

Faith Alive!

for the Generations

Session Eight: Being Catholic 24/7

by

Living Faith at Work

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Faith Alive! for the Generations

Session Eight

Being Catholic 24/7

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Faith Alive! for the Generations

Notes for the Session Coordinator

- In preparation for the session, read over the session agenda and all the session elements and note the materials needed for the session. Obtain the materials and arrange them for use as planned in the session elements.
- Prepare the home kit, that is, the materials for extending the learning and reflection into the household beyond/between the sessions. See separate notes related to the home kits. Use the ideas and principles normally used in Generations of Faith sessions. Determine when and how to distribute the kits.
- Prepare a Prayer Space within the meeting area using the items described in the Prayer Experiences documents.
- A time of 2½ hours for the entire session seems to work best for families. Schedule evening sessions to end by 8:30 PM as families start leaving about then to put children to bed.
- The timeframes given on the working agenda are all inclusive, that is, they include the time that must be allowed for moving the participants into and out of small groups and the various locations utilized for the sessions. The teaching-learning activities ought not be scheduled or allowed to run through all the allotted time in each segment. People, especially adults, will dawdle as they move between activities or locations—the greater the distance the more they are likely to dawdle.
- Start with the meal. Begin on time and have the participants eat immediately after signing in and getting their name tags. Allow for uninterrupted time during the meal. The suggestion is to allow about 25 minutes for the meal, giving a 5 minute warning before closing the meal and initiating the learning and reflection part of the program.
- One option for ending the meal time and beginning the program is to have a very brief prayer to close the meal. Follow that with the welcoming information, statement of purpose, and group formation.

In this option, the Opening Prayer Service flows directly into the All Ages Learning Experience.

- Determine who will be the Prayer Leader or person responsible for conducting the prayer services during the session. Give them the prayer service materials and time to prepare for the planned rituals.
- Read over the document, “Fundamental Purposes of the Faith Alive! Sessions,” in preparation for giving the purpose of the Faith Alive! Sessions during the opening of the session.
- In forming the groups for the session, use the Generations of Faith principles and practices normally used by your parish or institution. Grouping of high-schoolers should be as fits the situation or topic. If the participant pool is small, let them go with the adults or stay with their parents at the student’s option. Once the groups are formed, it may be necessary to allow time for the members to introduce themselves to each other. If so, have them give their names and just one interesting fact about themselves.
- It is important that the participants see work more broadly than just a job for pay. As part of the introduction for the session, it would be helpful to make a few comments about what work is.

Very broadly Living Faith at Work defines work as any productive activity. This would include children whose work can be that of students and stay-at-home parents whose work is housekeeping and child rearing. It is also worthy of note that each person may function in several different jobs or work efforts in the course of a day. An adult might work-for-pay with an employer, work at home on house cleaning or yard maintenance, and work at parenting with his/her children. We humans also experience different work over our lifetimes from student, to employee, to parenting, and to grand-parenting and supporting our adult children and grandchildren in many, varied ways.

- If at all possible, the reflections captured on chart paper over the previous sessions should be posted on the walls of the eating and meeting areas. They serve as a reminder of all the interactions that have gone on before this session.
- The Learning Experience activities included for this session is more expansive in this session as it is also a part of the Teaching Witness. In a way, it is a review the year’s sessions. In explaining the

directions, it may be useful to have 2 or 3 team members model the actions as they are explained.

- The All Ages Learning Experience, On the Walk to Emmaus, can be led by a separate facilitator or the person giving the Teaching Witness can facilitate the process. Having one person enables a very smooth transition from the multiple ideas expressed in the Walk to Emmaus process and the ideas to be expressed in the Teaching Witness.
- For the reflection part of the Learning Experience, one possibility is to capture the ideas shared with the entire group. If this is done, the process can be speeded up by having 2 people ready to write the ideas on separate flip charts.
- The Learning Experience/Teaching Witness flow together in that the Teaching Witness draws from the participants' reflections about On the Walk to Emmaus to make comments.
- In this session the Teaching Witness also surrounds the Personnel Witness in that the Personal Witness is a modeled small support group experience that is introduced and debriefed or summed up by the Teaching Witness. As part of the debriefing, the participants in the modeled experience can make comments about their intentions and feelings as they went through the experience as well as from their experiences from any support groups they are members of.
- An outline for the teaching witness, "*Being a Catholic Christian 24/7: Possibilities and Practicalities*," is included in the documents. The outline is not intended to be delivered in totality. Rather the person giving this talk should select the ideas and method of presentation that would best fit the needs of the anticipated group. The preferred deliverer of this talk would be a priest or deacon of the parish. Alternatively, a pastoral minister who is not a cleric could give the talk.
- The giver of the teaching witness talk and those who will model the support group are strongly encouraged to practice their talks in advance with a fellow team member offering feedback and suggestions for improvement in delivery and for keeping within the time limits.
- When the model support group is presented, it would be best if the observers could form a circle around those giving the demonstration.

- If time permits, allow 10-15 minutes for participants to form or confirm support groups. If time is too short, allow what you can and still end the session on time.
- Include in the Closing Prayer a time and call for the participants to bring forward their pledges and place them on the table in the prayer space. If the repository of the Blessed Sacrament is nearby, gather up the pledges and place them before the repository. If the repository is not nearby, let the participants know that the pledges will be placed before the repository later that evening or brought to the altar at the offertory during Mass the next day.
- Just before the Closing Prayer might be a good time to solicit volunteers to serve on the team for the next presentation of Faith Alive! for the Generations or for whatever education program into which you have incorporated these sessions.
- The Closing Prayer ritual is written for a session ending in the evening, hence the reference “rest” in the final prayer. If the session is held at another time, consider revising or dropping the last prayer.
- Sing at least the first two verses of “This Little Light of Mine.” An alternative is to sing this song while the participants are placing their commitment sheets on the Prayer Space table. In that case, you could sing just one verse at the end of the prayer serve.
- In dismissing the group at the conclusion of the final prayer, encourage the participants to share a greeting of peace and thanks with several of the people around them. Allow time after the session and before closing the facility for participants who wish to continue talking with each other.

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Session Eight Catholic 24/7

<p>45 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Gathering and Opening Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Registration & Hospitality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sign-in 2. Name Tags 3. Home Kit (in essence, a lesson plan for parents to use with children) 4. Meal 5. Welcoming statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Greetings b. Identify key people of the session's and the year's program c. Give purpose of the Faith Alive! for the Generations sessions (see Fundamental Purposes of the Faith Alive! Sessions.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To strengthen the connection (interaction, interrelationship, interdependence) between people's faith and work. (Work is defined as any productive activity we do.) ii. 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. B. Group Formation—Intergenerational Small Groups C. Opening Prayer Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Move the people to the Prayer Space. It should be prepared in your customary way or, if preferred, with a crucifix, a bowl of water, a small glass of oil, and a loaf of unsliced bread or pita bread. 2. See separate file for the prayer experience "Jesus, My Carpenter Brother."
<p>30 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> II. All Ages Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. On the Walk to Emmaus

55 minutes	<p>III. In-Depth Learning Experience</p> <p>A. Teaching Presentation: “<i>Being a Catholic Christian 24/7: Possibilities and Practicalities.</i>”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suggested outline/contents in separate file 2. Whole group presentation <p>B. Witness Presentation: “Modeling a Support Group Meeting.”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow up to 10 minutes for modeling and no more than 10 for follow up questions and comments. 2. Suggestions and guidelines for the modeling exercise are in a separate file. Use the reflection questions and guidelines prepared for distribution to the participants. <p>C. Make a commitment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow time for the participants to make a commitment and write it down. <p>D. Form or re-form support groups</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow time to consider with whom the participants would like to form support groups. 2. Allow time for the participants to form the groups and set the date and place of their first meeting. <p>If necessary, extend the time allotted to this part of the evening and reduce the time allotted for the next parts.</p>
10 minutes	<p>IV. Sharing Learning Reflections & Home Applications</p> <p>A. Whole Group Sharing & Reflection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring the whole group back to together and invite them to share some of the reflections they gave or heard in the small groups. <p>B. Reflection—Application Strategies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After about half the time is up or when reflections stop flowing, pose a new question for the entire group, “How can or will you apply the ideas brought forward today?” 2. Allow about a minute for private consideration and note taking. 3. Solicit volunteers to state their responses.
10 minutes	<p>V. Closing Prayer Service</p> <p>A. See file for Closing Prayer</p>

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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. 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
- D. A call to lay people to further develop and deepen their own unique spirituality rooted in who they are and what they do, 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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SESSION EIGHT: OPENING PRAYER

JESUS, MY CARPENTER BROTHER

Opening Song *All Are Welcome* (#753 in *Gather* hymnal, #406 in *Today's Missal Music Issue 2005*)

Leader Let us pray.

All Dear God, you have loved us, washing us with the waters of Baptism, strengthening us with the oil Confirmation, and feeding us with the Eucharist. These gifts have brought us into the Body of Christ. We give thanks for these wondrous gifts.

Leader Let us pray to Jesus, who in his incarnation became our brother and worked as a carpenter in the town of Nazareth.

ALL Jesus,

I have chosen to follow your path this season of my life. Please accept my life as a song of praise and glory to you.

Help me to dedicate each activity and choice of my day as a prayer of thanks and praise to you.

If and when I deviate from your path, encourage me back to your ways.

When I accept your grace and step back to your pathways, please accept those returning steps as prayers of repentance and petitions for forgiveness.

Amen.

Session Eight: Opening Prayer

Directions

Directions

Gather the participants in the space designated and decorated as the prayer space for the meeting. Have the participants take the provided hymnals or song sheets with them. If the *Gather* hymnal is not available, use what you have and select the listed songs or ones similar to them.

Prepare the prayer space. Use your customary decorations for the space. If there is not a customary decoration, we suggest a table covered with a cloth and holding a cross, a bowl of water, a small glass/cup of oil, a loaf of unsliced bread or pita bread, and a lighted candle.

Gather the participants in the space designated and decorated as the prayer space for the meeting. Provide them with copies of the prayers to be recited.

For added effect, have the participants assemble around the cloth covered table and have the cross, water, oil, bread, and candle carried to the table in procession by members of the session's team. The leader may note, if necessary, that the processors are bringing in the symbols of our salvation—the cross, our baptism—the water, our confirmation in the faith—the oil, the nourishment of our spiritual life, the Eucharist—the bread, and the mission to be light to the world—the lighted candle.

Once all are gathered and the prayer space set up, begin the prayers.

Materials needed

Copies of the prayer to be read.

Optional for setting up the prayer space

- Table covered with a cloth

- Cross

- Bowl of water

- Glass or cruet of oil

- Loaf of bread, unsliced, or piece of pita bread

- Candle

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Being a Catholic Christian 24/7 Possibilities and Practicalities

Outline of Ideas for the Teaching Witness

Several notes before beginning:

This outline is not meant to be totally incorporated into the Teaching Witness talk. It contains many ideas from which the witness can choose those most appropriate for the expected participants and the witness. Leave time and space in the talk for personal touches. Be aware of the time limitation necessary for the session and limit the content to fit the time.

If applicable, introduce and facilitate the walkabout review of the year's Generations of Faith and/or Faith Alive! for the Generations sessions. The process is titled "On the Walk to Emmaus." Forms and procedures provided in documents separate from this outline.

The Teaching Witness talk incorporates the Personal Witness into the teaching experience. The teaching witness will introduce a modeling of a small support group meeting and, at the end of the modeling, point out or draw out significant concepts or practices from the modeling.

Ideas suggested for incorporation into the teaching witness presentation.

Prior to the review process, On the Walk to Emmaus.

- If they were kept and posted on the walls, call attention to the reflections and ideas captured in previous sessions.
- If the reflections were not captured in the earlier sessions or if they were not posted, briefly review the topic and one or two main teachings from the earlier sessions, possibly by asking the participants for ideas that they remember.
- Note that it is rare for all persons to learn the same things even though they may all have experienced the same thing at the same time.

- We will undertake a process to help focus what we learned and at the same time to gain an appreciation of the many other things we could have learned and/or appreciated. After review, we might even change our mind about the things we learned that were most significant to us.
- Introduce the On the Walk to Emmaus exercise using the directions and form provided separately.

After the review process, On the Walk to Emmaus

- Elicit comments from the participants about what they observed and/or learned from the Walk to Emmaus exercise. Ask questions like
 - What did you hear that was as you expected?
 - What did you hear that surprised you?
 - What themes or strings of ideas did you notice in the ideas you traded or heard in your group?
 - What got you to think something like, “Aha, I had not thought of that.”?
- Make explicit the point that the ideas that other people have can be of benefit to me. We are each stewards of the ideas we have and as stewards need to be open to sharing these ideas with others. There are many ways to think about things, and we will gain from interacting with others to receive and give the possibilities.

Ideas for a short talk

- Being Catholic Christians 24/7 is about infusing every moment of our days with the core value of our faith, the essential teaching of Jesus.
 - Love God
 - Love your neighbor, that is, your fellow human beings.
- Easy to say, very complex in the doing.
- To live out these values, we need support.
- The resources presented in the session Faith Alive! for the Generations: Resources certainly offer much in the way of support.
- Today we want to deal with two forms of support that are considered very effective. One involves just you and the other involves a group, that is, at least one other person.
 - The first is a form of prayer, called Centering Prayer.

- An ancient prayer form recently re-introduced to western society.
 - A prayer form that invites God to be active in our hearts and minds.
 - Information on this is in the Home Kit.
 - The other is a support group. We'll deal with this now.
- In a general way, any group engaged in church ministry that meets on a regular basis could provide support by way of reminding us of our faith and the way of life believers have promised to live.
- More specifically though, we can choose to be part of a small group whose purpose is to help, support, and provide accountability for each other in living out the “Love” commandments of Jesus. This can be one other person, two or three. We recommend keeping the number small both to reduce the difficulties in scheduling a non-conflicting meeting time and to increase the closeness of the members.
- In these support groups, each person, in turn, is the focus of attention by the others in the group. Each shares the successes and challenges they have recently encountered. The others listen non-judgmentally; reflect what they have heard; and if asked, offer ideas for consideration by the person who is the focus at the moment.
- To demonstrate what we mean, we will have two (or three) people model a support group meeting. For the sake of brevity, they will demonstrate only one person's being the focus. In practice, the process would be repeated for each member of the support group.
- Introduce the team members who will be modeling the support group meeting. If possible, have the session's participants seated all around them so they are most easily able to be heard and seen by the participants.

The support group meeting is modeled for the participants of the Faith Alive! for the Generations session.

- Ask those who modeled the support group meeting if they have any comments or reflections they would like to share with the observers. Allow them to share their thoughts.

- Ask those who were the observers if they had any questions for the modelers. Allow the modelers to respond to the questions and comments that may be made.
- Note that the frequency, duration, and location of support group meetings are totally up to the participants.
 - The meetings can be weekly, biweekly, or monthly. We recommend not going more than a month between meetings.
 - The meetings can be held any place that can be conducive to quiet conversation, a corner of the company lunch room, on a walk from the car to the place of work, a walk in a park, over breakfast or lunch at a restaurant, at or after a family meal, after Sunday Mass in the church proper or the vestibule.
 - The meetings can be times of extended conversation or only as long as it takes to respond to two inquiries, “How have things gone since our last meeting?” and “What are you plans until our next meeting?”
- Offer guidelines and starter reflection questions for conversations about living faith in daily life and work. Give out the paper with this information on it.
- Guidelines:
 - What is shared in the group is not shared outside the group.
 - Keep in mind that the members of the support group are to treat the responses to the questions they ask in a totally non-judgmental way.
 - The member who is the focus of the questions will supply his/her own judgment.
 - The goal of the questions is to have the member verbalize and consider what and how they have done since the last meeting of the support group. This may call for the questioners to reflect back to the member what they understand using such phrases as, “What I hear you saying is....;” “If I understand you correctly, you mean....;” and “Do you mean to say....?”
- A good question that usually comes up around this point, is “What is to be the substance of our meetings?” or “Where do we begin?” The guidelines and support group questions could go in any direction without some target behavior or changes in behavior. For that reason, we offer the opportunity for the participants to set a beginning point.

We ask them to make a follow-up pledge from this session, a commitment. That pledge can be the subject of the self-reporting over the first several support group meetings until the group or the individuals choose other goals.

- Provide each person with 2 copies of the form titled, “Follow Up Pledge.” Suggest that the participants complete 1, 2, or not more than 3 items on one of the pledge sheets. This form they will give to Jesus in the closing prayer ritual. The other is for their future use.
- Allow about 5 minutes for the participants to fill out their pledge sheet. Instruct them to fold the sheets and hold them until the closing prayer ritual.
- Allow some time for the participants to form their own support groups. Tell them they may choose to keep it in their families or households, or they may elect to form a group outside their immediate household. They can form the group for a set period of time, say six months or a year with the option to renew or re-group at the end of that time, or for an indeterminate time.
- Provide opportunity for small groups to form, plan, commit. Say something like, “At this point, let’s pause and let you consider several people whom you might like to join in a support group. We’ll take minute to think about that and then provide a few minutes for you to talk to those you thought of. If you and they are agreeable, set a time and place for your first meeting.”
- *If people are already in support groups, they can use this time to re-commit and reflect how to further develop in those existing groups.*
- If after a short while, there are some people who have not found support group partners, invite those who have not yet formed support groups to meet with you at the (front, back, or side) of the room. Help them form groups looking at times available, geographic location, similar backgrounds or interests.
- Final word: For those times when you cannot meet with your support group, you can use the list of questions to guide a conversation with Jesus. Set aside about 10 minutes in a quiet place. Bring yourself to focus on yourself and your relationship with Jesus. Imagine Jesus to be sitting next to you or across from you. Then converse with him, telling him your responses to the questions. Spend a few additional minutes in silence, focused on Jesus. Listen quietly.

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Walk to Emmaus Review Process

1. Facilitator distributes the “On the Walk to Emmaus” form. Facilitator calls the attention of the group to the four columns and three rows. The first column has no lines around it and provides the title for the row. The next three columns are framed to limit the amount that goes into them.
2. Facilitator explains that the participants will place their own thoughts in the first column immediately under the title for the row and explains the meaning of each row.
 - “Reminded of” seeks ONE idea about our faith life as Catholic Christians that we were reminded of in the course of this Faith Alive! for the Generations experience. We may have forgotten it and it was brought back to our conscious thought. Or, we might not have forgotten it, but it was made more vivid in our thoughts during our experiences in the program.
 - “New Insight” seeks ONE NEW idea about our faith life as Catholic Christians that we learned during the Faith Alive! experience. This would be something that now has significance or importance to us.
 - “Application to My Life” seeks ONE idea, activity, attitude, or habit of mind or body that we plan to put into our lives on a daily or weekly basis as a result of this Faith Alive! experience.
3. Facilitator explains that after the group writes their individual thoughts in the first, unframed column, they will walk about the room and trade ideas. They must find 9 *different* people with whom to trade ideas—one type of ideas for the same type of idea. That is, “Reminded of” for “Reminded of,” “New Insight” for “New Insight,” and “Application to My Life” for “Application to My Life.”
4. Facilitator tells the group they will have four minutes to write their own thoughts, one for each row. Start the time. Note when two minutes are remaining and again when one minute is remaining. Call time after about four to four and half minutes.

5. Facilitator tells the group they will have nine minutes to find and trade information with nine other people. Their thoughts go in the framed boxes. People trade their idea for the other persons' idea, one type of idea for the same type of idea (row for row). People write the other person's ideas into the framed space and put that person's name in the box beneath the frame.
6. Facilitator starts the clock for the exchange of ideas. Warn people when five minutes remain, three minutes, two minutes, and one minute. Allow an extra minute if necessary for the group to get finished.
7. Facilitator has participants return to their seats with their groups. They are asked to reflect on what they have acquired and discuss patterns or strands discovered. The discussion may be with the entire group or briefly in the table groups and then share an idea or two with the all the session's participants.

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ON THE WALK TO EMMAUS

Reminded of			
	Name	Name	Name
New Insight			
	Name	Name	Name
Application to my life			
	Name	Name	Name

By Louis Trenta based on Robert Garmston and Bruce Wellman, *The Adaptive School: Developing and Facilitating Collaborative Groups*.

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Potential Reflection Questions for Support Groups

Keep in mind that the members of the support group are to treat the responses to the questions they ask in a *totally non-judgmental* way. The member who is the focus of the questions will supply his/her own judgment. The goal of the questions is to have the member verbalize and consider what and how they have done since the last meeting of the support group. This may call for the questioners to reflect back to the member what they understand using such phrases as, “What I hear you saying is....;” “If I understand you correctly, you mean...;” and “Do you mean to say....?”

Looking back over the past week (or since we last met):

1. What do I/you appreciate or value from my/your experiences of the past week? Elaborate, please.
2. What challenges have I/you had over this time?
3. How did I/you meet challenges?
4. How did this make me/you feel?
5. What alternatives might have been better choices for meeting those challenges?
6. What should I/you rejoice in? Give thanks for?
7. What challenges do I/you see in the next week?
8. What choices are available to me/you toward successfully meeting those challenges?
9. Which choice would best reflect Christ’s love for me/you and for those with whom I live and work?
10. Which choice would give me/you the most reason to rejoice? To give thanks?
11. How would I/you feel if I/you choose and follow the path most in line with Christ’s love for me/you and His world?

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FOLLOW-UP PLEDGE

As steward of the gifts given me by the Father, with Jesus' commandment to love my neighbor in mind, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, I commit myself to:

_____ Begin:

_____ Stop:

_____ Let go of:

_____ Recommit to:

_____ Get better at:

_____ Pray about:

_____ Think through:

_____ Learn more about:

_____ Change my attitude about:

_____ Talk about:

_____ Talk with:

_____ Write to:

_____ Visit:

_____ Share:

_____ Help:

_____ Other:

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Prayer Experiences

Session Eight: Closing Prayer

(In the meeting room at the space designated for prayer rituals)

Opening Song: *At Evening* (#759 in the *Gather* hymnal; 2 verses)

Prophets of a Future Not Our Own (Adapted)

By Archbishop Oscar Romero

- Reader 1. First, it helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.
- Reader 2 The Kingdom of God, of Truth and Love, Is *NOT* only beyond our efforts; it is beyond our vision.
- Reader 3 We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
- Reader 4 Second, nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.
- Reader 5 No speech says all that should be said.
- Reader 6 No prayer fully expresses our faith.
- Reader 7 No spiritual discipline brings perfection.
- Reader 8 No care for another brings wholeness.
- Reader 9 No program or project accomplishes our mission.
- Reader 10 No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

ALL

This is what we are about,
We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted knowing that they hold
future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our
capabilities.

Reader 11 Third, we cannot do everything, and there is a
sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables
us to do *SOMETHING*, and do it very, very
well.

Reader 12 Fourth, it may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a
step along the way, an opportunity for God's grace to
enter and do the rest.

ALL

We may never see the end results, but that is the
difference between the master builder and the
worker.

We are workers, not master builders...
Ministers not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future that is not our own.
Amen.

Leader: [Invite the participants to come and place their Commitment Sheets on the prayer space table.]

Leader: Let us pray.

ALL: Jesus, our brother, today we have considered our relationship with you and the Spirit you sent to be with us, and we thank you for this Generations of Faith experience. You have given many gifts, natural and spiritual, to our stewardship. In this session, we have made commitments to use the gifts you have given us to build up your kingdom. Help us keep these commitments so that the water of faith, the oil of loving commitment, and the bread of everlasting life may touch and act upon every aspect of our lives.

We ask this in your name. Amen

All: May the almighty Lord grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.
Amen.

Closing Song: This Little Light of Mine

Needed resources

- *Gather* Hymnals. If this hymnal is not available, it may be necessary to select other, comparable songs from the available hymnals or in accordance with whatever music use licenses are held by the institution putting on this Faith Alive! for the Generations session.
- If the song *At Evening* is not appropriate for the time and place of your gathering, select another song that is more appropriate.
- Copies of the prayers and reading for all participants
- Copies of *This Little Light of Mine* for all participants

Faith Alive! for the Generations

This Little Light of Mine

Words (1, 3, & 4) and music by Harry Dixon Loes.
In the Public Domain.

(1)

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.

(2)

In all the work I do,
I'm gonna let it shine.
In all the work I do,
I'm gonna let it shine.
In all the work I do,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.

(3)

Everywhere I go
I'm gonna let it shine.
Everywhere I go
I'm gonna let it shine.
Everywhere I go
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.

(4)

Let it shine til Jesus comes,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine til Jesus comes,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine til Jesus comes,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.
Let it shine.

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Materials list for Session Eight

For the Gathering and Opening

- Sign-in sheet(s)
- Name tags and markers
- Home Kit
- Food and beverages for the meal
- Waste containers
- Table tents or other means to identify groups

For Prayer Space

- Bowl of Water
- Cruet of oil
- Loaf of bread
- Music Stand
- Cloth
- Bible
- Candles

For the Opening Prayers

- Copies of the Opening Prayer, “Jesus, My Carpenter Brother,” for each participant.
- If individuals will be reading the various parts of the prayer rather than the group, identify them and be sure they are ready and willing.

For the All Ages Learning Experience

- Chart papers with notes from previous sessions posted on the walls.
- The form for On the Walk to Emmaus.

For the Teaching and Personal Witness talks: copies of the outlines and related information about the talks.

- Copies of Potential Reflection Questions for Support Groups
- Copies of Follow Up Pledge

For the closing Prayer Ritual

- *Gather* Hymnals. If this hymnal is not available, it may be necessary to select other, comparable songs from the available hymnals or in accordance with whatever music use licenses are held by the institution putting on this Faith Alive! for the Generations session.
- If the song At Evening is not appropriate for the time and place of your gathering, select another song that is more appropriate.
- Identify the readers for the parts to be read by individuals.
- Copies of the prayers and reading for all participants
- Copies of This Little Light of Mine for all participants

Home Kits for the participants

- Copies of Introduction to Centering Prayer

Faith Alive! for the Generations

ABOUT HOME KITS

About Home Kits in general

- Motto in preparing home kits, **Simplicity**. Aim for simplicity, not a lot of printed material.
- Categories of materials to consider for inclusion in the home kit
 - A reading or two
 - Table Reflections
 - Prayers
 - Service Project Ideas
 - Family Activities/Family Enrichment
 - Rituals
- There are many suggestions about when and ways to distribute the home kits. Let your knowledge of your participants guide your selection of the distribution and explanation method for each session's home kit.
 - Suggestion: Prepare the materials and put for the home kit together in advance. Give the participants the kits at the beginning of the program, to take with them through the day's program. Then, have the participants take out and use parts of the kit, or refer to specific parts, at different points in the evening.
 - Suggestion: Prepare the materials for the home kit but do not put them together in advance. Give the participants a bag and have them fill it with the home kit contents as they go through the parts of the day's program.
 - Suggestion: Hold the home kit till just before the final prayer. Allow time in the agenda to distribute the kit and explain how to use it.
- The kits' contents must apply to the topic of the day.
- Catholic Updates are a good print resource.

- Look into the various Diocesan offices for materials. Check the offices that are dedicated to the specific topic.
- Bible study can be encouraged by giving/listing a scripture reading for each day between GOF sessions.
- Encouraging daily journaling is a way to encourage daily reflection. The kit could include a small note pad for each member of the household with directions to write one or two sentences each day descriptive of his/her reflections about the topic of the session.
- The contents should foster experiential faith and relationships.
- Application is everything. Avoid assuming that people know “It” already.
- All sessions of the day’s program should make a connection to the home kit of the day.

About Home Kits for *Faith Alive! for the Generations*, Session Eight

- Introduce and practice Centering Prayer. Use the included description and directions. More information can be found on the Internet at http://www.thecentering.org/centering_method.html and/or <http://www.kyrie.com/cp/>
- Write and sing new verses to This Little Light of Mine. Target places or situations where you particularly need to remember to let the light of Christ’s love shine through you or one of your household members.
- Review the Home Kit exercises that your household has tried over the past year. Identify those that had the most meaning for your household or for individuals in the household. Decide if and how you might incorporate them more permanently into your family activities.
- In your yard pick out a place where each household member can have two 2’x2’ plots of ground for gardening. Prepare each plot the same way and plant the same things in the plots—seasonally appropriate flowers or vegetables. After the initial planting watering, tend one plot carefully, weeding, watering, and taking care of the plants. Let the other plot go untended. Weekly describe the growing difference between the tended and untended plots. Relate this to your growth in the spirit. In a sense, at Baptism we were a prepared seedbed. The Master sowed seeds in our seedbeds. If we tended to our spiritual life,

we have one result, and if we did not tend to our spiritual life, we are getting different results.

- Once a week or every other week, the members of the household can pause together and recall the commitments they made during the last session. Each can report on his/her progress in keeping the commitments and the difficulties that have developed. All can offer suggestions and support to each other for the time until they next review their progress.
- Prepare to be God's ambassador. At each household gathering have one of the members describe a situation that he/she expects to face in as he/she does his/her work and that he/she would like to handle very well. Members of the household volunteer or are assigned to play the role of people who will be involved in the situation. Then all act out the situation allowing the household member to try out various ways to deal with the situation. Also, others could take the role of the household member and have the member take the role of the person at work who is the most difficult to deal with in the given situation.
- Could include materials to create or enhance a home prayer space—picture, icon, cross, other religious symbols, materials to create their own symbols for the household.
- Identify and include appropriate readings from the seasonal liturgies with reflection questions.
- Encourage further exploration of the Living Faith at Work concepts by including the Living Faith at Work website flyer. The website is at <http://www.livingfaithatwork.org>.
- Include an abstract of the teaching talk, *Being a Catholic Christian 24/7: Possibilities and Practicalities*.

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Catholic 24/7

Being a Catholic Christian 24/7: Possibilities and Practicalities Abstract

1. Review what you have learned, re-learned, and committed to during these sessions.
2. Being a Catholic Christian 24/7 is about infusing every moment of our days with the core value of our faith, the essential teaching of Jesus.
 - a. Love God
 - b. Love your neighbor, that is, your fellow human beings.
3. We need support to do this.
 - a. Resources mentioned in the earlier session on Resources.
 - b. Prayers that invite God to be active in our minds and hearts.
 - c. Support groups of 2 or 3 people who meet with us on a regular basis
4. In these support groups, each person, in turn, is the focus of attention by the others in the group. Each shares the successes and challenges they have recently encountered. The others listen non-judgmentally; reflect what they have heard; and if asked, offer ideas for consideration by the person who is the focus at the moment
5. For those times when you cannot meet with your support group, you can use the list of questions to guide a conversation with Jesus. Set aside about 10 minutes in a quiet place. Bring yourself to focus on yourself and your relationship with Jesus. Imagine Jesus to be sitting next to you or across from you. Then converse with him, telling him your responses to the questions. Spend a few additional minutes in silence, focused on Jesus. Listen quietly.

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An Introduction to Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer was developed centuries ago to help us with the listening part of communication with God, otherwise known as prayer. It has been reintroduced to western society as a prayer form. It is not intended to replace other forms of prayer. It is intended to invite God to be active in our souls. The guidelines are meant to be simple. They are:

1. Find a quiet place to sit.
2. Choose a word that for you is a sign that you want God to be present and active within you. Think of it as your “invitation word.” Some possibilities include Jesus, Lord, Father, Spirit, Cross, Resurrection, Love, Master, etc.
3. Sit comfortably and repeat your invitation word peacefully and gently. Let your mind and soul settle into a listening silence.
4. If you become aware of wandering or distracting thoughts during your prayer time, gently go back to your invitation word.
5. Conclude your prayer time with a few moments of silence. Alternatively, you may end by slowly reciting the Our Father, the Hail Mary, or the Glory Be.

Most writers recommend practicing Centering Prayer for two twenty minute periods a day, once early in the day and again around the evening meal time, to gain the maximum benefit. Even shorter times and once a day can be beneficial.

If Centering Prayer is to be done in a group, the leader might say or lead a prayer to the Holy Spirit asking for his help during the prayer time. If it is not distracting to the participants, gentle, flowing background music might be played during the prayer time. The leader would initiate the recitation of the prayer chosen to conclude the session.

<http://www.livingfaithatwork.org>

The Living Faith at Work website [<http://www.livingfaithatwork.org>] contains more information, individual activities, and small group activities.

There you will find

- Materials for use by individuals. These may also be used in small groups as discussion starters.
- Materials for facilitators of small groups including some suggestions on facilitating small groups. Abstracts and reflection/discussion questions for several books related to living our faith in our daily lives are included.
- A list of suggested readings.
- A PowerPoint slide show about Living Your Faith at Work.
- Homilies or homily notes for the Sundays before St. Joseph the Worker and Labor Day from the past several years.
- Information and Internet links related to Catholic Social Teachings.
- Contact information for Living Faith at Work.
- Internet links to a variety of websites that contain information, prayers, reflections, activities, and even more Internet links related to living a life faithful to the Catholic Faith.

<http://www.livingfaithatwork.org>