity, sanctifies, and empowers for mission.
- ii. Following the talk is a 15-20-minute prayer session.

e. Retreat: We are at War

- i. Essential component to come apart with the Lord and the brothers and sisters to learn about the very real battle we face as Christians.
- ii. Retreat Sessions:
 - 1. The World: Introduces the theme: We are at War. Specifically, defines "the world" and practical ways to find freedom in Christ.
 - 2. The Flesh: Defines "the flesh" and how it resists life in the Spirit, includes practical ways we can "put to death the works of the flesh."

3. The devil: Shows that Christ and his Church teach that there is a devil whose goal is to steal, kill and destroy. Christ has overcome him and given His Church authority over all the work of the enemy.

- a. Following the talk is a 20-minute renunciation prayer time.

9. Session 6

- a. Advancing the Mission of the Church: To understand that the Church was founded so that all Christians would enter her mission. The talk also covers how to live a generous lifestyle, focusing on serving the Church and tithing.
- b. Announcements: The emcee should preview the final celebration session and encourage people to not miss the final night.

10. Session 7

- a. Celebration Session: Does not include a teaching, but is an essential element.
- b. Provides extra time in prayer and praise, small group discussion, fellowship, and time to share in the larger group their experience and any testimonies of life change.

11. Following Prayer Sessions

- a. Three sessions during the Following Christ course include a time of prayer after the DVD teaching and before small groups:
 - i. Forgiving One Another
 - ii. The Spirit-Empowered Life
 - iii. We Are at War: The Devil
- b. These prayer sessions are important for helping participants grow in Christ.
- c. Additional time is needed for these prayer times, so the opening time of prayer and worship is shortened.
- d. Those who lead these prayer sessions are encouraged to attend a ChristLife conference for complete training.

12. Training Your Team for Following Christ

13. Resources

- a. Following Christ: How to Run the Course Guide
 - iv. Worship song list
 - v. Recommended reading list

vi. Evaluation

- b. Following Christ Facilitators and Participants manuals
- c. Web resources (logos, sample flyers): christlife.org/follow

Discussion

What most impacted you from Fr. Erik's talk?

What sessions or dynamics of Following Christ are you most excited about?