

Faith Alive!

Living Faith at Work

*A Catholic Christian Retreat
to strengthen the connection between
our Faith and our Daily Life and Work.*

Manual for the Retreat Team

February 26, 2005

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Living Faith at Work

**40 University Avenue
Akron, OH 44308**

www.livingfaithatwork.org



To Those Who May Use These Programs:

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If you decide to use a program or a segment of a program, we ask that you pay a reasonable fee for the documents. For this *Faith Alive! Retreat* manual we suggest \$60. If you use less than the full manual, we suggest \$10 for each section of the manual that you use.

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Fundamental Purposes of the Faith Alive! Sessions

- To strengthen the **connection** between people's faith and work. (Work is defined as any productive activity we do.) [**Connection could be interpreted as interaction, interrelationship, and/or interdependence.**]
- To enhance parishes as formation centers which affirm, equip, challenge, and support believers in their daily life mission to live the gospel, especially at work

I. An examination of why our commonly understood Catholic Christian vision, at the grass roots level, needs further development for integrating faith and work.

A. Dualistic thinking

1. sacred vs. secular **or** spiritual vs. material [This issue has existed throughout human history. Today's materialistic culture makes the issue particularly relevant for Catholic Christians today.]
2. separating the divine from the human
3. misunderstanding the American concept of separation of church and state

B. Tendency to view spirituality as fundamentally an interior, contemplative experience.

C. Failure to take seriously one's own ordinary life events including work as a way of encountering the divine.

D. Too much emphasis upon mission and ministry being directly related to internal church work or parish commissioned responsibilities.

E. Lack of recognizing one's work as a possible "religious" vocation, an opportunity to strengthen the connections between God, oneself, and others.

- Again, Mission has a church. The church belongs to the mission. The church equates to “the people gathered.”
- “Call” equals desires, gifts, talent, interests, skills. All God given for one’s unique piece of the mission. We are stewards of what God has given—the call and the mission. The mission is born of us. The church is the vehicle.

II A realization we, as church, are forming people as disciples in the world. The Faith Alive! Retreat builds upon the foundation belief that together we can continue to strengthen our focus upon the vocation and mission of the laity in the world.

- A. Emphasis upon forming people for volunteer or paid "inner/ecclesial church life and work" needs to be extended to formation for daily life and work.
- B. Recognition that the average lay person would benefit from learning more about recent church teachings on the role of the laity in the world, the call of lay people to be Christian influences in the social, political, military, economic, educational, medical, cultural, etc., spheres of life
- C. Need to foster approaches in Christian formation that are life and work-centered, that foster faith-inspired reflection, decision-making, and action in the midst of the marketplace (we can infuse much of this into what is already going on in parish formation of people).
- D. An opportunity to encourage believers to find meaning, value, and creativity in their work, experiencing their labor as God-centered, as a vocation, as kingdom building, as responsible and honest stewardship.
- E. A call to lay people to further develop and deepen their own unique spirituality rooted in who they are and what they do, a stewardship of God’s gifts integrating personal growth and concern for the common good, grounded in scripture and Catholic Christian tradition.
 - Integrating personal and social moral growth based on scripture and Catholic Church tradition.

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Retreat Agenda

FRIDAY EVENING

6:00 Ministry Team gather for prayer

6:15 Registration and informal gathering of everyone – buffet meal, (team greets all)

7:00 Welcome, housekeeping concerns, ground rules, and **Foundation of Retreat**

- *For God so loved the world...*
- *Is the parish our world or is the world our parish?*
- *Jesus, within his faith tradition, was a lay person.*
- *The church is fundamentally God's lay movement for renewing the world.*

7:15 Opening Exercise: creating a presence

What is your name and background? What do you hope to get from this retreat? How do you feel about being here?

8:00 Opening Ritual -- "Come and see" – in church around baptismal pool. Theme is baptism and being called

8:15 ***Encountering Christ: The Human Heart of God***—Teaching talk, Reflection, & Sharing

8:50 Break

9:00 ***Growing in a Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ***—Witness talk, Reflection, & Sharing

9:50 Closing Prayer -- Sending Forth

Overnight reflection question: *What am I doing or not doing that prevents me from achieving the personal relationship with Jesus I desire?*

10:00 Leave for the Evening

SATURDAY MORNING

- 7:15 Ministry Team gathering for prayer in retreat center
7:30 Everyone gathers for continental breakfast (team greets all)
8:00 Morning Ritual: "Confirmed in faith" (gather in church) Theme is confirmation.

Give over to God that which prevents you from achieving the relationship you want with Jesus as Lord

- 8:15 ***Spirituality of Daily Living***—Teaching talk, Reflection, & Sharing
8:55 Break
9:05 ***The Spiritual Path of Love***—Witness talk, Reflection, & Sharing
10:20 Break
10:30 ***A Christian Vision of Work***—Teaching talk, Reflection, & Sharing
11:15 ***The Spiritual Path of Work***—Witness talk, Reflection, & Sharing
12:00 Lunch

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

- 12:30 Afternoon Ritual: "Bread for the journey" (in church) Theme is Eucharist.
12:45 ***Liturgy and Life: Being Centered and Sent***—Teaching talk, Reflection, & Sharing
1:30 Break
1:40 ***Liturgy in Life: Strengthening the Connections***—Witness talk, Reflection, & Sharing
3:00 ***In the Footsteps of Jesus: Sent to Serve and Do Justice***—Teaching talk, Reflection, & Sharing
3:45 Break
4:00 Conversation with another on "my spiritual journey"
4:30 ***Resources for Deepening in Faith***—Teaching talk, Reflection, & Sharing
5:20 Personal Reflection Time
1. Identify one personal commitment to action to take before future follow-up evening

2. *Share commitment with one person -- offer to pray for each other and hold each other accountable*

5:45 Prepare for Parish Mass, includes acknowledgment of retreat at Mass and possible comment by a team member

6:00 **Parish Mass**

(7:00 Optional Dinner Celebration)

(7:00) or 8:30 Retreat participants gather for ritual closing and sending forth: "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord"

FOLLOW-UP EVENING

7:00 Gathering

7:15 Ritual Opening

7:25 Oscar Romero reading and dyad sharing of outcomes of individual commitments

7:35 On the Road to Emmaus: Walkabout Review of Retreat

8:05 ***Being a Catholic Christian 24/7: Possibilities and Practicalities***

Teaching/witness talk and demonstration

- model small group dialogue for support and accountability
- offer guidelines and starter reflection questions for conversations about living faith in daily life and work
- provide opportunity for small groups to form, plan, commit
- for people already in groups -- a time to re-commit and reflect how to further develop in existing groups)
- Consider this possible option: periodic coming together of all who have made Faith Alive retreats with a speaker/presentation, discussion, and fellowship

8:35 Opportunity to express interest in being on a future *Faith Alive* team

8:40 Evaluation of program (written)

8:45 Ritual Closing: Sending forth to the mission fields of daily life.

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Retreat Initiator's Tasks

1. Confirm parish's intent to sponsor the *Faith Alive!* Retreat and the obligations and expectations of both the parish and Living Faith at Work.
2. With the parish ministers, set the date for the retreat and a follow-up session (about 10 days after the weekend) far enough in the future to allow for team formation and preparation—at least two months out.
3. Reserve parish facilities for the Friday evening, all day Saturday, and follow-up evening sessions.
4. Work with the parish ministers to identify the members of the team that will put on the retreat and secure their agreement to participate.
5. If you will not be the Retreat Coordinator, work with the parish ministers to identify a team member to assume that role and secure his/her agreement to lead the team.
6. Review the *Faith Alive!* Retreat manual with the Retreat Coordinator.
7. Establish the date, time, and place of the initial team meeting and communicate that to the selected team members.
8. With the parish ministers, establish and reserve tentative dates, times, and locations for the team preparation meetings. Eight would be ideal but it can be as few as four if the team members are willing to hold longer meetings (3 hours instead of one and one-half hours). These will be reviewed and modified at the first team meeting.
9. With the Retreat Coordinator prepare for the initial team meeting.

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Notes for Retreat Master

1. Review document titled “Fundamental Purposes of the Retreat” for first team meeting. This document can be found above in this section.
2. Concerning General Team Responsibilities at Team Formation meeting—ask those present to make their commitment total, beginning to end. Perhaps have all dates on a basic calendar that they can post on their home refrigerators.
3. Friday evening at the opening of the retreat: Welcome and Foundation of Retreat
 - Suggestion: Use the idea, “Does the Church have a mission or does our mission have a Church?”
 - Note that the church is 99% laity.
4. Concerning General Team Responsibilities—after the retreat
 - Concerning team members make some personal contact with the participants:
 - Encourage team members to be friendly to all retreatants and to work to be special to at least one participant. Build on natural connections. Seek to have every participant be special to at least one team member.
 - Team members reach out and engage the participants one-on-one at appropriate times. Consider assigning retreatants to team members for extra attention, hello’s, “How’s it going?” and so forth. By assigning responsibility to make several contacts even the shyest will not be overwhelmed and those needing attention will get it.
 - Follow-up after the retreat. A week later call them, make a home visit, and send a post card, something to remind them of their connection to the retreat experience and relationship.
 - Solicit from retreatants, before they leave, names of family members and fellow parishioners who they feel would benefit or be interested in a future *Faith Alive!* retreat.

- Support future *Faith Alive!* retreats by talking about the retreat with others who might have an interest. Then, close to the date of a future retreat, extend personal invitations to those you think could benefit.

5. Concerning Retreat Coordinator Responsibilities

- Consider having a vice-coordinator in case of illness or other emergency. Perhaps this could be a person in training to lead the next retreat.