

# **Discovering Christ**

## **Team Training Guide**

**ChristLife**

Catholic Ministry for Evangelization

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*Discovering Christ Team Training Guide*

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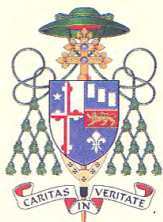
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# Archbishop Lori Letter



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

## ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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January 25, 2013

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Evangelization, as Pope Paul VI taught, is “the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize” (EVANGELII NUNTIANDI, 14). These words, echoed and expanded by Blessed John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, have set the Church on a vibrant course to re-propose the Gospel to the world.

Our parishes are the places in which the work of the New Evangelization - a work which belongs to all the baptized - first takes place. With so much being said about the New Evangelization, I am happy to recommend the work and ministry of ChristLife, a Catholic ministry of evangelization.

ChristLife was founded in 1995 and established as an apostolate by William Cardinal Keeler. ChristLife’s mission is to help the people of our day - those who fill our pews on Sundays and those who do not - to personally encounter Jesus Christ and follow Him as disciples and members of the Church. To this end, ChristLife has developed an evangelizing process of three DVD-based courses: “Discovering Christ,” “Following Christ,” and “Sharing Christ.”

I was happy to learn that parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Baltimore and in 40 other dioceses (in the United States, Canada, Australia, Slovakia and Nigeria) are using these courses with great fruitfulness. As a result, many people are encountering the joy of knowing Jesus Christ as Lord in parishes and other ministries.

With great joy, I recommend ChristLife to parishes and dioceses looking to respond to the Church’s urgent call to a New Evangelization.

Faithfully in Christ,

Most Reverend William E. Lori  
Archbishop of Baltimore

## Speaker Biographies

**Rev. Erik Arnold** was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Baltimore in 1999 and serves as pastor at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ellicott City, MD. He earned a Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University and is ChristLife's liaison to Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore. He is a speaker for the Discovering Christ, Following Christ, and Sharing Christ series. As a pastor he has run the ChristLife series in his parish multiple times with great fruitfulness.

**Pete Ascosi** is Assistant Director at ChristLife. He experienced a life-changing conversion that began during his senior year at Mt. St. Mary's University in 2003. After working for two years as a research assistant at a public policy think tank in Washington DC, he felt the call to full-time ministry and joined ChristLife in 2005. He is currently pursuing his MA at Notre Dame University of Maryland. He is married to Ally, and is a father of three children: Leyna, Terese, and Anthony. He enjoys spending time with family, the outdoors, and home brewing.

**Dianne Davis** serves as ChristLife's NY Regional Director. Flowing from her deep love for our Lord, Dianne has embraced a life of evangelization and bringing others to a personal relationship with Jesus. She has supported ChristLife in the coordination of Discovering Christ at her parish, St. Martin de Porres in Poughkeepsie, NY; and has facilitated the expansion of ChristLife programs in over 25 parishes region-wide, serving over 2,600 participants since January 2010. As a trainer and presenter for ChristLife, she is one of the featured speakers on the Sharing Christ DVD series.

**Dave Nodar** is the founder and Director of ChristLife. He oversees all program activities and is a speaker at conferences in dioceses, parishes and other Catholic organizations in the USA, and internationally. He is a speaker for the Discovering Christ, Following Christ, and Sharing Christ series. He is the co-author of *Discover Christ* published by Our Sunday Visitor in 2011. His passion is to help others to know the love of God the Father in Jesus Christ through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

**Lisa Timm** is the Director of Faith Formation at Holy Trinity parish in Poughkeepsie, NY and a ChristLife Board member. In 2010, she ran the first Discovering Christ course in the Archdiocese of NY at her parish. Her parish hosted the Archdiocese of NY Discovering Christ Conference in July 2011 where she was part of the conference team as both a coordinator and speaker. Her greatest passion is to bring people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to assist in the promotion of the New Evangelization.

# Talk 1: What is Discovering Christ and Why Does it Work?

Dave Nodar

## 1. ChristLife: An Evangelization Process

- a. Discovering Christ
- b. Following Christ
- c. Sharing Christ

## 2. The Goal of Discovering Christ

*"Transmitting the faith means to create in every place and time the conditions for a personal encounter of individuals with Jesus Christ. The faith-encounter with the person of Jesus Christ is a relationship with him..."*

- Synod on the New Evangelization, *Lineamenta*, 11

## 3. Personal Encounter with Jesus

*"Faith is above all a personal, intimate encounter with Jesus, and to experience his closeness, his friendship, his love; only in this way does one learn to know him ever more, and to love and follow him ever more. May this happen to each one of us."*

- Pope Benedict, October 21, 2009

## 4. Key Elements

- a. Community/Fellowship
- b. Prayer
- c. Teaching
- d. Personal Sharing

## 5. Growing, not manufacturing...

- a. Takes time to see: Grace
- b. Takes time to grow in trust: Relationships
- c. Takes time to reach a decision: Personal response

6. Involves the whole person

- a. Appeal to the mind
- b. Appeal to the heart

*"Evangelization must touch people's minds and hearts, stir their consciences and engage their energies."*

- Pope John Paul II, 1990

7. The Structure

- a. One session each week for seven weeks
- b. One-day retreat after session 5

8. Four parts to each session:

- c. Dinner
- d. Announcements, prayer & song
- e. DVD Teaching
- f. Small group discussion

9. Dinner

10. Song & Prayer

11. DVD Teaching

- 1) What Is the Meaning of Life?
- 2) Why Does Jesus Matter?
- 3) What Does Jesus Want Us to Know?
- 4) Why Do I Need a Savior?
- 5) Why Is the Resurrection Important for Us?
- 6) Who Is the Holy Spirit? (Retreat)
- 7) The Holy Spirit and You! (Retreat)
- 8) New Life in the Spirit: Being a Catholic Disciple
- 9) Believing and Belonging: Why We Need the Church

## 12. Keep It Simple

*"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."*

- Pope John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 20

## 13. Focus on the *kerygma*:

*"Often those who are admitted to catechesis need, in fact, a true conversion. Thus the Church desires that ordinarily an initial stage in the catechetical process be devoted to ensuring conversion"*

- Pope John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 19.

## 14. Small Group Discussion

## 15. Holy Spirit Retreat Day

## 16. "Making the Ask"

- a. It's not enough to present information about Christ – we need to create an environment where they desire to give their life completely to the Lord Jesus.

*"Conversion means accepting by personal decision the saving sovereignty of Christ and becoming his disciple."*

-Pope John Paul II, *Mission of the Redeemer*, 46

## 17. The Primacy of Grace

*"In every activity of evangelization, the primacy always belongs to God.... God has taken the first step and therefore we can boldly take the initiative to move forward, to seek the fallen away, to welcome the outcast, to share the Father's mercy."*

- Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, 12, 24

## 18. Afterwards?

- a. Following Christ
- b. Sharing Christ