



# JOURNEY: New Life in Christ

# Foreword

Thanks for entering the formation process of JOURNEY: New Life in Christ. You have already experienced the weekend retreat and are now invited to enter more deeply into a personal relationship with Christ and others through this faith journey. How often you have been told, “The best is yet to come!” Yes, the best is always yet to come because an ever-deepening appreciation of ourselves and our relationship with Christ continually brings us to something better. The hope and expectation are that the spiritual formation process outlined in this handbook will assist you in continuing to nurture your own spirituality as well as preparing to provide the JOURNEY retreat to the next group.

As a member of the JOURNEY team for the next retreat, you have a special calling and challenge. The calling is to continue your own growth as a disciple of Jesus and the challenge is to prepare well to provide an enriching retreat experience for the next group of retreatants. Both are fully interconnected as you will experience as you enter into this time of formation.

This handbook is provided as a resource to help you and all your team in responding to the calling and challenge you have received. It provides a wealth of material for you and your teammates to explore as you move forward in being disciples and witnesses to Christ.

The JOURNEY process has proven to be successful in many local parishes. It is crucially important that the process be followed carefully with adaptations made only after consultation with the JOURNEY Continuation Committee for your parish. The process as outlined in this handbook has been developed over the years under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the experience of innumerable retreat teams. Trust the Spirit as you journey through this time of preparation and formation.

Again, thank you for your commitment and your desire to continue your growth in your baptism through this renewal of your life in Christ. It will have a tremendous impact on you, your family, the next retreatants, your parish, your world. May the Holy Spirit be your Guide and Christ Jesus your Lord and Savior!

*Msgr. Tom Tank*

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# Introduction

JOURNEY: New Life in Christ is a parish-based, volunteer-led retreat program, presented at the parish, by parishioners. The Holy Spirit is the true guide for the retreat and there are no professional presenters. JOURNEY is a way to grow in your relationship with Christ through a deepening relationship with your fellow parishioners. Formation can help you in your personal spiritual journey.

JOURNEY has three parts:

- The weekend retreat
- Formation
- A life of service and spiritual growth

You've experienced the weekend retreat and have chosen to become part of the team that will give (because it is a gift) the next weekend retreat. You and your team will now enter a period of personal spiritual formation called JOURNEY with Christ.

JOURNEY was designed to proclaim the love of God which comes to us through Jesus Christ and to proclaim it in a way that, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we can accept that love. The teams that minister the renewal weekends were formed to proclaim God's Good News of love. Through God's grace and mercy, every parishioner is offered an opportunity for a total interior renewal.

This is the primary experience of a JOURNEY weekend at a parish. The weekend gives parishioners the opportunity to respond more fully to God's call to a deep and personal relationship with Him. During the weekend retreat, we are called to change our lives, rethink our priorities.

During the retreat you may have felt a subtle stirring or a strong response. Your weekend experience may have been a continued encounter with your loving Father and your friend, Jesus, or it may have been an unexpected encounter. The Holy Spirit may have begun to work in you. The team that put on the retreat expected that you would find a rebirth in the love of the Trinity. And now, you will provide the same opportunity for someone else.

The themes of the weekend help those who attend reflect on the power of the Holy Spirit to heal our lives, our place in God's family, our personal relationship with Jesus as friend and brother. For some, the weekend may be their first experience of a loving and welcoming Christian community. They may hear a deeper invitation to Eucharist, to prayer, to Scripture. The themes provide the opportunity to reflect on living the values of the Gospel, forgiving and forgiveness, and the call to share the Good News with others.

As a result of your weekend experience, you have now committed yourself to your own spiritual growth, to increased discipleship in Jesus and to the ministry of the next retreat weekend. This handbook will provide you with the basic structure of how to prepare for and provide a retreat weekend. Keep in mind that the best preparation will be prayer and the best guide will be your Bible.



## THE PROCESS



Continuation Committee supports entire process

Approximately 26 weeks from The JOURNEY Begins to Retreat Weekend

Men's and Women's weekends approximately two weeks apart

Four retreat weekends each year - two for men, two for women

# JOURNEY with Christ

JOURNEY with Christ is an exceptional opportunity to further your spiritual journey and deepen your relationship with Christ through Scripture, the faith stories of your fellow team members and through shared prayer. JOURNEY with Christ is not a series of committee meetings to plan the next retreat. Most people who faithfully attend the JOURNEY with Christ meetings say the deepening relationship with Christ is a life-long, life-changing experience. Each renewal team, although many parts, is one body with a common goal: to be a model of love and unity for the parish. The members of the team share both what they are and what they have, with each other, with those who attend the retreat and with the parish.

Each week you will pray together, share your experiences of God in your life and come to recognize more clearly God's love for you so that you can share that love and faith with those who will attend the next retreat weekend. The team meetings are a time of spiritual formation, not event planning.

Formation is comprised of The JOURNEY Begins, Sharing Our Journey, JOURNEY with Christ meetings, Evening with the Holy Spirit and the retreat weekend. Living a New Life in Christ occurs for the outgoing team after they have commissioned the new team during The JOURNEY Begins.

A word about schedules. Yes, we should be on God's time as we go through formation, but the demands of daily life necessitate respect for people's schedules. It's important to start meetings on time and end them on time, while allowing the Holy Spirit to work in and through the agenda.





# Stage 1: The JOURNEY Begins

This meeting should be held as soon as possible (within days) following the retreat weekend. The date and time should be established by the Continuation Committee and should be included on the calendar for the team in formation. The date and time can also be mentioned in the letter to retreatants. The Journey Leader announces The JOURNEY Begins during the Discipleship witness talk near the end of the retreat weekend.

The JOURNEY Begins is facilitated by the outgoing Spiritual Guide and/or a trained facilitator and outgoing Journey Leader in collaboration with the Continuation Committee. The pastor or his designee should be there for at least the commissioning part of the evening. The JOURNEY Begins should not last more than three hours.

Set up:

- For the first part, set up the room in a circle with chairs for team and retreatants.
- It is ideal to hold the commissioning in the church.

Handouts:

- Team Commitment sheets (The JOURNEY Begins Handout #1 in The Journey Begins Facilitator Guide)
- Extra Personal Commitment sheets (Weekend Handout #1 in Retreat Weekend section under Growing with Christ)
- Pens and extra name tags

Ask those who attended the weekend to bring the Personal Commitment sheets they completed during the weekend, Bible and name tags.

## *The JOURNEY Begins Agenda*

- 7:00 **Bible Enthronement**
- 7:03 **Opening Prayer** Pastor, Outgoing Spiritual Guide or Facilitator
- 7:05 **Purpose of The JOURNEY Begins** Pastor or Continuation Committee member
- Purpose of evening to commission next JOURNEY Team
  - Each person makes a prayerful decision about what God is calling him or her to do
- 7:15 **Called to serve** Outgoing Spiritual Guide or Facilitator
- Most of you were touched very personally this weekend
  - You may have discovered a deep well of spirituality within you
  - You may have healed an old wound or hurt
  - You may have opened a new relationship with Jesus
  - You may have learned new ways to pray
  - You may have opened the Bible and found words of advice and comfort
  - You may have a new perspective on your life in the Holy Spirit
  - You may have met new friends
  - You may have gotten insights into how to contribute differently to this parish community
  - The team hopes, and has faith, that the Holy Spirit has provided a gift to you

Themes from the weekend:

- Renewal – a realization of the need to renew our faith life
- Grace – recognizing God’s grace and mercy in our lives
- Spirituality – invitation to a deeper life of prayer
- Community – the responsibility of belonging to and serving the church, the parish, the world
- Gospel Values – the challenge of living the values of the Gospel
- Scripture – personal acquaintance with Scripture as the living word; importance of continued reflection on Scripture
- Love – God, our Father, loves *you*
- Discipleship – personal response to God’s call, commitment to growing in relationship to Christ, commitment to share the Good News with others

Team reads together Prayer to be Faithful of Serving God

- 7:20 **Reflection on experience** Journey Leader
- Leads group in sharing, brief moments (go around the tables)
  - Invite team to share after retreatants share
- 8:00 **Commitment to each other** Journey Leader

Journey Leader reflects on meaning of team commitment

- We are all parts of one body, we need each other
- Together we can play a role in renewing the parish
- We can create a Christian community of support and service, with the next retreat weekend the focus

8:10 **Commitment to formation** Continuation Committee member

- Continuation Committee member (Sample script at [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org), [The Journey Begins Facilitator Guide](#))
- Date for the next retreat
- St. Teresa of Avila prayer – God needs our hands and feet to minister to those who will come on the next weekend
- Dispel temptation to think you cannot manage meeting time for God
- Give brief description of formation
- You aren't asking them to commit to putting on the next weekend yet. You aren't even asking them to commit the entire formation process. You are only asking them to come for the next 4-6 weeks to "see what's next".

8:20 **Move to sanctuary if possible** Outgoing Spiritual Guide or Facilitator

- Invite all to move to sanctuary for commissioning, even if you are still deciding.
- Ask those going on with new team to gather in a circle, outgoing team and others around them for support

8:25 **New Team Commissioning** Pastor or designee

- Arrange in two circles, new team on the inside, outgoing team on the outside
- New team prays St. Teresa of Avila prayer
- Outgoing team prays over new team with arms extended. Spontaneous shared prayer for blessings and guidance.
- Conclude with "Come Holy Ghost"

Closing Song

8:50 **Announce time and place for Sharing Our Journey**

Incoming Spiritual Guide or Sharing Our Journey facilitator

- Announce date, time and place if already set (Or agree on date/time if not set)
- Ask team members to personal commitment by next meeting
- Provide links to Introduction, JOURNEY with Christ and Sharing Our Journey from handbook
- Remind team to bring name tag, Bibles, handout to meeting

A sample script for The JOURNEY Begins is available at [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org), [The Journey Begins Facilitator Guide](#).

## *The JOURNEY Begins Handout*

*As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen*

*1 Peter 4:10-11*

### Prayer to be Faithful of Serving God

Father in Heaven,  
ever-living source of all that is good,  
keep me faithful in serving You.  
Help me to drink of Christ's Truth,  
and fill my heart with His Love  
so that I may serve You in faith  
and love and reach eternal life.  
In the Sacrament of the Eucharist  
You give me the joy of sharing Your Life.  
Keep me in Your presence.  
Let me never be separated from You  
and help me to do Your Will.  
— *Catholic Online*

### St. Teresa of Avila Prayer

Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which He looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are His body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.  
— *St. Teresa of Ávila (attributed)*

*JOURNEY Begins Handout #1*

## Stage 2: Sharing Our JOURNEY

The first evenings of the formation process are dedicated to Sharing Our JOURNEY. Sharing Our JOURNEY evenings are a way to get to know your team members. You may know some of your team members very well. Others you may have just met on the retreat weekend. Each of you has experiences and a story to tell. Sharing Our Journey begins that process.

Sharing Our Journey is led by a facilitator identified by the Continuation Committee. He or she will guide your team through a process of sharing a bit of your background and history, as well as some key parts of your faith journey. This is not a witness talk. You can share as much or as little you are comfortable sharing. There will be many opportunities throughout formation and during the weekend to share your story of faith. Depending on the size of the team, Sharing Our Journey usually takes 3-5 weeks.

The process is designed to begin building this community by getting to know each other beyond the surface. We must begin to know our fellow team members on a personal and faith level in order to become the model of a Christian community that can love and serve those attending the next retreat weekend. It will be how we love each other, rather than what we do, that will touch people's hearts and minds.

During Sharing Our JOURNEY you will practice ministerial skills that will be important for the retreat weekend. First you will share your story of faith. Second, you will affirm your team members in their faith journeys and they will affirm you. Finally, you will practice listening with an open heart, enabling others to share without fear of judgement or condescension.

Team members should bring their Bibles, name tags and The JOURNEY Begins handout to each meeting.

### Process tips:

- Share as much or as little as you like
- Be sensitive to length of sharing
- Do not prepare your story while someone else is sharing
- Always be attentive and attending to the person sharing
- Maintain eye contact and avoid distractions
- Keep hands free of Bible, papers, etc.
- Do not interrupt during an individual's sharing
- Do not question or probe after a sharing is finished
- Do not give advice or engage in dialogue with the one who has shared
- Keep affirmations brief and to the point
- In order to facilitate our sharing, we have asked that you keep your story to about 20-30 minutes. There will be MANY other times to share during formation, so everything doesn't need to be told at once.

### Reflection questions for preparing Sharing Our Journey:

- Think back over your life. Think about those times when you felt close to God or distant from God
  - Pick two or three "close" times and two or three "distant" times that were, in retrospect, important to your life. For example, did a "distant" time turn out to be

positive because it helped you make a needed change or choose a new direction in your life?

- Think about the presence of God in your life during the “close” and “distant” times. How do you think God was present in your life at these points? Did you have a sense that God was present? As you look back, do you now have a sense of the presence and activity of God, even though you may not have been aware of God at that time?
- Think about the way your thinking about God and your beliefs have changed over time.
  - How did you understand God when you were a child?
  - What was important to you about God then?
  - How about during your teenage years?
  - Were there other experiences or times of your life when your thinking and beliefs changed and developed? (young adulthood, getting married, having children, career, growing older)
  - Overall, how has your life experience shaped and changed your thinking about and understanding of God and your relationship with Him?
- Some have a dramatic experience of God’s presence. If you have had an experience when God seemed vividly present to you, you might want to center your faith journey sharing around that experience.
  - How did the experience happen?
  - Were there other people involved?
  - Have there been convictions or beliefs that you have been more confident of because of the experience?
  - Are there actions you have taken as a result of this experience?
- Another way to think of your faith journey is to think about the different activities that have been important to you during your life and how those activities have expressed or changed your sense of relationship with God.
  - An example of works of mercy and how those activities draw you closer to God.
  - How has service influenced your relationship with God?
  - What impact have these activities had on your sense of being related to God?

## Sharing Our JOURNEY Agenda

*Chairs in circle/ Songs heets on chairs*

- 7:00 **Team Commissioning** *[if not done during The Journey Begins]*
- **Spiritual Guide** leads with Christ Candle up to Church
  - Sing “Here I am Lord” on the procession up
  - **SOJ Facilitator** – end of procession / potentially close and lock the room since purses there

*[Bathroom Break if needed on the way back down to the room]*

- ~7:20 **Bible Enthronement and opening song**
- Identify three people for Bible Enthronement
  - Bible Enthronement Song

- 7:25 **Welcome and Opening prayer**
- **Spiritual Guide** Come Holy Sprit
  - Could use Team Renewal Prayer on Handout #1

- 7:27 **Team #1 Handout** - Read Personal Commitments *(if not done during The Journey Begins)*
- **Spiritual Guide** introduce, goes first around circle – ends just next to **SOJ Facilitator**
  - Starts with “Hello my name is XXX” followed by applause

- 7:47 **Introductions** Going around the room, simple introductions
- **SOJ Facilitator** will introduce self, role and then this part of the evening. About a minute max per person, SOJ Facilitator goes first to model, around circle, ends with **Spiritual Guide**
    - Name
    - Spouse and children names
    - Where you live
    - Occupation
    - How long in the parish
    - Parish activities

- 8:07 **Sharing Our JOURNEY Explanation** - Giving the gift of yourself – sharing your story and your faith
- **SOJ Facilitator** will introduce, review high points of Sharing Our JOURNEY Guidelines including what to share, timeframe (15/20 minutes and Amen/Alleluia signs), Affirmations

- 8:15 **Sharing Our JOURNEY [15 min amen / 20 min alleluia / 5 min affirmations/prayer = max 25 minutes]**
- **SOJ Facilitator** Models – Starts with “Hello my name is XXX” followed by applause
  - **Spiritual Guide** to man Amen/Alleluia Signs when **SOJ Facilitator** Models
  - **Spiritual Guide** invites Affirmations:  
*Thank you so much for sharing your faith journey with us Spiritual Guide, I would now like to invite Affirmations for Spiritual Guide as you feel moved.*
  - **Spiritual Guide** offers prayer of Thanksgiving for SOJ Facilitator and her faith, etc. etc.

**[8:40 – Break?]**

8:40 **Sharing Our JOURNEY**

- **SOJ Facilitator** invites someone else to share (*can be Spiritual Guide as another example*)
- Faith Sharing Starts with “Hello my name is XXX” followed by applause
- **SOJ Facilitator** to man Amen/Alleluia Signs
- **SOJ Facilitator** invites Affirmations:  
*Thank you so much for sharing your faith journey with us XXX. I would now like to invite Affirmations for XXX as you feel moved.*
- **Spiritual Guide** offers prayer of Thanksgiving for XXX and her/his faith

9:05 **Sharing Our JOURNEY**

- **SOJ Facilitator** invites Faith Sharing
- Faith Sharing Starts with “Hello my name is XXX” followed by applause
- **SOJ Facilitator** to man Amen/Alleluia Signs
- **SOJ Facilitator** invites Affirmations:  
*Repeat process of affirmations*

9:30 **Sharing Our JOURNEY Closing Announcements**

- **SOJ Facilitator** reminder of the importance of confidentiality, preparing for Sharing Our JOURNEY, importance of attendance / commitment, starting promptly on time

9:31 **Spiritual Guide Announcements**

**Closing prayer**

- **Spiritual Guide**

9:33 **Bible Dethronement and closing song**

- Same three people can Dethrone that Enthroned at the beginning of the evening
- Bible Dethronement Song

Format for additional Sharing Our JOURNEY evenings

7:00 **Bible Enthronement and opening song**

- Find three people for Bible Enthronement
- Bible Enthronement Song

7:05 **Welcome and Opening prayer**

- **Spiritual Guide**

7:07 **Team #1 Handout** – Anyone who did not yet share Personal Commitments *Omit if all shared the first night*

- **Spiritual Guide**
- Anyone else? Starts with “Hello my name is XXX” followed by applause

7:11 **Introductions** Going around the room, simple introductions *If someone was missing the first night; omit if all were introduced first night*

- **SOJ Facilitator** will introduce. About a minute max per person. SOJ Facilitator provide handout
  - Name, Spouse and children names, Where you live, Occupation. How long in the parish. Parish activities



7:17 **Sharing Our JOURNEY Explanation / RECAP** - Giving the gift of yourself – sharing your story and your faith

- **SOJ Facilitator** will introduce, review high points of Sharing Our JOURNEY Guidelines including what to share, timeframe (15/20 minutes and Amen/Alleluia signs), Affirmations

7:22 **Sharing Our JOURNEY [15 min amen / 20 min alleluia / 5 min affirmations/prayer = max 25 minutes per person]**

- **SOJ Facilitator** invites Faith Sharing
- Faith Sharing Starts with “Hello my name is XXX” followed by applause
- **SOJ Facilitator** to man Amen/Alleluia Signs
- **SOJ Facilitator** invites Affirmations:  
*Thank you so much for sharing your faith journey with us XXX. I would now like to invite Affirmations for XXX as you feel moved.*
- **Spiritual Guide** offers prayer of Thanksgiving for XXX and her/his faith

7:47 **Sharing Our JOURNEY**

8:12 **Sharing Our JOURNEY**

8:37 **BREAK**

8:47 **Sharing Our JOURNEY**

9:12 **Sharing Our JOURNEY**

9:27 **Sharing Our JOURNEY Closing Announcements**

- **SOJ Facilitator** reminder of the importance of confidentiality, preparing for Sharing Our JOURNEY

9:28 **Spiritual Guide Announcements**

- **Spiritual Guide** could include importance of attendance / commitment, starting promptly on time, etc.

9:30 **Closing prayer: could consider Shared Prayer around the room**

- **Spiritual Guide**

9:35 **Bible Dethronement and closing song**

- Same three people can Dethrone that Enthroned at the beginning of the evening
- Bible Dethronement Song

Repeat process until all have shared.

Sample script and guidelines for Sharing Our Journey facilitators can be found at [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org) Sharing Our Journey Facilitator Guide.

## Stage 3: Evening with the Holy Spirit

Evening with the Holy Spirit is the opportunity for each team member to discern where he or she is called to serve during the next retreat weekend. Evening with the Holy Spirit is led by a facilitator identified by the Continuation Committee who will guide the group through the process.

Discerning God's call is a faith exercise. It is a process of listening to God's call to you for the ministry He has in mind for you for the next weekend retreat and formation. It is a process of listening to Him call your team mates also. It is not about what you want to do, but what He wants you to do. Often, people come into the process sure of their call, and the team hears it differently. It would be a mistake to look at the ministry descriptions and make any final decisions about what you will and will not do for the team at this point in the process. Discernment only happens with your recognition that it isn't only your understanding of His will, but the team's understanding of His will. And, it is all about you turning to His will.



Each team member has unique gifts. Team members bring their own personalities and spirituality to the team and to the retreat weekend. Each team member is being called to exercise a specific ministry during formation and during the weekend. No ministry is more important than any other ministry. All ministries, large and small, are needed in order to give the retreat weekend. The beauty of the weekend actually stems from the Holy Spirit and the interconnecting love the Holy Spirit brings.

Your facilitator will give you some preparation guidelines the week or two before Evening with the Holy Spirit, which will include prayer and listening to God's voice. Your call may come as a quietly rising feeling, a slowly developing thought, or like a light bulb turning on. It can come during or after you are reading His word, the ministry descriptions or even as you go about your living, even at a long traffic light. Listen for Him wherever you go, whenever you stop.

Evening with the Holy Spirit has three elements:

- An inner call to the Lord's preference for your ministry and work in the coming weekend, and in how you participate in your weeks of JOURNEY with Christ ahead. Hearing God's call may bring you peace or it may challenge you to serve in areas that are uncomfortable for you. Have no anxiety of you all. The Lord knows what He needs, what you need, and what the people attending the retreat need. He knows what will help your spiritual growth and what role you can assume to renew our parish.
- The second element is the team discernment. Your team members may be called to encourage you toward a specific ministry, particularly when you are not clear on what your call is or if you feel inadequate about the ministry you are considering. Also remember that more than one person may feel called to the same ministry. This is where the team's dialogue, if based on

prayerful reflection, can discern who should serve in each ministry to benefit the whole team and the parish.

- Third is the Commissioning. Here we will all call on the Holy Spirit to help us send forth each person to ministry. We will say a prayer after members are discerned as a form of commissioning.

Evening with the Holy Spirit asks you to have an openness of spirit, a readiness to grow in discipleship, the faith that God can speak to individuals and manifest His will through the community and trust in the Lord and the Holy Spirit. You will also be asked to speak the truth with love and receive that honesty with love, be aware of forgiveness and healing and love for each other.

**The most important thing to remember is to be open to the Holy Spirit.**

A note: Following discernment, you may still have questions about why you were called to a specific ministry. Trust in God. Move forward in faith. And ask for the Holy Spirit to bless your ministry.

An Evening with the Holy Spirit Facilitators Guide can be found at [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org).

## *Retreat ministries*

The specific ministries needed for the retreat weekend are determined by the parish Continuation Committee depending on the size of the team and are not changed during the Evening with the Holy Spirit. With large teams, some parishes choose to discern a lead coordinator and assistant(s) for the support ministries. Other parishes choose to discern co-coordinators. The Continuation Committee provides many of the behind-the-scenes support functions, so these ministries do not need to be discerned for a small team. An ideal JOURNEY team has about the same number as the number of retreatants for the retreat weekend. The recommended maximum number of people who can attend the retreat is 24, so no team would ever have more than 24 discerned ministries. Typically, the following ministries are discerned during Evening with the Holy Spirit:

- Journey Leader
- Six witnesses
- Table Leaders (usually six, depending on number of retreatants expected)
- Sacristan
- Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Weekend Coordinator
- Agape Coordinator
- Materials Coordinator
- Physical Arrangements Coordinator
- Kitchen Coordinator
- Invitations Coordinator

All possible ministries are described below.

### Ministry descriptions

**Spiritual Director** – the pastor and the Holy Spirit direct the spirituality of the retreat weekend and the formation process. The presence of the pastor is very important to most parishioners, and the pastor’s visible support of JOURNEY will encourage parishioners and give credibility to the process. While the pastor’s presence and involvement is critical, JOURNEY acknowledges the time constraints faced by most pastors and is designed for shared leadership. The pastor can choose how involved he wants to be and may designate an associate pastor or deacon to serve with a specific team. The Continuation Committee assists the pastor in the practical aspects of the program, such as room reservations, selecting Spiritual Guides, making changes in the retreat format or formation process to accommodate local parish sensibilities. The Spiritual Guide takes on the day-to-day responsibility of ministering to the spiritual needs of the team in JOURNEY with Christ. Three areas cannot be delegated: support from the pastor to ensure that space at the church is prioritized for JOURNEY weekends; assistance with the Reconciliation Service on the weekend; and support for invitations.

If the pastor designates an associate pastor or deacon to work with a team, it is critical for that person to be engaged with the team, participating as much as possible in The JOURNEY Begins, Evening with the Holy Spirit, team JOURNEY with Christ meetings and, of course, the retreat weekend. Specific responsibilities for the Spiritual Director:

- Assist with invitations by encouraging and inviting parishioners personally

- Work with Continuation Committee as needed re: changes to JOURNEY with Christ or the weekend retreat
- Prepare and deliver reconciliation witness during JOURNEY with Christ and during weekend retreat
- Work with Sacristan/Liturgist to arrange all sacraments, including reconciliation on Saturday night
- Arrange for transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to and from the chapel
- Celebrate Mass Saturday night (if separate Mass is included in the weekend) and Sunday afternoon

**Spiritual Guide** – the Spiritual Guide is the liaison between the team and the pastor/Continuation Committee. The Spiritual Guide is typically discerned by the pastor or the Continuation Committee with pastor approval before the retreat weekend for the next team and participates as he or she is able. Setting the spiritual tone for the team, the Spiritual Guide pays attention to the spiritual formation of all team members and ensures that JOURNEY with Christ meetings remain focused on spiritual formation, not planning an event. The Spiritual Guide is focused on each individual’s relationship with God, building the team and reaching out to the community through the retreat weekend. The Spiritual Guide prays, continually inviting the Holy Spirit into the group. The details of meetings are left to facilitators and the Journey Leader. The Spiritual Guide will want to come together with the Journey Leader frequently to pray for the team and for the retreatants. Specific responsibilities:

- Coordinate with the Continuation Committee on team meeting dates, times and locations. Reserve spaces as necessary for team JOURNEY with Christ and the retreat weekend. Ensure that schedule takes into account holidays, school breaks, etc.
- Determine how other supplies are provided for JOURNEY with Christ meetings.
- Coordinate with the Continuation Committee to identify and secure facilitators for Sharing Our Journey, Evening with the Holy Spirit and Living a New Life in Christ. Meet with facilitators prior to those sessions.
- Coordinate with the Continuation Committee or past Spiritual Guide to identify any past retreat participants who didn’t go through the formation process and may want to join the current team.
- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Participate in The JOURNEY Begins; the immediate past Spiritual Guide, team and Continuation Committee facilitate the majority of this program.
- Assist facilitators and Journey Leader in organizing specific meetings.
- Serve as liaison between the team and the Continuation Committee.
- Be available to the team for spiritual support. Holding an individual meeting with team members can be helpful when the Holy Spirit prompts. Be attentive to those who may need healing or special attention.
- Encourage parishioners to make the retreat weekend.
- Prepare Finding Grace witness talk
- Assist other witnesses in preparing witness talks.
- Coordinate chapel time and prayer for team at the end of Friday set up.

- Make remarks during the retreat weekend according to the timeline/script.
- Pray with witnesses before each witness talk.
- Assist with foot washing.
- In cooperation with Continuation Committee and the outgoing Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader, organize The JOURNEY Begins for the incoming team.
- Assists Continuation Committee with alumni gathering retreat six months after retreat weekend.

For more information and support for the Spiritual Guide ministry, go to [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).

- Additional information about ministry role during specific segments
- Inspirational notes
- Sample script for weekend retreat
- Sample weekly schedule

**The following ministries are discerned at Evening with the Holy Spirit.**

**Journey Leader** – Leadership in the Body of Christ is following and serving – following Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and serving others in love. The Journey Leader leads the team and facilitates meetings after Evening with the Holy Spirit. He or she works with the Spiritual Guide to organize the JOURNEY with Christ meetings, the retreat weekend and activities of the team, assists all the ministry leaders, prays for the team and gives the final witness talk on Discipleship during the weekend retreat. Specific responsibilities:

- Pray for the team, for the retreatants, for the parish.
- Familiarize yourself with the entire JOURNEY process. Work with the Spiritual Guide and the Continuation Committee to identify contacts and guidelines for sacristy, facilities, weekend retreat, copying, supplies, website, budget, etc.
- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Coordinate and plan team JOURNEY with Christ segments in cooperation with the Spiritual Guide.
- Between meetings, stay in communication with team members. Know the status of all ministries.
- Conduct as much “business” as possible outside of JOURNEY with Christ meetings, so the focus of JOURNEY with Christ can be on opportunities for spiritual growth
- Prepare witness talk on Discipleship.
- Invite a teen witness, based on feedback from the team.
- Pair up witnesses and Table Leaders, in cooperation with the Spiritual Guide.
- In collaboration with the Spiritual Guide, assign retreatants to tables. With prayer, random seating is best, although it is best to separate best friends. Strive for a good distribution of age and vocation.
- Remind Table Leaders to call retreatants prior to the retreat weekend.
- Support physical arrangements in setting up for the retreat weekend.
- Help welcome retreatants to the retreat weekend.  
Make decisions on starting time and late arrivals. Be sure “no shows” are called.  
Make remarks during the retreat weekend according to the timeline/script.

Work with the Weekend Coordinator to stay on schedule.

- Remind everyone of the importance of confidentiality regarding what people share during JOURNEY with Christ and the retreat weekend.
- Assist with distribution of Agape letters.
- Work with the incoming Spiritual Guide, the current Spiritual Guide and the Continuation Committee to organize The JOURNEY Begins.
- Remind Table Leaders to call retreatants regarding The JOURNEY Begins.

For more information and support for the Journey Leader ministry, go to [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).

- General information
- Weekend planning
- Weekend prayer partner schedule
- Activity rotation schedule
- Sample JOURNEY with Christ meeting schedule in Excel
- Sample script for retreat weekend
- JOURNEY handout

**Witnesses** – share their stories as a way of illustrating how God works in our lives and God’s immense love for us. When people share the depth of their experience, other people are moved. A witness does not just share background information nor the facts of his or her history, but the specifics of God’s actions around a specific theme. Witnesses also assist Table Leaders in their ministry.

Preparing to witness and specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Read all of the witness themes so that your witness talk fits into the overall weekend. Ensure that the theme of your witness is clear and compelling for those who hear it.
- Pray.
- Read Scripture. Include appropriate Scripture passages in your witness talk. Cite chapter and verse, using the version of the Bible used during the weekend.
- Call on the Holy Spirit to assist in preparing your witness.
- With the theme as your guide, select experiences from your life that illustrate the theme. You should not share your entire life story. Focus on examples of spiritual growth, conversion, healing and forgiveness.
- Do not give advice or tell others how they should grow.
- Practice presenting your witness. Use notes to stay on track. It is better not to read your witness talk. Stay within the allotted time frame.
- Present your witness talk during the appropriate JOURNEY with Christ meeting. Graciously accept feedback from your team.
- Pray with your prayer partner.
- Write Agape letters to all the retreatants.
- Invite your family and friends to pray for you in the chapel during your witness.
- Assist the Table Leader with shared prayer, activities, welcoming, etc.
- Pray in the chapel prior to your Witness talk. The Weekend Coordinator will call you back to the Witness Room when it is time for you to speak.

- Return to the chapel to pray following your witness.
- Return to the Witness Room and sit in the back during the presentations following your witness.
- Return to your table following the presentations.

(Descriptions of witness themes can be found at Witness and JOURNEY with Christ Themes, found under Witnesses in Ministry Descriptions.)

For more information and support for the Witness ministry, go to [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).

- Additional background
- Witness prep tips

**Table Leaders** – are the welcoming face of the retreat team for those who attend the retreat. They facilitate discussion at the tables after each witness talk, lead shared prayer, involve everyone in activities and minister to the needs of those at their tables. Table Leaders listen with empathy, encourage engagement and serve the retreatants. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray with your prayer partner.
- Practice listening with empathy.
- Be familiar with all the witness themes. Reflect on examples from your life that illustrate the theme, so you are prepared to share at your table.
- Write Agape letters to all the retreatants.
- Call those assigned to your table prior to the retreat weekend to remind them of the commitment and answer questions.
- Welcome all those assigned to your table. Double check that name tags are correct.
- Notify the Journey Leader and Weekend Coordinator if someone is missing from your table.
- Be aware of all the people at your table. Encourage those who do not participate. Be sensitive. If you sense someone is struggling, approach the person privately during a break.
- Pay full attention to witness talks and take notes. Set an example for the table.
- Lead the table in shared prayer.
- Explain activities to the table and assist as needed.
- During table sharing, listen. Keep the focus on the theme, not the person who gave the witness talk. Use starter questions if necessary. For example, “Have you had a similar experience?”
- Do not give advice. If questions arise that you cannot answer, arrange for the person asking to talk privately with the Spiritual Guide or the pastor or his designee.
- Use meals and breaks to minister privately to anyone at your table who seems to need attention. Respect the need for space but encourage engagement.
- Lead your table to private chapel time after the Agape letter presentations. Encourage them to express gratitude for the support. Be mindful of the allotted time, so that other teams are not waiting. Conclude by giving thanks, asking for blessings and saying the Our Father.
- Answer questions about JOURNEY with Christ following the discipleship witness and discussion of The JOURNEY Begins.
- Following the retreat weekend, contact the people at your table regarding The JOURNEY Begins.

For more information and support for the ministry of Table Leader, go to [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).



- Additional background
- Sample transitional statements to use in table discussions
- Table Leader tips

**Sacristan** – assists the Continuation Committee in preparing a prayer space for worship and the Sacraments. The Sacristan also ensures that prayer support is provided for each witness and that the entire JOURNEY community at the parish is welcomed to the chapel. The Sacristan also coordinates Bible Enthronement and any other arrangements needed for sacraments during JOURNEY with Christ. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- With the Liturgist, arrange Bible enthronement and closing prayer services for JOURNEY with Christ meetings.
- Have everything needed for Bible enthronement in Witness Room.
- Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator plan Reconciliation service with Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader for the team during JOURNEY with Christ if advised by the Continuation Committee.
- With Agape Coordinator, coordinate prayer support for team witnesses in the chapel during the retreat weekend. Ensure that people know when the chapel will be open for prayer.
- With the Liturgist, arrange for servers, gift bearers and Eucharistic ministers as needed.
- Plans and coordinates team practice of the foot washing service before the weekend retreat.
- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

More information about sacramental preparation can be found in the Ministry Preparation section. Support for the ministry of Sacristan can be found at [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).

- Additional background
- Setup details
- Chapel support schedule template
- Sample schedule for sacristan

**Liturgist/Music Coordinator** – plans the liturgies (Mass, Reconciliation) as well as liturgical music, witness music and transition music (what is played or sung as retreatants move from one space to another.) The Liturgist/music coordinator also provides music and plans liturgies during JOURNEY with Christ. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- Consult with Continuation Committee in planning the music for the weekend. Assure that music choice is consistent with parish norms and Catholic faith. Be aware of copyright issues.
- Assist witnesses in selecting music to accompany their witness talks. Arrange for playing the music in the Witness Room.
- With the Sacristan, prepare Bible enthronement and closing prayer services for JOURNEY with Christ meetings.

- Liturgist/music coordinator and Sacristan plan reconciliation service with Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader for the team during JOURNEY with Christ if advised by the Continuation Committee.
- Consult with celebrant regarding liturgy and songs for Saturday and Sunday Masses, be aware of ordinary time, advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter season. Make copies of hymns if hymnals are not available. Follow copyright restrictions.
- Make available all needed materials for liturgical celebrations.
- Ensure that Personal Commitment sheets are available for Saturday night.
- Lead or arrange for someone to lead singing.
- With the Sacristan, arrange for servers, gift bearers and Eucharistic ministers as needed.
- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

More information about sacramental preparation can be found in the Ministry Preparation section.

**Weekend Coordinator**— ensures that the retreat stays on time and is the only person during the retreat weekend with access to a clock. The Weekend Coordinator oversees all the materials and supplies needed for the retreat weekend and JOURNEY with Christ and works with the Physical Arrangements Facilitator to ensure that the space is comfortable and welcoming. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- Assume responsibility for physical arrangements and materials if coordinators for those areas are not discerned. Work with those coordinators if they are discerned.
- Consult the Continuation Committee regarding procuring materials. Ensure that the finances of the weekend are handled appropriately and within the designated budget.
- Contact the Continuation Committee for a list of supplies. (Review the Weekend in a Box section for more details.)
- Assure that first aid supplies are on hand. Know emergency procedures (fire, evacuation, tornado). Identify medical personnel to be notified for emergencies.
- Meet with Journey Leader and other support ministry coordinators outside of JOURNEY with Christ meetings to assure all details are in place and coordinated.
- Help welcome retreatants to the retreat weekend.
- Check rest rooms periodically for supplies.
- Keep Witness Room clean of trash. Collect from tables as needed.
- Pay attention to heat/cold in rooms and adjust as needed.
- Facilitate and direct the movements of the group from one place to another (Witness Room to chapel, to meals, etc.) Check for stragglers. Ensure that weekend retreat schedule is on time.
- Call witnesses from the Witness Room 15 minutes prior to the witness talk, return them to the Witness Room for their talks and escort them back to the chapel following their talks.
- Remove all edible items from tables an hour before liturgies.
- Turn out lights and check windows/doors Saturday night.
- Bring an alarm – you are responsible for waking the team Sunday morning.
- Prepare an inventory of supplies available at the end of the retreat weekend and give to Continuation Committee.
- With the Journey Leader, prepare a financial accounting of any expenses for the weekend.

- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

Resources for the Weekend Coordinator can be found at [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).

- Weekend Coordinator checklist
- Setup details

**Agape Coordinator** – solicits and gathers Agape support letters for those attending the retreat weekend. Agape is often defined as unconditional love, and these letters demonstrate to retreatants how much they are loved. The Agape Coordinator coordinates general letters from other parishes and church leaders; generic support letters from school children and seniors; and personal letters of support from family and friends of the retreatants. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- Contact families of retreatants to solicit letters of support.
- Contact the parish school (if there is one) to ask young students to make posters and write general letters of support.
- Contact shut ins and past JOURNEY-participants to write letters of support.
- Contact neighboring parishes who host JOURNEY retreat weekends for general letters of support, as well as diocesan staff as appropriate.
- Contact parish organizations to write letters of support.
- Arrange for Agape letter drop off spot at the parish, in collaboration with the Continuation Committee. Pick up letters as needed.
- Assist in setting up support room. Provide extra stationery supplies.
- Sort letters for each retreatant. (Put in envelopes or small handle bags.) Ensure that each retreatant has at least three letters.
- Help welcome retreatants.
- Coordinate distribution of Agape letters on Sunday.
- Provide prayer support in the chapel when possible
- Write thank you notes to any groups who provide Agape letters.
- If Agape letters come in after the retreat weekend, make every effort to deliver them to the retreatant.
- Consult the Continuation Committee for guidance on what to do with Agape letters addressed to a retreatant who did not make the weekend.
- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

For more information on prayer support, go to the Ministry Preparation section. Additional details on the ministry of Agape Supportt can be found at [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).

- Checklist for Agape Coordinator
- Sample script of call to contact person
- Sample follow up email soliciting support
- Sample language for soliciting Agape support letters

**Materials Coordinator** – develops the artwork for materials needed for the retreat weekend, including nametags, folders, handouts, etc. The Materials Coordinator works with the Weekend Coordinator on the production of all materials. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- Prepare name tags for all. Color code team versus retreatants so that it is simple to identify who is who. Make the first names large enough to read across the room. Put table number in the corner.
- Prepare materials for retreatant and team folders.
- Assist in welcoming retreatants.
- Coordinate with Sacristan/Liturgist to distribute candles and Personal Commitment sheets during Reconciliation Saturday night.
- Provide prayer support in the chapel when possible
- Assist in sorting Agape letters when possible.
- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

Additional details on Materials Coordinator ministry can be found at [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions).

- Materials checklist

**Invitations Coordinator** – acts as the liaison with the Continuation Committee. A permanent part of the Continuation Committee oversees the Invitations process. The entire team and the pastor share the responsibility to ask people to come and see. The invitation's coordinator serves as the primary contact with the retreatant once that person registers for the retreat. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- Follows up with retreatant once the person registers for the retreat and serves as the retreatant's primary contact before the retreat weekend.
- Sends letter to retreatants about 2-3 weeks before the retreat giving additional detail about what to bring to the weekend.
- Provide the team with the materials they need for reaching out to retreatants.
- Provide update reports as needed.
- Act as the liaison between the team and the Continuation Committee invitations group. Report on those signed up at meetings, provide lists of attendees to Agape Coordinator for letters, Journey Leader for team assignments, Materials Coordinator for weekend materials, and entire team for Agape letters. Assist Materials Coordinator with name tags
- Welcome retreatants on Saturday morning.
- Call no shows.
- Provide prayer support in the chapel when possible
- Assist in sorting Agape letters when possible.
- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

**Kitchen Coordinator** – acts as the liaison between the team and the Continuation Committee kitchen group. That group plans the menus, solicits donations for the meals and snacks during the weekend, and organizes additional volunteers to serve meals and clean up. Typically, the meals are not cooked on site but donated by various volunteers. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- Coordinate snack donations for JOURNEY with Christ meetings, if desired by the team.
- Serve as the liaison between the team and any food-related issues.
- Decorate the dining area as appropriate. Keep it simple.
- Work with the materials coordinator to make place cards for each retreatant for the dining room. Change the place cards for each meal so the retreatants get to know other people besides those who sit at their tables in the witness rooms.
- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

**Physical Arrangements Coordinator** – serves as the liaison to the Continuation Committee group that sets up and takes down of all the spaces needed for the retreat weekend (chapel, Witness Room). The Physical Arrangements Coordinator works with the Continuation Committee to prepare the rooms and clean up after the weekend is over. Specific responsibilities:

- Attend and fully participate in all team meetings, sacraments and the retreat weekend.
- Pray together with your prayer partner.
- Assist with any set up needs for Evening with the Holy Spirit, JOURNEY with Christ meetings, Living a New Life in Christ and The JOURNEY Begins.
- Ensure that appropriate team members know how to operate AV equipment.
- Secure any keys needed for using the space during the retreat weekend.
- Each table should have a Bible for each person, music missal for each person, candy and gum, tissues, large candle, crayons/magic markers, pens, and a table number card.
- Place other materials on back table where Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader sit.
- Assist in welcoming retreatants.
- Provide prayer support in the chapel when possible
- Assist in sorting Agape letters when possible.
- Assist Weekend Coordinator in maintaining restrooms, cleaning trash from Witness Room, etc.
- Return keys.
- Mingle with retreatants whenever possible.

### Variations in team sizes

Ministry roles that are discerned at Evening of the Holy Spirit may need to be modified due to team size. The Spiritual Guide and the Continuation Committee will make final decisions about the ministries to be discerned. The following provides suggestions as to what adjustments to make.

If there are significantly more team members than retreatants, the number of Table Leaders may need to be adjusted. The weekend retreat was designed such that one Table Leader and one witness would host six retreatants at each table. Fewer than four retreatants per table can inhibit participation. It may

be better to add an extra witness to a table and decrease the number of Table Leaders discerned. Assistants or co-coordinators can be discerned for support ministries as needed.

A very small team can host a retreat weekend. It is best to discern the Witness Room ministries (Journey Leader, witnesses, Table Leaders) from the current team (formed from the immediate past retreat participants). A small team can also reach out to people who completed a retreat weekend previously but did not go through JOURNEY with Christ and add them to the team. In this situation, support ministries can be discerned from members of prior teams. It is important that there be no “professional” team members and that each team experiences JOURNEY with Christ as a new JOURNEY together.

Additional information about adjusting ministry roles can be found in the Evening with the Holy Spirit Facilitator Guide ([inlic.org](http://inlic.org)).

## *Evening with the Holy Spirit Agenda*

Evening with the Holy Spirit should follow one week after the end of Sharing Our Journey. The purpose is not only to discern ministries for the upcoming retreat weekend, but also to nurture spiritual growth and trust, allow team members to experience God's call and to practice affirming each other.

Evening with the Holy Spirit is facilitated by a person trained and knowledgeable about the process. It should not be the Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide. The Spiritual Guide should be present but should not participate vocally in the discernment process, so that the person does not unduly influence the team. Attendance by the Spiritual Director is optimal but optional. The Journey Leader also does not participate vocally, once discerned. Both should provide prayer support. The Sharing Our Journey facilitator may be on hand to assist the Discernment facilitator. There should be no one else in the room besides the team members. Allow three-four hours for the evening. The facilitator should be aware of waiting for the Holy Spirit, but also respectful of team members' time and other responsibilities. Discerning until midnight is not recommended.

Past team members should be invited to pray throughout discernment in a separate place (church, chapel, etc.)

The ministries to be discerned will be defined in advance based on team size. See prior notes as to variations in team ministries based on team size.

### **Set up**

- Set up enough chairs in a large conference or meeting room for each team member and the facilitator in a circle. Make sure everyone can see everyone else.
- Reserve a place for the Christ candle and the Bible.
- If you are using flipcharts, post them in an appropriate place
- If you are using any kind of electronics, make sure it is working.
- Bring extra copies of ministry descriptions/three questions handout
- Reserve time in the church or a chapel for a short period of quiet reflection

### **First Part:**

*(Begin in meeting room)*

- Opening Music
- Opening prayer
- Discernment Handout review
- Process review
- Process for discerning absent team members

Process to chapel or church singing Come Holy Ghost

*Silent reflection in chapel or church*

*(Return to conference or meeting room)*

### **Second Part:**

- Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila
- Reminder to read what is written for Questions 1-3
- Going around the room, each team member says name, reads answer to Question 3
- Confirm who is called to each ministry
- Go to prayer and Scripture
- Discern in order of appearance in Evening with the Holy Spirit Handout #1
  - Start with Spiritual Guide as a model for others
  - Ask for description of call by reading answers to Questions 1 and 2
  - Ask for affirmations
  - Commission by having discerned people stand in middle of circle, all pray over the discerned; end with short song or prayer and applause. Facilitator will determine how many to commission at one time.
- Discern Journey Leader
  - Read names of those called to Journey Leader ministry
  - Pray quietly for those team members
  - Ask each to describe call by reading answers to Questions 1 and 2
  - Ask for affirmations
  - When team affirmation of one person has been elicited, invite that person to accept the call to that ministry. Repeat process for all remaining ministries
  - Commission in groups
- At end of discernment
  - Share prayer of thanksgiving and song
  - Remind of confidentiality about things shared during discernment
  - Allow Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader to make announcements about next meeting
  - Contact any team members discerned in absentia

Notes:

- Be sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit. Periods of silent listening and prayer are a blessing
- Welcome opportunities for healing and forgiveness
- Make sure hurt feelings are addressed
- Return to prayer if discussion reaches an impasse
- Draw lots, if needed





## *Handout for Evening with the Holy Spirit (customize)*

**SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR** – the pastor or his designee (assistant pastor or deacon) provides spiritual leadership and counseling and support for the team during its JOURNEY with Christ.

**SPIRITUAL GUIDE** – a lay person discerned in advance of Evening with the Holy Spirit by the pastor or the Continuation Committee. The Spiritual Guide ministers to the spiritual formation of all team members and ensures that JOURNEY with Christ meetings remain focused on spiritual formation. The Spiritual Guide is the liaison between the team and the Continuation Committee.

**JOURNEY LEADER (1)** – The Journey Leader leads the team and facilitates meetings after Evening with the Holy Spirit. He or she works with the Spiritual Guide to organize the JOURNEY with Christ meetings, the retreat weekend and activities of the team, assists all the ministry leaders, prays for the team and gives the final witness talk on Discipleship during the weekend retreat.

**WITNESSERS (6)** – share their stories as a way of illustrating how God works in our lives and God’s immense love for us. The witness talks share their experience of **Renewing Your Faith Life, Growing in Holiness, Supporting Each Other, Living the Eucharist, Listening to the Word, Unconditional Love for Us**. Witnesses also assist Table Leaders.

**TABLE LEADERS (6)** – are the welcoming face of the retreat team for those who attend the retreat. They facilitate discussion at the tables after each witness talk, lead shared prayer, involve everyone in activities and minister to the needs of those at their tables. Table Leaders listen with empathy, encourage engagement and serve the retreatants.

**SACRISTAN AND ASSISTANT (2)** - helps prepare a prayer space for worship and the Sacraments. The Sacristan also coordinates Bible Enthronement and any other arrangements needed for sacraments during JOURNEY with Christ.

**LITURGIST/MUSIC COORDINATOR (1)** – plans the liturgies (Mass, Reconciliation) as well as liturgical music, witness music and transition music. The Liturgist also provides music and plans liturgies during JOURNEY with Christ.

**WEEKEND COORDINATOR AND ASSISTANT (2)** – ensures that the retreat stays on time. The Weekend Coordinator replenishes supplies and helps ensure that the space is comfortable and welcoming.

**AGAPE COORDINATOR (1)** - solicits and gathers Agape letters for those attending the retreat weekend.

**MATERIALS COORDINATOR (1)** – develops the artwork for materials needed for the retreat weekend.

**PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS COORDINATOR (1)** – works with the Physical Arrangements Facilitator.

**KITCHEN COORDINATOR (1)** – is the contact person for the Kitchen Facilitator.

**INVITATIONS COORDINATOR (1)** – is the liaison between the team and the invitations efforts of the Continuation Committee. The entire team and the pastor share the responsibility to ask people to come and see. The invitations coordinator is the primary contact with the registrant before the retreat weekend.

\*Finding Grace and Discipleship witnesses are given by the Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader, Reconciliation witness by a priest, and the witness on Serving the Community by a teen from the parish.

### **St. Teresa of Avila Prayer**

Christ has no body but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which He looks  
Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are His body.  
Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks  
compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.  
— *St. Teresa of Ávila (attributed)*

### **COME HOLY SPIRIT PRAYER**

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

### ***COME, HOLY GHOST***

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest  
And in our hearts take up Thy rest.  
Come with Thy grace and heav'nly aid.  
To fill the hearts which thou hast made.  
To fill the hearts which thou hast made

*Evening with the Holy Spirit Handout #1*

***FOR YOUR PRAYERFUL REFLECTION AND RESPONSE***

1. How is God calling you to journey with Him and to serve His people?

2. What gifts has God given you that you can use in service to the team and on the retreat weekend?

3. What one particular team ministry do you feel called to by God? (Please write down only one ministry. If your call is to witness, be specific about which witness talk.)

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart.**

## Stage 4: JOURNEY with Christ



*“And you became imitators<sup>sq</sup> of us and of the Lord, receiving the word in great affliction, with joy from the holy Spirit, so that you became a model for all the believers”*

*1 Thessalonians 1:6*

JOURNEY with Christ evenings are at the heart of the JOURNEY process. The ideal is to meet on a regular basis (weekly if the retreats are offered twice a year; every other week if the retreats are offered annually.) It is best not to have long gaps between meetings in order to facilitate the growth of the team and the sense of community. Each session is designed to last about three hours with a full team of 24 people. Times listed in the agendas are approximate.

The purpose of these evenings is to continue personal spiritual growth for each team member, develop a sense of discipleship in a community of love and service, and prepare specific ministries for the next retreat weekend.

JOURNEY with Christ helps us to become more fully the people that God calls us to be. We grow in our own spirituality in order to treat others the

way God wants us to treat them. We grow in fellowship to show how God wants us to love each other. Our model of faith and love will mean more to the retreatants on the retreat weekend than any prayer or witness talk. We must be open to the Holy Spirit working in us and through us, and we must commit to the team and the process.

Team members should bring Bibles and name tags to each meeting. Each session follows a similar format:

- Bible Enthronement
- Theme reflection
- Sharing God moments
- Witness presentation and review
- Ministry preparation and review
- Assignments for next meeting
- Scripture reflection and shared prayer
- Team prayer

Additionally, the Continuation Committee may recommend the teams in formation attend an instructional Mass and/or Reconciliation during the JOURNEY with Christ period. Individual teams may

supplement JOURNEY with Christ meetings with chapel time, praying the rosary and Adoration. Teams may also get together for social activities. JOURNEY with Christ culminates in the set-up meeting immediately prior to the weekend.

A description of the key elements of a JOURNEY with Christ meeting is provided below.

### *Bible Enthronement*

Each session begins with a ritual called Bible Enthronement (cross, bible, Christ candle), which you experienced on your retreat weekend. During the Second Vatican Council, the meeting of Bishops from all over the world held in Rome from 1962 to 1965, the Bible was solemnly enthroned every morning at the opening of their sessions. Through this liturgical ceremony the bishops reminded themselves that they could only effectively PREACH the Good News if they first LISTENED to God's Word. Since then, in many Church gatherings like Congresses, Conventions Workshops, meetings, retreats and recollections, the first activity has been the Enthronement of the Bible.

### *Theme Reflection*

Each JOURNEY with Christ segment has a theme, which coincides with the themes at the retreat weekend. Suggested Scripture passages spotlight and support the theme. Each theme builds on the other, helping integrate and unify the JOURNEY with Christ formation process. Themes allow for us to view prayer, our faith and Scripture from a new perspective. Themes encourage conversation and provide an opportunity for team members to reflect on how God is working in their own lives. The twelve themes for JOURNEY with Christ, which are described later, are:

1. Commitment
2. Shared Ministry
3. Renewing Your Faith Life and Evangelization
4. Finding Grace
5. Growing in Holiness and Prayer as Relationship
6. Supporting Each Other
7. Serving the Community
8. Reconciliation
9. Living the Eucharist
10. Listening to the Word
11. Unconditional Love
12. Discipleship and Spiritual Growth

The focus of each JOURNEY with Christ meeting will be the opportunity to reflect on the theme, to provide time for you to learn from your experiences during the retreat weekend and in your daily life. The retreat weekend was not a time of reflection. It was more of an evangelistic event, a time to hear and open oneself to the enkindling of the Holy Spirit, a personal faith experience. The retreat weekend was an acceptance or a renewal of an invitation to friendship with the Lord. It was a time to commit or re-commit to that friendship. Unless we take time to reflect at the JOURNEY with Christ meetings, we will not gain the essential insights which give our experiences the power to change us. Without a time for reflection, the experience of faith will fade.

While scripture is one important component of JOURNEY with Christ, the meetings are not intended as Bible studies. Through various activities, JOURNEY with Christ calls us to **know** Jesus, not just to know

**about** Him. To know your faith is to know Jesus. To be committed to your faith is to be committed to Jesus. Faith involves both a relationship and its expression. Faith requires your action.

Theme reflections are typically given by the Spiritual Guide, the Journey Leader or other members of the JOURNEY community. The hope is that these reflections will draw on the person's experience of prayer, discipleship and reflection. These themes are expanded upon in Witness and JOURNEY with Christ Themes.

Sample theme reflections can be found at Witness and Theme Reflections [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org).

## *God Moments*

*"The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them."*

*Matthew 11:5*

It is not always socially acceptable to talk about God, to share the good news of how God is working in our lives. Once we have become adept at noticing God's presence, we are sometimes reluctant to share that with others.

Talking about God is not the only thing needed for effective evangelization and community formation, but it's a good first step God is living and present in us today and we can emphasize that presence by sharing examples from our own lives.

The Gospel is, literally, good news. We should want to share that with others. Unless this good news is shared with others, the kingdom of God will remain hidden. Community faith sharing builds relationships which are the fabric of community life. Community faith sharing helps us see farther than the immediate reality of this world. Sharing how God is present in our lives helps us see through the falseness of secular values.

We share the good news of how Jesus is working in our lives, the "God moments" that happen all around us if we stop and pay attention. We get better at this with practice, by praying and sharing with our team. The fresh and vital things God is doing in our lives is nourishment for the community.

Sharing is not without risk. Love needs intimate knowledge to grow, and knowledge comes when we are willing to let another person know us as we really are, and trust we will not be rejected. That takes trust and faith. In the beginning of formation, some team members may be hesitant to share beyond the surface. Others may overshare. By trusting in the Holy Spirit and through weekly practice, the team will work toward creating an environment where people feel free to share.

## *Witness Talks*

The most effective way the Gospel is proclaimed during JOURNEY with Christ and on the retreat weekend is through the witness of each team member. Witness arises from a life that reflects on God's love for self and community and on how God works for good in everyday life. We are each called to bear witness to Jesus and His message.

As team members, we are all called to give witness to our life in Christ. While some will be called to proclaim the word by giving witness talks on the retreat weekend, others will be called to give witness

through leading table discussions or through their service, such as Sacristan, Liturgist or Weekend Coordinator.

A witness is a person who has seen something firsthand and can tell others about it. As a witness for the retreat weekend, you are not being asked to comment on the Church's theological teachings or teach a class in spirituality. You are being asked to give a firsthand account of your relationship with God in the person of Jesus Christ. In a message on evangelization, Pope Paul VI said, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."

To be able to give a firsthand account of Christianity, we must know the Christ. Our witness flows from the experience of knowing and loving Jesus. We share how we know Jesus and our relationship with Him. The power of a witness is in showing how grace can work in imperfect people. God in his miraculous mercy works in all of us. Witnessing requires honesty and vulnerability, allowing others to see and hear Christ through us and the ordinary experiences of our lives that have been touched by God's grace.

Throughout JOURNEY with Christ, those who have been discerned as witnesses will share their stories with the team. The team provides feedback and in the spirit of this review should be one of love and fellowship. This review is not a time for grammatical feedback or public speaking critiques. The themes can be found in Witness and JOURNEY with Christ Themes.

### *Ministry Preparation*

During every JOURNEY with Christ, some time is set aside for ministry and weekend preparation. This is a small portion of the JOURNEY with Christ meeting as the focus should be on personal spiritual growth and developing a sense of discipleship and community.

Most of the "work" of preparing for the retreat weekend will happen outside of JOURNEY with Christ meetings. The set-up, the menus, the materials can all be discussed and prepared by the coordinators assigned to those areas in collaboration with the Journey Leader and the Continuation Committee, where appropriate. Input from the team will be solicited when needed (for instance, invitations and Agape letters). More details can be found in the Ministry Preparation section.

### *Scripture Sharing*

*Then He opened their minds to understand the Scripture.*

*Luke 24:45*

Scripture is the source of our renewal and our opportunity to listen to Jesus as he speaks to our hearts. We must have a listening heart and allow the Word to enter into our hearts and minds. We close each formation session by going back to the Word of God.

We must prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to help us hear the message of the Gospel, to open our minds to understand Scripture. By sharing our experience of hearing Scripture, we break open the Word for each other and hear the message more fully.

## *Shared Prayer*

Before you made your retreat weekend, people were praying for you. The team that gave your retreat prayed for you. Alumni of the program prayed for you. Parishioners prayed for you. Your pastor prayed for you. During your weekend retreat, there was a focus of prayer for you and candles were burning.

Prayer is simply a heart-to-heart conversation with one who loves us. Prayer can be individual or can be shared. True Christian prayer leads to deeper conversion and to community. Prayer is a true openness to God, a willingness to follow when the path is not clear.

Through prayer, we draw closer to Jesus and welcome him into our lives. And when He makes His home in me and when I live that, others will know that He is in me and that my life is in Him.

If we pray always, Jesus will always be with us. By sharing our prayer, we remind each other of God's love for us. And if we spent every moment of our JOURNEY with Christ meetings in prayer, we would have wonderful retreat weekends.

Shared prayer may be a new experience. We may be more comfortable with our private prayers. Shared prayer allows us to lift up our hearts together and speak out in faith. During the retreat weekend, this was done after the personal sharing of a witness. During JOURNEY with Christ, shared prayer typically follows Scripture readings.

Shared prayer is not limited to the entire team. The Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader will assign "prayer partners" for the duration of JOURNEY with Christ and through the retreat weekend. Prayer partners should meet outside of JOURNEY with Christ meetings to share prayer, for their families, for the retreatants, for their team and for the parish.

Prayer partners are typically paired based on discerned ministries:

- Spiritual Guide – Journey Leader
- Witness – Table Leader (six pairs)
- Sacristan – Liturgist
- Weekend Coordinator – Materials Coordinator
- Invitations Coordinator – Agape Coordinator
- Kitchen Coordinator – Physical Arrangements Coordinator

The addition of co-coordinators or assistant coordinators may suggest different pairings. If there is an uneven team number, the Journey Leader would pair with someone other than the Spiritual Guide. More background on the role of prayer during the retreat weekend can be found in the Ministry Preparation section.

## *Witness and JOURNEY with Christ Themes*

Witness talks focus on specific themes that, woven together throughout the course of a retreat, demonstrate the power and glory of God working in our day-to-day lives. Because the themes are interrelated and are part of a bigger story, it is important to focus on the theme of the witness, not any one person's personal story of salvation. Our stories lead to the mystery of God's role in our lives. We tell our stories with a sense of wonder as we recognize God's plan and that we are part of something



bigger than just ourselves. **The story is not about me, but about what Christ has done for me and how I have responded.**

The weekend retreat features 10 witness talks. Four are pre-assigned: the pastor or designee (Reconciliation), the Spiritual Guide (Finding Grace), the Journey Leader (Discipleship) and a teen witness from the parish (Serving the Community). The other six witnesses (Renewing Your Faith Life, Growing in Holiness, Supporting Each Other, Living the Eucharist, Listening to the Word and Unconditional Love) are discerned during Evening with the Holy Spirit.

The overall theme of the retreat weekend is the central role of Jesus Christ in our personal lives and the life of the parish. All witness talks are variations on the theme of God's love for us, and how the Trinity works in our lives.

The first witness talk focuses on personal change, establishing that the purpose of the retreat weekend is to change hearts and minds. The focus on Renewing Your Faith Life provides the opportunity for retreatants to reflect on the importance of change or conversion, in big or small ways. That talk is followed by the Spiritual Guide reflecting on Finding Grace, living our new life in Christ every day.

This renewal and conversion should be more than a weekend experience. The witness talk on Growing in Holiness provides examples of how we must continue to renew our lives in Jesus, an ongoing journey to grow in our relationship with Jesus.

The witness talk on Living the Eucharist precedes Mass and focuses on the healing power of the Eucharist. The Mass celebrates our need to worship as a community. Our new life in Christ cannot be lived in isolation. The witness talk on Supporting Each Other illustrates God's love through our family and community.

These five witness talks should encourage retreatants to look at their own lives and their own need for change and conversion, setting the stage for Reconciliation. This witness talk ideally is followed immediately by the opportunity to experience the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Serving the Community looks beyond the immediate faith community and allows someone who has been served to share experiences of serving and loving as Jesus did.

God's word is food for the journey, and it is important to feed and form ourselves on a continual basis. The witness on Listening to the Word provides experiences of how the word of God nurtures and sustains spiritual growth. The community also provides tangible evidence of Unconditional Love. This witness reflects on how God loves us and responds to our individual needs. Retreatants then experience this tangible love through Agape letters of encouragement written by family, friends and the community.

The final witness talk is on Discipleship. Assured of God's love for us and strengthened by the community, we are called to follow him. The witness talk reflects on personal experiences of saying "yes" to God.

The specific witness and JOURNEY with Christ themes are listed below.

## Commitment

*“Whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.”*

*Matthew 10:38*

Formation begins with a reminder of the commitment the team made to God, to each other and to the retreat process. True disciples are committed to following God’s call. If we are to renew ourselves and our parish, we must be willing to be present and engaged.

During the Eucharist at the retreat weekend, all retreatants were given the opportunity to make a commitment to Christ. At The JOURNEY Begins, you were called to renew this commitment as a community. Throughout JOURNEY with Christ you will be asked to continue this commitment, to Christ, to the community and to those invited to the next JOURNEY retreat weekend.

If there is to be growth and meaning in one’s life, one needs to make a commitment. Without commitment, everything is of equal value. And if everything is equal, then nothing is of value. By committing to Christ, you are saying that you value a relationship with Christ, you are prioritizing your faith life and your spiritual growth, and you are promising to minister and serve others as a disciple.

Making a commitment to Christ and to the JOURNEY process may mean allowing other things to become less important. Putting Christ at the center of our lives helps us understand what IS important and allows us to focus on those things. A commitment to Christ can create order out of our chaotic lives.

Living the life of a Christian is a choice. While many of us are claimed for the faith through baptism as children, we must all embrace our faith as adults and recommit to being disciples of the Lord and living His Gospel values.

We are many parts, but we must serve together. Christian faith life begins and continues in community with the entire body of the faithful. Faith is a communal experience. It is shared in the larger Catholic Christian community, in our parish and with our JOURNEY team.

By participating in a JOURNEY retreat weekend, you have taken a step in your personal renewal process. Through The JOURNEY Begins, you made a commitment to participate and share your gifts through JOURNEY with Christ and the renewal of your parish.

Suggested Scripture:

- 2 Peter 1:1-10
- Acts 4:32-35
- John 13:12-17
- Luke 14:25-33

## Shared Ministry

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

During The JOURNEY Begins, team members make a commitment to each other. They pledge to continue sharing the gift of themselves with the team and with the retreatants on the retreat weekend. They promise to support each other however they can. They make a commitment to participating in the team's ministry, prayerfully preparing and giving priority to team formation.

We are many parts, we are all one body.

Individuals will be discerned for specific ministries for the retreat weekend, but every ministry is important to the overall. Shared ministry means each person must do his or her part, completely and faithfully.

Suggested Scripture:

- Romans 12:3-8
- Ephesians 4:11-16
- Ephesians 4:32
- 1 Corinthians 3:5-11
- Galatians 2:20
- John 17:17-19

## Renewing Your Faith Life

The Renewing Your Faith Life witness is typically someone who has had a profound experience of renewal/change in his or her life. The witness talk may include:

Reflection:

- Renewal
- Transformation
- Turning from old ways
- God has a better idea
  
- A description of life before Christ entered in; existing vs. living
  - A distorted view of what was important
  - How I saw myself; how others saw me; how God saw me
  - Failure, sin, restlessness, depression
  - What I thought I wanted wasn't making me happy
- Turning points of conversion
  - Hitting rock bottom
  - A new way of looking at myself
  - Discovering God, love, forgiveness through caring people
  - Finding or re-finding a life of faith
- The beginnings of renewal
  - Step by step
  - Understanding and accepting God's forgiveness
  - The courage to step into a new way of living
  - The challenge to continuing growing
- Let go and let God

Suggested Scripture:

- Ephesians 4:17-24
- John 3:5-8
- 2 Corinthians 5:16-18
- John 9:25

## Finding Grace

The Finding Grace witness talk is given by the Spiritual Guide and is a testament to the continuing need for renewal. The witness talk may include:

Reflection:

- Jesus call to love
- Joy
- Peace
- New life in Christ
  
- Living within the laws of the church
  - Believing that I can earn God's love
  - Living faith life on the surface (attending Mass, prayer)
- Control vs. surrender
  - Understanding God's call to a deeper relationship
  - I'm not perfect; only God is perfect
  - Finding grace through a deeper appreciation of God's call
- Former ideas of grace
  - Grace as something to be understood
  - A thing to be lost, gained, earned, traded
- The meaning of grace
  - Grace as **someone**, not something
  - relationship loving presence
  - Liberation from sin, selfishness, guilt, hopelessness
- Living a new life in Christ
  - Learning to let go
  - Continuing to choose Christ
  - The effect of a deeper faith on family, friends, the community

Suggested Scripture:

- Colossians 3:10-12
- John 15:1-17
- Romans 12:1-2
- Luke 6:20-26

## Growing in Holiness

This witness should have an awareness of God's presence in his or her daily life and a commitment to spiritual growth. Renewal leads us to a moment when we receive the Spirit into our lives, freely and consciously.

Reflection:

- Holiness
- Faith is a journey
- Prayer relationship
  
- A spiritual approach
  - Knowing I am a child of God
  - Sharing God's love with others
  - Being part of God's mission here on earth
  - A fullness of life in Christ
- Faith in daily life
  - What has shaped my faith
  - My prayer life
  - Expressing God' love through service

Suggested Scripture:

- 1 John 4:7-16
- John 1:12
- Psalm 16:11
- Leviticus 11:44

## Living the Eucharist

This witness should evidence a deep appreciation of the Eucharist, its mystery and relevance to day-to-day life.

### Reflection:

- The same old miracle every Mass
- Jesus, remember me
- Bread of the presence
- God with us
  
- Source and summit of Christian life
  - Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus
  - United with the whole church in heaven and on earth
  - Real presence of Jesus
- Celebrating the Eucharist
  - A sign of unity
  - A bond of charity
  - A paschal banquet
- Impact of the Eucharist on the individual
  - Food for the journey
  - Fills the mind with grace
  - Consoling presence, unconditional acceptance
- Impact of the Eucharist on the community
  - A community of believers
  - A shared experience of faith

### Suggested Scripture:

- 1 Corinthians 10:16-17
- Matthew 26:25-27
- John 6: 48-58
- 1 Peter 1:17-21
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

## Supporting Each Other

The Supporting Each Other witness talk is given by someone who has especially felt God at work in his or her life through the church/Christian community. Life in Christ is not lived in isolation.

Reflection:

- Reinforcement
- You've got a friend
- Blessed are the merciful
- Here I am. Send me.
- Connectivity
- Circle of friends
- Sisters/brothers in Christ
  
- Evolving relationship with Christ
  - How the sense of belonging can be affected by sin and brokenness
  - How that can be healed by forgiveness and reconciliation
- Birth, growth and maturity in Christ
  - Sacraments of initiation – baptism, confirmation, Eucharist
  - Sacrament of growth and healing - reconciliation
  - Embracing faith as an adult
- The community of Christ
  - Community during the retreat weekend and formation
  - Community as seen in the parish
  - Call to share the good news

Suggested Scripture:

- 1 John 4:17-21
- Philippians 2:1-4
- 1 Peter 3:15-16



## Reconciliation

The Reconciliation witness talk is given by the pastor or his designee. More than a homily on reconciliation, this witness should reflect on personal experiences of forgiveness and healing.

Reflection:

- Go now and sin no more
- Homecoming
- Relief
- See I make all things new
- Forgiving yourself
- Letting go of pride
- Prodigal son
  
- The grace to discover the divisions within us and around us
  - Separation
  - Disconnected
  - Everything is not all right
  - Moments of discovery from life
- Pardon from God's mercy for our offenses
  - Sacrament of healing
  - Makes present Jesus' call to conversion
  - Movement of a contrite heart
- To be reconciled
  - Radical reorientation of our lives
  - God must give us a new heart
  - The strength to begin again

Suggested Scripture:

- Luke 6:37-42
- Matthew 6:14-15
- Luke 7:36-50
- Luke 15:11-32
- Romans 5:6-11
- Hebrews 4:14-16
- Isaiah 55: 6-7

## Serving the Community

The Serving the Community witness talk is given by a teen from the parish. He or she should focus on an awareness of Christ's presence in daily life and the call to serve as Jesus did in the broader community.

### Reflection:

- Giving witness to Christ
- Making God's love tangible to others
- The least of these
- Pay it forward
  
- How do I respond to God's love?
  - Serving and loving as Jesus did
  - Giving because I have been given
- Jesus as the center of the kingdom
  - The meeting place of God's grace, mercy, truth and love
  - The kingdom of God here on earth
- Following Christ the King
  - Awareness of a new lifestyle
  - Being led by the Spirit
  - The Beatitudes
  - The corporeal works of mercy
  - Catholic social justice teachings

### Suggested Scripture:

- Matthew 5:1-16
- Luke 10:29-37
- 1 Corinthians 12:21-27
- Philippians 2:12-16
- Ephesians 4:11-16

## Listening to the Word

This witness talk is given by someone who has experienced Scripture as “nourishing and sustaining spiritual growth”. This person has an awareness of God’s presence in His Word and/or experience of God speaking through His Word (may be in church or individually.)

### Reflection:

- God’s plan of salvation
- In the beginning was the Word
- Handbook for life
  
- Communications in relationships
  - Words are powerful
  - Words can hurt
  - Works can bring life
- God’s word to us: a love letter
  - Coming alive in our lives
  - Scripture gives support and vigor to the life of the Church
  - Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ (St. Jerome)
- Scripture in daily life
  - Lectio Divina
  - Daily reading and prayer
  - Bible studies, sharing the good news

### Suggested Scripture:

- John 1:1-18
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- John 6:63
- Mark 4:14-20

## Unconditional Love

The Unconditional Love witness has an “experience of a loving Heavenly Father’s daily concern” and a closeness with God as “Father.” (This may be because of a close experience with the person’s earthly Father, or because God is the person’s only experience of a true Father figure.)

### Reflection:

- Coming home
- Your Father knows what you need
- As the Father has loved me, so I will love you
- Good gifts for His children
  
- Our Father, who art in heaven
  - Knowing we have a loving Father
  - Help in trying situations
  - Caring for the day-to-day details in our lives
- God meeting us where we are
  - An invisible God made visible
  - The love and care of others as a sign of God’s love Children of God
- God’s love for us
  - The Father loves you
  - Goodness and loving care for all His children
  - Intimacy between the Creator and the created

### Suggested Scripture:

- Philippians 4:6
- Matthew 6:5-14
- Mathew 7:7-10
- Mark 4:14-20
- John 16:22-28
- Isaiah 43:4
- Isaiah 43:1b-2

## Discipleship

The Discipleship witness talk is given by the Journey Leader, who reflects on his or her call to serve the Lord.

### Reflection:

- They will know we are Christians by our love
- Go where I send you
- We are called
- Using gifts in service to others
  
- The foundation
  - Highlights of my faith journey
  - An awakening to faith, grace and new life in Christ
- Committed approach to living a Christian life
  - An encounter with Christ
  - Choosing to follow Christ
  - Visible through actions
  - Personal sacrifice
- A community of the believers
  - Your call to follow Christ
  - Serving others (family, friends, community)
  - Renewing the parish
  - Life in the spirit
- We are called
  - Using talents to build the kingdom of God
  - Spiritual works as well as good works
  - Evangelization – go and make disciples of all nations

### Suggested Scripture:

- Matthew 28:18-20
- Luke 9:57-62
- John 21:15-18
- John 15: 1-17
- 1 Peter 2:5
- Mark 8:34-38

## *JOURNEY with Christ Agendas*

The following agendas provide guidance for each of the 12 JOURNEY with Christ meetings. The agenda length is based on having 24 team members in the formation group. The length of time for each session can be adjusted based on the team size.

## **Segment 1: Commitment**

### **Bible Enthronement (15 minutes)**

- Sacristan prepares for Bible Enthronement
- Liturgist/music coordinator selects participants and music
- Journey Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (45 minutes)**

- Spiritual Guide reflects on personal commitment
- Spiritual Guide initiates reflection and response from the team
- Prayer to be Faithful to Serving God (The JOURNEY Begins Handout)
- Journey Leader reflects on team commitment
- Journey Leader initiates reflection and response from team
- Journey Leader leads discussion on shared prayer and explains prayer partners
- Pray St. Teresa of Avila prayer (The JOURNEY Begins Handout)

### **God moments (35 minutes)**

- Journey Leader introduces the sharing of God moments
- Journey Leader invites team to share the exciting news of what Jesus is doing in their lives

### **JOURNEY with Christ orientation (40 minutes)**

- Journey Leader reviews the JOURNEY with Christ process and announces the schedule for the rest of JOURNEY with Christ
- Journey Leader reviews general team instructions and highlights specific ministry instructions. Journey Leader reminds the team to keep confidential information that is shared in meetings; confidential.
- Journey Leader calls all to commit to attendance, assignments, prayers, Scripture, team spirit

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan and Liturgist/music coordinator prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Journey Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Invitations Coordinator prepares an action plan for soliciting retreatants
- All should pray about a Scripture verse as the theme for the weekend retreat
- All are requested to consider possible parish teenagers for Serving the Community witness
- All team members read assigned material
- All are reminded of call to faithfulness in family, personal prayer and Scripture reading
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Journey Leader introduces the purpose of Scripture reflection
- Journey Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Journey Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture reading; what does this Scripture passage mean to team members?

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Journey Leader leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for personal, family and parish needs
- Prayers for retreatants
- Prayers to the Holy Spirit for personal and communal growth
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## Segment 2: Shared Ministry

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Journey Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (45 minutes)**

- Spiritual Guide reflects on shared ministry
- Spiritual Guide initiates reflection and response from the team

### **God moments (45 minutes)**

- Journey Leader invites team to share the exciting news of what Jesus is doing in their lives
- Team members share personal experiences from the past week

### **Ministry Review (40 minutes)**

- Report on Invitations
- Team response to invitations plan, suggestions
- Team discussion of candidates for teen witness
- Discussion of Scripture verse as theme for retreat weekend; agreement on theme
- Journey Leader comments

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- An appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Journey Leader contacts teen re: witness talk and preparations
- Renewing Your Faith Life witness prepares talk for presentation and review
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Journey Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Journey Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Journey Leader leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for personal, family and parish needs
- Prayers for retreatants
- Prayers of thanksgiving for specific prayers answered
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song



## **Segment 3: Renewing Your Faith Life**

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Assigned Table Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (30 minutes)**

- Journey Leader reflects on renewal
- Journey Leader initiates reflection and response from the team

### **Witness on Renewing Your Faith Life (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive feedback offered by team members

### **God moments (30 minutes)**

- Journey Leader invites team to share the exciting news of what Jesus is doing in their lives
- Team members share personal experiences from the past week

### **Ministry Review (25 minutes)**

- Brief report on invitations
- Team invited to share success in their outreach efforts
- Journey Leader comments

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Journey Leader prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares witness talk on Finding Grace
- Weekend Coordinator, Physical Arrangements and Kitchen prepare brief reports
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Table Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for personal, family and parish needs
- Prayers for retreatants
- Prayers of thanksgiving for specific prayers answered
- Prayers to the Holy Spirit for the courage to evangelize
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## **Segment 4: Finding Grace**

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Assigned Table Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (30 minutes)**

- Journey Leader reflects on Finding Grace
- Journey Leader initiates reflection and response from the team

### **Witness on Finding Grace (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **God moments (30 minutes)**

- Journey Leader invites team to share the exciting news of what Jesus is doing in their lives
- Team members share personal experiences from the past week

### **Ministry Review (25 minutes)**

- Brief reports from Weekend Coordinator, Physical Arrangements and Kitchen
- Team response and suggestions
- Journey Leader comments

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Growing in Holiness witness prepares talk
- Agape Coordinator prepares an action plan for soliciting Agape letters
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Table Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for personal, family and parish needs
- Prayers for retreatants
- Prayers of thanksgiving for specific prayers answered
- Prayers to the Holy Spirit for renewal of the parish
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## Segment 5: Growing in Holiness

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/music coordinator
- Assigned Table Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (45 minutes)**

- Selected person reflects on renewal and prayer as relationship
- Team members write a prayer expressing their relationship with Jesus. Team members can reference their thoughts from the reflective writing exercise completed on their retreat.
- Spiritual Guide initiates reflection from the team, can share prayer written to Jesus

### **Witness on Growing in Holiness (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **God moments (30 minutes)**

- One-on-one exercise with prayer partners. Each person shares God moments for 15 minutes while the other person listens. Then vice versa. May need extra space for people to spread out

### **Ministry Review (15 minutes)**

- Brief report from Agape Coordinator
- Team response and suggestions
- Journey Leader comments

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Supporting Each Other witness prepares talk
- Journey Leader prepares progress report
- Invitations prepares brief report
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All team members reflect on experience of parish, church, Christian community
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Table Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for personal, family and parish needs
- Prayers for retreatants
- Prayers to the Holy Spirit for blessing on family prayer
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## Segment 6: Supporting Each Other

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Assigned Table Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (30 minutes)**

- Spiritual Guide reflects on Supporting Each Other
- Spiritual Guide initiates reflection and response from the team

### **Witness on Supporting Each Other (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **God moments (30 minutes)**

- Journey Leader invites team to share how their experiences of renewal and JOURNEY with Christ have affected their attitude about and participation in church/parish life

### **Ministry Review (25 minutes)**

- Invitations gives report
- Journey Leader gives progress report on other areas of ministry

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares brief prelude on the Beatitudes as an introduction to the theme of Serving the Community. Other team members asked to select one Beatitude and prepare a three-five minute personal reflection
- Serving the Community witness (parish teen) prepares talk
- Spiritual Guide prepares interim assessment of team's spiritual growth and formation process
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Table Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for personal, family and parish needs
- Prayers for retreatants
- Prayers for specific needs of parish and parish ministries
- Prayers to the Holy Spirit for an outpouring of love for parish priests
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## Segment 7: Serving the Community

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Assigned Table Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (45 minutes)**

- Selected person gives brief prelude to the Beatitudes
- Selected team members give personal reflections on each Beatitude
- Selected person initiates reflection and response from the team

### **Exercise: Growing in Serving the Community (30 minutes)**

- Complete Living the Beatitudes exercise (JOURNEY with Christ Handout #1)
- Share one-on-one or in small groups

### **Witness on Serving the Community (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **Ministry Review (10 minutes)**

- Spiritual Guide assessment of team spiritual growth and team JOURNEY with Christ process
- Journey Leader comments

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Journey Leader prepares exercise in forgiveness (JOURNEY with Christ Handout #2)
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader, Sacristan and Liturgist/music coordinator plan Reconciliation service; depending upon team size, additional priests may be needed (if communal service is not possible, encourage members to receive Reconciliation individually)
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members reflect on personal sinfulness and God's forgiving mercy
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Table Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for specific prayers answered
- Prayers for retreatants
- Prayers to the Holy Spirit for increased awareness of gospel values
- Say prayer of St. Francis as a group
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## Segment 8: Reconciliation

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Assigned Table Leader selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (30 minutes)**

- Spiritual Guide reflects on Reconciliation
- Spiritual Guide initiates reflection and response from the team

### **Witness on Reconciliation (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team
- Team responds by sharing personal experiences of reconciliation

### **Communal Reconciliation Service (60 minutes)**

- Pastor conducts service in chapel or church
- Special prayers for an increase in the spirit of healing and reconciliation throughout the parish

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Sacristan/Liturgist prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Living the Eucharist witness prepares talk
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader, Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator plan instructional Mass
- Liturgist solicits specific needs from team for Prayers of the Faithful
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members reminded to ask forgiveness from family and friends
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Assigned Table Leader reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Table Leader initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

## **Segment 9: Living the Eucharist**

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Sacristan/Liturgist selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Witness on Living the Eucharist (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **Instructional Mass**

- This is usually not a real Mass; priest walks through the parts of the Mass and gives explanation
- Instruction is given on symbolism of vestments, tableware, etc.
- Teaching is given on Liturgy of the Word
- Homily is offered on the importance of Eucharist
- Prayers of the faithful incorporate specific needs of team members
- Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated according to the style of the celebrant
- Communion reflection should include opportunity for all team members to offer prayers of thanksgiving

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Weekend Coordinator prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Listening to the Word witness prepares talk
- Agape Coordinator and Invitations prepare update reports
- Weekend Coordinator/Materials Coordinator, Kitchen and Physical Arrangements r prepare final reports
- Table Leaders prepare thoughts on ministerial considerations (listening, affirming, enabling, avoiding controversy, loving attention)
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members share learning about Mass with family and friends
- All reflect on significance of Scripture in their lives
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Sacristan/Liturgist initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

## Segment 10: Listening to the Word

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator
- Weekend Coordinator selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (45 minutes)**

- Selected team member gives personal reflection on Scripture
- Selected person initiates reflection and response from the team

### **Witness on Listening to the Word (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **God moments (30 minutes)**

- Team members open their Bibles to passages that “speak” to them and share with the group
- Journey Leader invites team members to share other experiences in listening to God’s word

### **Ministry Review (40 minutes)**

- Invitations report
- Agape Coordinator report
- Table Leaders share ministerial considerations for weekend
- Journey Leader comments

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Agape Coordinator prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares reflection on Unconditional Love and the importance of intercessory prayer
- Unconditional Love witness prepares talk
- Agape Coordinator solicits letters for next meeting
- Weekend Coordinator/Materials Coordinator, Kitchen Coordinator and Physical Arrangements Coordinator prepare final reports
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members arrange for family Agape letters for weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Weekend Coordinator reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Weekend Coordinator initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Facilitator leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for specific prayers answered
- Prayers for retreatants and those who have not said “yes” to the Lord’s invitation
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song



## Segment 11: Unconditional Love

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/music coordinator
- Agape Coordinator selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (30 minutes)**

- Selected person gives reflection on Unconditional Love and intercessory prayer
- Selected person initiates reflection and response from the team

### **Witness on Unconditional Love (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **God moments (30 minutes)**

- Journey Leader invites team to share the exciting news of what Jesus is doing in their lives
- Team members share personal experiences from the past week

### **Ministry Review (30 minutes)**

- Weekend Coordinator/Materials Coordinator, Kitchen and Physical Arrangements give final reports
- Update by Invitations and Agape Coordinator
- Journey Leader comments

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Materials Coordinator prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares reflection on discipleship and spiritual growth
- Journey Leader prepares witness talk on discipleship
- Journey Leader and Spiritual Guide assign retreatants to tables
- Journey Leader prepares final report
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members reminded to write Agape letters for retreatants
- All reflect on continuing response to the call of discipleship
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Agape Coordinator reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Agape Coordinator distributes letters for team

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Agape Coordinator leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for specific prayers answered
- Prayers for retreatants and those who have not said “yes” to the Lord’s invitation
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## Segment 12: Discipleship

### **Bible Enthronement (10 minutes)**

- Facilitated by Sacristan and Liturgist/music coordinator
- Materials Coordinator selects and reads Scripture passage appropriate to the theme

### **Theme reflection (30 minutes)**

- Spiritual Guide gives reflection on discipleship and spiritual growth
- Spiritual Guide initiates reflection and response from the team
- Option: Spiritual Guides leads the team in guided meditation on the washing of the disciples' feet (John 13).

### **Witness on Discipleship (30 minutes)**

- Team prays with witness
- Witness is given standing before team

### **Review of Witness (15 minutes)**

- Team members invited to affirm witness
- Constructive suggestions offered by team members

### **God moments (30 minutes)**

- Journey Leader invites team to share the exciting news of what Jesus is doing in their lives
- Team members share personal experiences from the past week

### **Ministry Review (30 minutes)**

- Review of table assignments
- Update by Invitations and Agape Coordinator
- Weekend Coordinator and Physical Arrangements review work plan for set-up
- Journey Leader gives final report

### **Assignments for next meeting (5 minutes)**

- All team members review general instructions
- Each ministry reviews specific ministry instructions
- Table Leaders call retreatants to welcome them and answer questions
- Make extra effort to solicit Agape letters
- All are reminded to pray

### **Scripture reflection and shared prayer (20 minutes)**

- Materials Coordinator reflects on selected Scripture reading and the meaning of the passage to his/her life
- Materials Coordinator initiates shared prayer around the Scripture

### **Team prayer (15 minutes)**

- Material Coordinator leads the team in shared prayer
- Prayers for each ministry and each team member
- Closing blessing by Spiritual Guide
- Closing song

## *Team JOURNEY with Christ Weekly Assignments*

*(This information can be copied and pasted into separate documents and printed off as handouts or copied and pasted into emails to the team.)*

### **First Segment – Commitment**

#### **Reading**

- Introduction to JOURNEY – [jnlic.org/introduction-to-journey](http://jnlic.org/introduction-to-journey)
- Journey with Christ -[jnlic.org/journey-with-christ](http://jnlic.org/journey-with-christ)
- 2 Peter 1:1-10
- Acts 4:32-35
- John 13:12-17
- Luke 14:25-33

#### **Assignments**

- Sacristan and Liturgist/music coordinator prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Journey Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Invitations Coordinator prepares an action plan for soliciting retreatants
- All should pray about a Scripture verse as the theme for the weekend retreat
- All are requested to consider possible parish teenagers for Serving the Community witness
- All team members read assigned material
- All are reminded of call to faithfulness in family, personal prayer and Scripture reading
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Second Segment – Shared Ministry**

#### **Reading**

- Ministry Descriptions – [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions)
- Witness Themes – [jnlic.org/witnesses/#block-5d21db6de2827a634fc8](http://jnlic.org/witnesses/#block-5d21db6de2827a634fc8)
- Romans 12:3-8
- Ephesians 4:11-16
- Ephesians 4:32
- 1 Corinthians 3:5-11
- Galatians 2:20
- John 17:17-19

#### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- An appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Journey Leader contacts teen re: witness talk and preparations

- Renewing Your Faith Life witness prepares talk for presentation and review
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Third Segment – Renewing Your Faith Life**

#### **Witness – Renewing Your Faith Life**

*(Note: Some teams switch the order of the third and fourth segments so the Spiritual Guide can model witnessing.)*

#### **Reading**

- Ministry Preparation –jnlic.org/ministry-preparation
- Ephesians 4:17-24
- John 3:5-8
- 2 Corinthians 5:16-18
- John 9:25

#### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Journey Leader prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares witness talk on Finding Grace
- Weekend Coordinator, Physical Arrangements and Kitchen prepare brief reports
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

### **Fourth Segment – Finding Grace**

#### **Witness – Finding Grace**

#### **Reading**

- Retreat Weekend –jnlic.org/retreat-weekend
- Colossians 3:10-12
- John 15:1-17
- Romans 12:1-2
- Luke 6:20-26

#### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music

- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Growing in Holiness witness prepares talk
- Agape Coordinator prepares an action plan for soliciting Agape letters
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Fifth Segment – Growing in Holiness**

### **Witness - Growing in Holiness**

#### **Reading**

- Review individual Ministry Descriptions – [jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions](http://jnlic.org/ministry-descriptions)
- 1 John 4:7-16
- John 1:12
- Psalm 16:11
- Leviticus 11:44

#### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Supporting Each Other witness prepares talk
- Journey Leader prepares progress report
- Invitations prepares brief report
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All team members reflect on experience of parish, church, Christian community
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Sixth Segment – Living the Eucharist**

### **Witness – Living the Eucharist**

*(Note: In some parishes a teen witness does Living the Eucharist and an adult gives the Serving the Community witness)*

#### **Reading**

- 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

- Matthew 26:25-27
- John 6: 48-58
- 1 Peter 1:17-21
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares brief prelude on the Beatitudes as an introduction to the theme of Serving the Community. Other team members asked to select one Beatitude and prepare a three-five minute personal reflection
- Serving the Community witness (parish teen) prepares talk
- Spiritual Guide prepares interim assessment of team's spiritual growth and formation process
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Seventh Segment – Supporting Each Other Witness – Supporting Each Other**

### **Reading**

- 1 John 4:17-21
- Philippians 2:1-4
- 1 Peter 3:15-16

### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Another appointed Table Leader prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Journey Leader prepares exercise in forgiveness (JOURNEY with Christ Handout #2)
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader, Sacristan and Liturgist/music coordinator plan Reconciliation service; depending upon team size, additional priests may be needed (if communal service is not possible, encourage members to receive Reconciliation individually)
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members reflect on personal sinfulness
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Eighth Segment – Reconciliation**

### **Witness – Reconciliation**

*(Note: This segment may need to be scheduled by the Spiritual Guide according to pastor's availability.)*

#### **Reading**

- Luke 6:37-42
- Matthew 6:14-15
- Luke 7:36-50
- Luke 15:11-32
- Romans 5:6-11
- Hebrews 4:14-16

#### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Sacristan/Liturgist prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Living the Eucharist witness prepares talk
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader, Sacristan and Liturgist/Music Coordinator plan instructional Mass
- Liturgist solicits specific needs from team for Prayers of the Faithful
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members reminded to ask forgiveness from family and friends
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Ninth Segment – Serving the Community**

### **Witness – Serving the Community**

#### **Reading**

- Matthew 5:1-16
- Luke 10:29-37
- 1 Corinthians 12:21-27
- Philippians 2:12-16
- Ephesians 4:11-16

#### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Weekend Coordinator prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting

- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares a reflection on the theme for the next meeting
- Listening to the Word witness prepares talk
- Agape Coordinator and Invitations prepare update reports
- Weekend Coordinator/Materials Coordinator, Kitchen and Physical Arrangements r prepare final reports
- Table Leaders prepare thoughts on ministerial considerations (listening, affirming, enabling, avoiding controversy, loving attention)
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members share learning about Mass with family and friends
- All reflect on significance of Scripture in their lives
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Tenth Segment – Listening to the Word Witness – Listening to the Word**

### **Reading**

- John 1:1-18
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- John 6:63
- Mark 4:14-20

### **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Agape Coordinator prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide, Journey Leader or selected team member prepares reflection on Unconditional Love and the importance of intercessory prayer
- Unconditional Love witness prepares talk
- Agape Coordinator solicits letters for next session
- Weekend Coordinator/Materials Coordinator, Kitchen Coordinator and Physical Arrangements Coordinator prepare final reports
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members arrange for family Agape letters for weekend
- All are reminded to pray
- All team members extend personal invitations for the retreat weekend
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Eleventh Segment – Unconditional Love Witness – Unconditional Love**



## **Reading**

- Philippians 4:6
- Matthew 6:5-14
- Mathew 7:7-10
- Mark 4:14-20
- John 16:22-28
- Isaiah 43:4

## **Assignments**

- Sacristan/Liturgist prepare Bible Enthronement and music
- Materials Coordinator prepares a reflection on a Scripture appropriate to the theme for that meeting
- Spiritual Guide prepares reflection on discipleship and spiritual growth
- Journey Leader prepares witness talk on discipleship
- Journey Leader and Spiritual Guide assign retreatants to tables
- Journey Leader prepares final report
- All team members read assigned material
- All team members reminded to write Agape letters for retreatants
- All reflect on continuing response to the call of discipleship
- All are reminded to pray
- All bring bible and JOURNEY materials to next meeting

## **Twelfth Segment – Discipleship**

### **Witness – Discipleship**

## **Reading**

- Review Setting up the Retreat Weekend – <https://www.jnlic.org/retreat-weekend>
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Luke 9:57-62
- John 21:15-18
- 1 Peter 2:5
- Mark 8:34-38

## **Assignments**

- All team members review general instructions
- Each ministry reviews specific ministry instructions
- Table Leaders call retreatants to welcome them and answer questions
- Make extra effort to solicit Agape letters
- All are reminded to pray

## *JOURNEY with Christ Handout*

### Living the Beatitudes

*(How am I living the Beatitudes in my life?)*

#### ***Blessed are the poor in spirit***

Am I preoccupied with worldly things?  
Do I put my needs over the needs of others?  
Am I humble?

#### ***Blessed are those who mourn***

Can I express my feelings in a positive, healthy way?  
Do I comfort others?  
Do I ignore or discount the suffering of others?

#### ***Blessed are the meek***

Do I treat others with a gentle spirit?  
Do I try to see the best in others?  
Do I make people feel comfortable? Do I listen well?

#### ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice***

Am I thirsty for Christ?  
Do I help spread the good news to others?  
Do I treat others with respect? Do I participate in unjust systems?

#### ***Blessed are the merciful***

Am I quick to forgive? Can I forgive myself?  
Do I judge others? Do I hold grudges?  
Am I sensitive to the needs of others?

#### ***Blessed are the pure of heart***

Do I let my urges get the better of me?  
Are my eyes fixed on God?

#### ***Blessed are the peacemakers***

Do I seek to reconcile differences?  
Do I let go of my own position and compromise?  
Am I open to hearing different ideas?

#### ***Happy are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice***

Do I speak the truth, even when it is inconvenient?  
Can I take constructive criticism?  
Can I love those who hurt me? Can I pray for them?

*JOURNEY with Christ Handout #1*

# Ministry Preparation



The best preparation for the retreat weekend is to pray, to share the gift of yourself with your team, to support your team in every way possible and to be open to God's call in your life. That said, this section provides some practical information on preparing for the retreat weekend. More information about specific ministries can be found in Ministry Descriptions in the JOURNEY with Christ section and set-up details can be found in the Retreat Weekend section.

## *Team Instructions*

During JOURNEY with Christ:

- Participate fully in all team JOURNEY with Christ meetings
- Be faithful to daily personal prayer and Scripture reading
- Support all team members. Pray for each other daily
- Hold what is shared in confidence
- Prepare properly for all team meetings
- Prayerfully and actively participate in the invitations process
- Prayerfully and actively participate in the Agape letter process

On the retreat weekend:

- Maintain an attitude of prayerfulness and hospitality throughout the retreat weekend
- Share your experience of renewal with others, but don't compare experiences
- Focus attention on retreatants, not team members
- Allow the flow and spirit of the weekend to be natural. Let people respond to God's call in their own ways, in their own time
- Allow the Journey Leader to lead the retreat weekend. Any departure from schedule must be approved by the Journey Leader
- Fulfill your ministry to the fullest
- Pray more, worry less
- Get to know all retreatants
- Do not give hints to what comes next, but answer questions openly. Remember you are in God's hands and on God's time
- Confidentiality is critical
- Team members not assigned to the Witness Room should spend time in the chapel when not performing other responsibilities.

## *Prayer*

Prayer must be at the heart of authentic renewal. Prayer is at the heart of the JOURNEY process. If God is the very source of our existence, it makes sense to be in continuous contact with that source. “In Him we live and move and have our being.”

Everything we do on the retreat weekend should help us become closer to God. All of the team’s actions on the retreat weekend should be an open prayer to God, with the Holy Spirit conducting the connection. Prayer life is more important than prayer forms. Everyone on the team must model a life of prayer, where everything that is said and done creates an environment for renewal. The whole team must be the presence of a prayerful people whose every word, action and attitude creates an environment where God’s spirit works powerfully to renew people.

The personal prayer practices of JOURNEY with Christ lead us to be able to speak and be present to the needs that arise during the retreat weekend. The retreat weekend process invites prayer and reveals the fruits of prayer. As we pray together, we find common cause in the promises of Christ. Through prayer we discover that we not only need God, we need each other. We are called to step out from the privacy of prayer and risk healing, supported by others who go to God with us.

Although the retreat weekend does not teach specifics on how to pray, retreatants come to know the importance, value, purpose and power of prayer through the many opportunities and forms offered during the weekend. Team members, especially those in the Witness Room, are called to be sensitive to moments of prayer, not only those scheduled but the unexpected occasions as well. It is the faith and the openness to prayer of the team that will best guide retreatants into their own prayer.

## *Scripture*

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

*2 Timothy 3:16*

The primary handbook of JOURNEY is the Bible. The Word of God guides us in our relationship with God. We must know the Word of God. Scripture is a means through which we encounter the living God in a personal way. Scripture is meant to lead us into a communion with God, into a personal relationship of faith and love.

Bible enthronement, the gift of Bibles to retreatants, incorporating Scripture into each witness talk, Scripture reflections throughout the retreat weekend – all these things are tangible signals of the importance of Scripture.

The retreat weekend provides opportunities to pray Scripture, not study it. Scripture is the Word of God, alive in our midst, another form of Christ’s presence. Our attitude toward Scripture should be one of listening. Scripture is one way God has of speaking to us. A listening heart is a heart that can be touched, moved and brought to more love.

In the Scripture, we meet God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Pondering God’s word with faith and love allows us to be in the presence of the Trinity. The Word of God has power to encourage us, to prepare us to live our lives as Christians and provide direction when we are confused. God’s word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

## *Prayer Support and Letters*

Prayer support cannot be emphasized enough. The retreat weekends do not happen unless people pray. Remember, you are in your ministry because your parish prayed, other JOURNEY team members prayed, your friends and family prayed. Prayer support can be chapel prayer support or general/personal written prayer support. The Agape Coordinator typically arranges for Agape letters, but the entire team contributes to the effort. A member of the Continuation Committee organizes chapel support.

The team must be committed to providing prayer support for each other and for the retreatants. Team members must pray for each other and the retreatants, should write letters of encouragement and should help the Agape Coordinator solicit letters from the family and friends of retreatants.

Agape letters are a community exercise in asking God to sustain our positive response to his call, and to help others respond, to say “yes” to the gift of new life and to commit their lives to the giver of new life. Agape letters put a face on the prayers of people.

**General prayer support.** General prayer support are letters that are read out loud to all on Sunday morning. These letters are addressed to all men or women on the weekend. Give sufficient notice to allow written responses by those whom you ask to write general letters of support.

- Call/write local Catholic and Christian churches and ask for prayer and general Agape letters. Focus on other JOURNEY parishes.
- Ask your bishop to pray for the renewal weekend and write a letter to all the people on the weekend.
- Talk to leaders in parish school and religious education program. Ask them to pray and have kids write letters, make banners, posters, etc., showing their prayer support. Feel free to be innovative.
- Ask parish organization leaders for a letter from each parish organization.
- Ask well know Christians for general Agape letters.
- Ask former pastors/clergy/sisters, etc. to pray and/or write letters of general support.
- Ask senior citizens club, shut-in people, young mothers to pray and/or write letters of general support.

**Personal prayer support.** MOST IMPORTANT! These are love letters, tangible expressions of God’s love shown through the people in our lives. Be sure to solicit personal Agape letters for each retreatant from those who are closest to them, as well as support for the team, the pastor and the teen witness. These will be addressed to each person by name. For those who are without immediate family, make a special effort to gather letters from friends and possibly coworkers.

Each retreatant is asked to designate an emergency contact person on the registration form. That contact person is typically a good place to start soliciting personal Agape letters. Explain the purpose of the letters as affirmations and opportunities to share how important the retreatant is to the person writing the letter. Even young children can draw a picture.

- Spouses, parents, children of retreatants.
- Friends of retreatants.

- Parish staff.
- Co-workers.
- Siblings, other family

**NOTE:** All prayer Agape letters need to be collected by 9 am Sunday morning. Agape Coordinator will sort for proper distribution. Many parishes set up a box in the church vestibule to collect letters.

## *Sacramental Preparation*

The sacraments are a vital part of the retreat weekend. The Sunday liturgy (celebrated on Saturday evening) Reconciliation and the Foot Washing Mass on Sunday all work together to deliver God's grace to the retreatants.

Mass is a critical part of the retreat weekend. The schedule is organized such that each parish has the option of allowing those on retreat to celebrate Mass with the entire parish community at the regular Saturday evening Mass, or at a private Mass at the end of the day Saturday. Either option allows us to gather at the table of the Lord to connect and commit.

Jesus invites us to His table. We are called to meet a Jesus who loves us and feeds us with His word and His loving presence. We meet the real and present Christ in the Eucharist, and we are strengthened for the journey. The theme of Christian commitment recurs throughout the liturgy. A parish has two options regarding Mass on Saturday during the retreat: Option 1 is to celebrate Mass with the parish at the regular Saturday evening Mass. Option 2 is to schedule a private Mass at the end of the day Saturday (see the two schedule options for more details.)

If the Saturday evening Mass is private, commitment should also be the theme of the homily. The liturgy for the Sunday Mass is used on Saturday night, in order to fulfill the Sunday obligation. The Mass is celebrated in the chapel in order to provide a small, intimate environment. The Sacristan/Liturgist will select lectors who can proclaim the Gospel with feeling. Songs should be selected for their messages of love, hope, forgiveness and community.

Reconciliation provides the opportunity for retreatants to restore personal relationships with Jesus and to see how their sins damage the life of the community. Reconciliation touches the deepest areas of alienation in our lives. We encounter a forgiving, reconciling Jesus who leads us to identify our sins and repent them. Through Reconciliation we are reconciled with God and with our community.

The Saturday evening service lets us come to know the forgiving and healing power of Jesus Christ. The witness talk and service should help move people from contrition and guilt to the healing power of repentance. God sees us as we are, forgiven and loved. Repentance and reconciliation free us to live a deeper spiritual life. We focus on the mercy of God, not our own sinfulness.

Thus the Reconciliation witness should share personal experiences of being loved and forgiven, rather than provide a teaching on the sacrament itself. The witness talk can be a powerful occasion for moving people from fear to forgiveness.

The communal penance service should also reflect the themes of forgiveness and love. Because we are forgiven we can, in turn, forgive others.

In addition to a communal penance service, every effort should be made to secure enough confessors so that each retreatant may make a personal confession. The personal time of confession should be marked by holy and reverent silence, broken occasionally with appropriate readings, meditations and music. The time frame must be flexible to allow time for all retreatants to take advantage of the sacrament. Team members will have received the sacrament during JOURNEY with Christ which allows more time for retreatants.

Confessors should be introduced at the end of the communal penance service. Care should be taken to provide spaces that are private. Lighting should be appropriate for the solemnity of the sacrament. Aids such as guides to an examination of conscience can be provided.

Sunday closes with the celebration of the Eucharist, and typically includes a foot washing ceremony. This can set the stage for the personal commitment that each attendee will make at communion. This Mass can use the liturgy For the Unity of Christians, which can be found in the Lectionary Volume IV Masses for Various Needs and Occasions pages 729- 743. That liturgy offers choices for first and second readings, responsorial psalms and the Gospel. The Liturgist can select the readings based on the needs of the team. For the Gospel, use John 13:1-15 which includes the foot washing.

*If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.*

*John 13:14-15*

As each retreatant goes to communion, he or she quietly reads the personal commitment statement written after the Discipleship witness as the priest holds the Host up.

## Stage 5: Retreat Weekend

The Retreat Weekend is designed to lead those who attend through a process of exploration, recognition and repentance that leads to commitment and discipleship. Changes to the agenda should not be taken lightly, but accommodations and adjustments can be made for local issues.



### *Setting up for the Weekend Retreat*

Setting up for the retreat takes place the Friday evening before the retreat weekend and is coordinated by the Continuation Committee. The purpose of the meeting is to complete all preparations and physical arrangements, review and coordinate all responsibilities for the weekend and pray together.

- Weekend Coordinator and Physical Arrangements should have a work plan and check list for setting up.
- **It is very important to document or take quick pictures on mobile device of what each space looks like BEFORE set up so that it can be returned to its normal state following the retreat.**
- Weekend Coordinator/Materials Coordinator brings all materials needed for retreat (see Weekend in a Box), including chapel and kitchen supplies.
- Table Leaders double check name tags to ensure correct spellings.
- Physical Arrangements supervises setting up the Witness Room, Support room and sleeping spaces.
- Kitchen supervises setting up the dining space and organizes all food donations.
- Sacristan supervises setting up the chapel.  
Agape Coordinator ensures that each retreatant has letters and that writing materials are available for those who want to write letters during the weekend.

Setting up the spaces may take three or four hours, depending on how much transformation is needed. Keep it simple. Many hands make light work and it is hoped that volunteers from other teams will assist.

When everything is in place, the current team proceeds to the chapel.

- Journey Leader reviews any last minute changes, reminds team members of what time to arrive on Saturday morning and provides additional comments and encouragement for the team.
- Journey Leader leads team in praying for each retreatant by name. Journey Leader initiates shared prayer.
- Spiritual Guide gives closing prayer.

The Continuation Committee will determine whether setup evening ends with a community Agape Service, presented by the immediate past team, or a simple Prayer Service.



**DURING THE JOURNEY RETREAT THERE ARE TWO OPTIONS FOR SATURDAY AFTERNOON.**

**OPTION 1: Mass in the afternoon with the parish. Adjust the retreat weekend agenda to accommodate the parish Mass time.**

**OPTION 2: Special Mass for Journey Retreatants and Team. The second option includes Mass late at night after the Reconciliation and Eucharist witness talks.**

**THE CONTINUATION COMMITTEE SHOULD DETERMINE WHICH OPTION WORKS BETTER FOR THE PARISH. EITHER OPTION IS FINE.**

## *Retreat Weekend Agenda - Option 1 (Saturday Mass with parish)*

### **Saturday**

- 6:20 am        **Directors and Kitchen Coordinators** arrive: plug in coffee, check all facilities
- 6:30 am        **Team** arrives – stows baggage
- Table Leaders** check tables (folders, Bibles, etc.) name tag table, picture table
- Sacristan** and **Weekend Coordinator** need to make sure that all is ready for Prayer Service
- (Blessed Sacrament transferred, Christ candle, cross, Bible)
- 6:45 am        **Team** to chapel for short prayer service
- Spiritual Guide** gives Bible Reflection
- Spiritual Guide** blesses team members individually as they leave chapel
- (Alternatively, team can meet in church and process to chapel with Blessed Sacrament)
- 7:30 am        **Retreatants** arrive. **Team** greets retreatants in the parking lot or at the entrance. *Assist with carrying baggage and opening doors.*
- Show them to the room for secured storage.*
- Ask them to keep medications/sweaters, etc. that they will want easy access to all day. Help them to find their name tags and then encourage them (along with their families) to go to the dining area for refreshments. (Note: some parishes do not encourage families to stay out of respect for those who do not have family.)*
- \*\* No one should be left standing alone!*
- 8:00 am        **Invitations Coordinator or Weekend Coordinator** calls any “no shows”
- Journey Leader** makes any changes to table assignments needed
- 8:00 am        **Spiritual Director, team, retreatants** process to chapel
- 8:05 am        **First Chapel Visit**
- Background music as entering*
- Spiritual Director** gives welcome

*(Thank team and retreatants for time, speak to importance of Journey to parish life)*

**Spiritual Guide** gives opening prayer

*(Comment on intercessory prayer, invite everyone to ask the Lord for one special favor during the weekend)*

**Journey Leader** announces moving to Witness Room

*(Sing while moving between locations if desired)*

*All follow to Witness Room – help retreatants find their table and seat*

*\*\*Team members set reverent tone in Chapel—no talking*

**Team members** take Christ candle, Cross, Bible from Chapel to back of Witness Room

**Table Leaders** introduce themselves and help retreatants become acquainted.

8:25 am **Spiritual Director and/or Spiritual Guide** make opening remarks

8:30 am **Journey Leader** makes orientation remarks

*General information about facility, personal needs, wearing name tags, telephone messages, etc.  
Encourage participation*

**Weekend Coordinator** collects watches and instruction cards for medicine dispensing

8:40 am **Introductions**

*Name, spouse name, name and ages of children, street address, occupation, time in the parish. Try to move through this quickly. Each table takes a turn at the podium. All applaud as each person gives name. Team members not at tables go last. An information card to be placed on podium for people to refer to*

9:15 am **Renewing Your Faith Life Witness** and prayer support to the chapel.

9:05 am **Bible Enthronement**

**Journey Leader** asks retreatants to write name in Bible and explains the purpose of Bible Enthronement

All rise for entrance song and Bible procession. Journey Leader reads Scripture verse (usually the theme of the weekend) and invites reflection. Journey Leader explains the Christ candle and invites one person from each table to light a table candle from the Christ candle. Journey Leader mentions the importance of Christ's light at the center of the tables. Everyone is invited to join hands at table and share prayer.

Journey Leader concludes with leading Prayer to the Holy Spirit or the Our Father

*Note: For the first Bible Enthronement the Sacristan-Liturgist should carry the candle and bible. For the remainder of the weekend, retreatants should be selected or volunteer for Bible Enthronement. Sacristan-Liturgist organize these volunteers. Before any Scripture reading, give chapter, verse and page number so all can follow.*

9:25 am **Restroom break**

9:35 am **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness to Witness Room

9:40 am **Renewing Your Faith Life Witness Talk**

**Journey Leader** explains witnessing

**Journey Leader** introduces witness by simply giving the person's name and the theme of the witness. Encourages retreatants to take notes.

**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness

*Note: If Spiritual Director is able to be present throughout the weekend, he can bless the witness in place of the Journey Leader.*

*At the end of the witness talks, team and retreatants may spontaneously provide affirmation hugs. Don't make a big line. Your table may need you. You can always affirm later.*

10:10 am      **Sharing on Renewing Your Faith Life**

**Renewing Your Faith Life Witness** goes to chapel.

**Journey Leader** invites all to share their experiences of Renewing Your Faith Life at their tables. This is not a conversation about the witness, but should be focused on the theme.

10:25 am      **Activity**

**Journey Leader** explains the procedure for preparing table presentations, then assigns activity to each table – Scripture, poem, poster, skit, prayer, song (these should be rotated so that each table does a different activity each time. The purpose of the activity is to get everyone out of their seats and out of their comfort zones. Table leaders should be prepared to coach, but should let the creativity flow from the retreatants response to the theme. This is not a competition and there are no prizes for great artwork or inspired poems.

10:40 am      **Weekend Coordinator** bring witness and prayer support team member back from chapel

*They will sit at chairs in back of room*

10:40 am      **Table Presentations**

*Each table, in turn, presents the fruit of their activity.*

*After presentations, Journey Leader asks each table to choose a table name. The name should be Christian, scriptural or spirit inspired.*

**Weekend Coordinator** makes sure "table name cards" are on each table for table names.

10:55 am      **Break for snacks**

10:55 am      **Finding Grace Witness** and prayer support to the chapel.

11:15 am      **Sharing of Table Names**

*All move back to Witness Room*

*Each table shares its name, writes name on card at the table*

**Weekend Coordinator** brings witness to Witness Room

11:20 am      **Finding Grace Witness Talk**

**Journey Leader** introduces witness  
**Journey Leader** blesses witness  
 11:50 am     **Sharing on Finding Grace**  
**Finding Grace Witness** goes to chapel  
 Journey Leader invites tables to share their experiences of Finding Grace  
 12:05 pm     **Activity**  
**Journey Leader** makes table assignments  
 12:15 pm     **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room  
 12:15 pm     **Table Presentations**  
 All move to dining area  
  
 12:30 pm     **LUNCH**  
**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** says grace before meal  
 1:00 pm     **Journey Leader** leads prayer of thanks  
*All invited to return to chapel (may visit restrooms if needed). Remember to be reverent*  
 1:10 pm     **Chapel Visit**  
*Background music as entering*  
**Journey Leader** explains shared prayer and initiates – team be prepared to share prayer  
**Spiritual Guide** ends prayer with Glory Be  
 Conclude with hymn  
 Growing in Holiness Witness and prayer support stay in chapel  
 1:35 pm     All return to the Witness Room  
 1:40 pm     **Weekend Coordinator** brings Growing in Holiness Witness to Witness Room  
 1:45 pm     **Growing in Holiness Witness Talk**  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness  
**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness  
 2:15 pm     **Sharing on Growing in Holiness**  
**Growing in Holiness Witness** goes to chapel  
**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Growing in Holiness. Also asks table members to change seats and sit by someone new  
 2:30 pm     **Activity**

- Journey Leader** describes Reflective Writing exercise
- 2:30 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room
- 2:45 pm **Living the Eucharist Witness** and prayer support to chapel
- 3:00 pm **Snack break**

*Remove candy from tables in Witness Room*

**ATTENDING THE REGULAR PARISH SATURDAY EVENING MASS AS PART OF THE WEEKEND WILL FULFILL THE SUNDAY MASS OBLIGATION AND PROVIDE A POWERFUL WITNESS TO THE PARISH. THE FOLLOWING SEGMENTS CAN BE ADJUSTED BY THE CONTINUATION COMMITTEE TO ACCOMMODATE THE EXACT START TIME FOR THE PARISH MASS (TYPICALLY BETWEEN 4:30 AND 5:30 P.M.)**

- 3:10 pm **Journey Leader** directs everyone back to the Witness Room
- Weekend Coordinator** brings Living the Eucharist Witness to Witness Room
- 3:15 pm **Living the Eucharist Witness Talk**
- Journey Leader** introduces witness
- Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness
- 3:45 pm **Sharing on Living the Eucharist**
- Living the Eucharist Witness** goes to chapel
- Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Living the Eucharist
- 4:00 pm **Activity**
- Journey Leader** makes table assignments
- 4:15 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room
- 4:15 pm **Table Presentations**
- 4:25 pm **Process to church.** Restroom if necessary.

**IF MASS IS AT 4:30 P.M.**

4:30 pm           **CELEBRATION OF EUCHARIST**

5:30 pm           **One-on-One Sharing**

Journey Leader announces one-on-one sharing: Retreatants pair up and go off alone to share. (If odd number, include a team member). Encourage pairing with someone you don't know. Each person will share for 15 minutes without interruption. Then second person will share for 15 minutes without interruption. In the sharing, address this question: How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus.

**Weekend Coordinator** to inform retreatants where they can go and signal halfway point

**Table Leaders** pass out copies of sharing questions (Copies of questions in Weekend Retreat Handouts)

*Weekend Coordinator to let people know when to return*

6:00 pm           **DINNER**

**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** offers grace

6:10 pm           **Supporting Each Other Witness** and prayer support to chapel.

6:25 pm           All return to Witness Room

**Weekend Coordinator** brings Supporting Each Other Witness to Witness Room

6:30 pm           **Supporting Each Other Witness Talk**

**Journey Leader** introduces witness

**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness

7:00 pm           **Sharing on Supporting Each Other**

**Supporting Each Other Witness** goes to chapel

**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Supporting Each Other

7:15 pm           **Activity**

**Journey Leader** makes table assignments

7:30 pm           **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room

7:30 pm           **Table Presentations**

**IF MASS IS AT 5 P.M., MOVE ONE-ON-ONE SHARING PRIOR TO MASS**

**4:30 pm One-on-One Sharing**

Journey Leader announces one-on-one sharing: Retreatants pair up and go off alone to share. (If odd number, include a team member). Encourage pairing with someone you don't know. Each person will share for 15 minutes without interruption. Then second person will share for 15 minutes without interruption. In the sharing, address this question: How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus.

**Weekend Coordinator** to inform retreatants where they can go and signal halfway point

**Table Leaders** pass out copies of sharing questions (Copies of questions in Weekend Retreat Handouts)

*Weekend Coordinator to let people know when to return*

**5:00 pm CELEBRATION OF EUCHARIST**

**6:00 pm DINNER**

**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** offers grace

**6:10 pm Supporting Each Other Witness** and prayer support to chapel.

**6:25 pm** All return to Witness Room

**Weekend Coordinator** brings Supporting Each Other Witness to Witness Room

**6:30 pm Supporting Each Other Witness Talk**

**Journey Leader** introduces witness

**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness

**7:00 pm Sharing on Supporting Each Other**

**Supporting Each Other Witness** goes to chapel

**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Supporting Each Other

**7:15 pm Activity**

**Journey Leader** makes table assignments

**7:30 pm Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room

**7:30 pm Table Presentations**

**IF MASS IS AT 5:30 P.M., SWITCH ONE-ON-ONE SHARING WITH WITNESS AND DELETE TABLE ACTIVITIES**

- 4:10 pm      **Supporting Each Other Witness** and prayer support to chapel.
- 4:25 pm      **Weekend Coordinator** brings Supporting Each Other Witness to Witness Room
- 4:30 pm      **Supporting Each Other Witness Talk**  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness  
**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness
- 5:00 pm      **Sharing on Supporting Each Other**  
**Supporting Each Other Witness** goes to chapel  
**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Supporting Each Other
- 5:30 pm      **CELEBRATION OF EUCHARIST**
- 6:30 pm      **DINNER**  
**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** offers grace
- 7:15 pm      **One-on-One Sharing**  
Journey Leader announces one-on-one sharing: Retreatants pair up and go off alone to share. (If odd number, include a team member). Encourage pairing with someone you don't know. Each person will share for 15 minutes without interruption. Then second person will share for 15 minutes without interruption. In the sharing, address this question: How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus.  
**Weekend Coordinator** to inform retreatants where they can go and signal halfway point  
**Table Leaders** pass out copies of sharing questions (Copies of questions in Weekend Retreat Handouts)

*Weekend Coordinator to let people know when to return*



- 7:30 pm        **Sacristan and Physical Arrangements Coordinator** set up for Reconciliation service  
*Each confessor should have a Reconciliation space that is lighted appropriately, separated and private if private confessions will be heard*
- 7:35 pm        **Spiritual Director** to chapel
- 7:45 pm        **Journey Leader or Weekend Coordinator** lead all to church or designated space
- 7:50 pm        **Reconciliation Service**  
**Weekend Coordinator** brings Spiritual Director to church or designated space  
 No introduction needed  
**Spiritual Director** gives Reconciliation Witness as part of service
- 8:10 pm        **Sacristan** greets confessors; assigns them to stations within church or designated space
- 8:25 pm        **Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
 Journey Leader explains that priests are available for the sacrament of Reconciliation. Introduce and thank confessors, explain where they will be. All should use time for individual prayer and reflection. Remain in church until all have completed sacrament. Journey Leader explains Personal Commitment handout, and encourages prayerful reflection on writing a statement of personal commitment.
- NOTE: If multiple priests are not available to offer individual confessions, the Spiritual Director who offers the Reconciliation witness can lead a group Reconciliation service. If a priest is unavailable, a deacon or the Spiritual Guide may offer a simple prayer service based on the theme of reconciliation
- Sacristan** to ensure that things move smoothly
- Weekend Coordinator and Materials Coordinator** hand out Personal Commitment handout (See Weekend Retreat Handouts – Weekend Handout #1 – four pages)
- 9:10 pm        **Weekend Coordinator** to meet Serving the Community Witness (teen) and take to chapel.
- 9:25 pm        All return to Witness Room  
**Sacristan** thanks confessors and provides thank you stipend  
**Sacristan and Physical Arrangements Coordinator** coordinate clean up of church  
*It may be helpful to recruit additional help from past teams to assist in clean up*
- 9:30 pm        **Serving the Community Witness Talk**  
**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness
- 10:00 pm       **Bible dethronement**  
**Serving the Community Witness** goes to chapel or goes home. He or she is given Agape letters unobtrusively

10:05 pm All process to chapel

10:10 pm **Closing Prayer Service**  
**Spiritual Guide** reads appropriate Scripture verse  
Invite silent reflection on Scripture and experiences of the day  
Together all read personal commitment prayer (See Weekend Retreat Handouts – Weekend Handout #1 – four pages)  
Together all sing “Here I Am Lord” or song related to weekend theme

10:25 pm **Journey Leader** gives sleeping location instructions  
Feel free to share about Reconciliation/Serving the Community

## **Sunday**

5:45 am **Weekend Coordinator** rouses team  
Team awake and smiling!!!

6:05 am Team wakes up retreatants with music. Let them know they have about 30 minutes to get ready for breakfast.

6:30 am **BREAKFAST**  
Informal continental breakfast

6:55 am **Journey Leader** gives 5-minute warning before chapel

7:00 am **Chapel Visit**  
**Spiritual Guide** offers short reflection  
**Journey Leader** initiates shared prayer

7:20 am All move to Witness Room  
**Listening to the Word Witness** and prayer support go to the chapel.

7:30 am **Bible Enthronement**  
**Sacristan** select retreatants for bible procession  
Invite one retreatant from each table to light table candles

7:35 am **Weekend Coordinator** brings Listening to the Word Witness to Witness Room

7:40 am **Listening to the Word Witness Talk**  
**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness

8:05 am **Sharing on Listening to the Word**

- Listening to the Word Witness** goes to chapel
- Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Listening to the Word
- 8:25 am     **Activity**
- Spiritual Guide** leads Scripture meditation
- 8:25 am     **Weekend Coordinator** brings Listening to the Word Witness and prayer support to Witness Room
- 9:15 am     **Snack break** near Witness Room  
(Leftovers from continental breakfast)
- Unconditional Love Witness** and prayer support go to the chapel
- 9:30 am     **Retreatants** return to Witness Room
- Weekend Coordinator** brings Unconditional Love Witness to Witness Room
- 9:30 am     **Team** goes to chapel for prayer and to retrieve Agape letters
- Agape Coordinator** brings bags/envelopes to letters to chapel (divided by table); leads prayer over letters.
- 9:35 am     **Unconditional Love Witness talk**
- Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness
- Journey Leader** introduces witness
- Journey Leader** goes to chapel for Agape letters. Spiritual Guide stays in room with witness.
- 10:05 am    **Unconditional Love Witness** returns to chapel
- Spiritual Guide** reflects on Unconditional Love, reads general Agape letters
- All reflect silently on how each one can see God's loving care personally in own life*
- 10:15 am    **Presentation of Agape letters**
- Team** returns to Witness Room with agape letters
- Table Leaders** deliver letters to retreatants at their tables
- Allow time for reading.*
- 10:45 pm    **Chapel Visit** by table
- Table Leaders** take turns taking their retreatants to the chapel; share feelings about letters and prayer support at table, pray and read Scripture
- Weekend Coordinator** coordinates time; about 5 minutes per team
- 11:15 pm    **Brunch**
- 12:05 pm    **Discipleship Witness** and prayer support go to chapel

12:15 pm All gather in Witness Room  
12:15 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings Discipleship Witness to Witness Room

12:20 pm **Discipleship Witness Talk**  
**Spiritual Guide** blesses witness  
**Spiritual Guide** introduces witness

*Witness talk should include reference to The JOURNEY Begins. Note date, time and location.*

12:55 pm **Sharing on Discipleship**  
**Spiritual Guide** reflects on Discipleship and personal commitment  
**Weekend Coordinator and Materials Coordinator** ensures that everyone still has their Personal Commitment handout from Saturday night (See Weekend Retreat Handouts – Weekend Handout #1 – four pages)

At tables, share response to the call to discipleship. Table Leaders share experience of JOURNEY with Christ and ministry. Retreatants take time to write their own Personal Commitment Prayer (on handouts)

1:15 pm **Sacristan** coordinates moving Blessed Sacrament from chapel  
**Sacristan and Physical Arrangements Coordinator** begin set up for Last Supper Mass

1:30 pm Preparation for Eucharist  
**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** reflects on Last Supper

1:40 pm Bible dethronement

1:45 pm **CELEBRATION OF EUCHARIST**

Sunday closes with the celebration of the Eucharist, and typically includes a foot washing ceremony. This can set the stage for the personal commitment that each attendee will make at communion. This Mass can use the liturgy For the Unity of Christians, which can be found in the Lectionary Volume IV Masses for Various Needs and Occasions pages 729-743. That liturgy offers choices for first and second readings, responsorial psalms and the Gospel. The **Liturgist** can select the readings based on the needs of the team. For the Gospel, use John 13:1-15 which includes the foot washing. Set up for foot washing according to local practice (chairs near the altar, not directly surrounding the altar.)

Retreatants read their Personal Commitment statement to the priest as each receives Communion.

*Note: If a priest is unavailable to say Mass, this can be a prayer service conducted by a deacon or the Spiritual Guide. Option to be in the chapel with Blessed Sacrament or in the church with personal commitment to be read individually in front of tabernacle or Blessed Sacrament.*

2:45 pm All move to Witness Room  
**Journey Leader** reminds all of date/time/location for Evening of Discipleship

**Retreatants** complete comment cards at tables

**Weekend Coordinator** returns watches, etc.

Conclude by forming a circle around the room. Retreatants can be in the inner circle with Team behind. Spiritual Guide shares Scripture quote or other sending forth message.

Conclude with appropriate song.

3:00 pm          Retreatants free to leave

Team helps retreatants get belongings to their vehicles

**Physical Arrangements** oversees clean up. Ensure that all spaces are restored to their original state.

Team may remain for final closing with reading of comment cards if desired and final prayer

## *Retreat Weekend Agenda – Option 2 (Mass end of day Saturday)*

### **Saturday**

- 6:20 am        **Directors and Kitchen Coordinators** arrive: plug in coffee, check all facilities
- 6:30 am        **Team** arrives – stows baggage
- Table Leaders** check tables (folders, Bibles, etc.) name tag table, picture table
- Sacristan** and **Weekend Coordinator** need to make sure that all is ready for Prayer Service
- (Blessed Sacrament transferred, Christ candle, cross, Bible)
- 6:45 am        **Team** to chapel for short prayer service
- Spiritual Guide** gives Bible Reflection
- Spiritual Guide** blesses team members individually as they leave chapel
- (Alternatively, team can meet in church and process to chapel with Blessed Sacrament)
- 7:30 am        **Retreatants** arrive. **Team** greets retreatants in the parking lot or at the entrance. *Assist with carrying baggage and opening doors.*

*Show them to the room for secured storage.*

*Ask them to keep medications/sweaters, etc. that they will want easy access to all day. Help them to find their name tags and then encourage them (along with their families) to go to the dining area for refreshments. (Note: some parishes do not encourage families to stay out of respect for those who do not have family.)*

*\*\* No one should be left standing alone!*

- 8:00 am        **Invitations Coordinator or Weekend Coordinator** calls any “no shows”
- Journey Leader** makes any changes to table assignments needed
- 8:00 am        **Spiritual Director, team, retreatants** process to chapel
- 8:05 am        **First Chapel Visit**

*Background music as entering*

**Spiritual Director** gives welcome

*(Thank team and retreatants for time, speak to importance of Journey to parish life)*

**Spiritual Guide** gives opening prayer

*(Comment on intercessory prayer, invite everyone to ask the Lord for one special favor during the weekend)*

**Journey Leader** announces moving to Witness Room

*(Sing while moving between locations if desired)*

*All follow to Witness Room – help retreatants find their table and seat*

*\*\*Team members set reverent tone in Chapel—no talking*

**Team members** take Christ candle, Cross, Bible from Chapel to back of Witness Room

**Table Leaders** introduce themselves and help retreatants become acquainted.

8:25 am **Spiritual Director and/or Spiritual Guide** make opening remarks

8:30 am **Journey Leader** makes orientation remarks

*General information about facility, personal needs, wearing name tags, telephone messages, etc.  
Encourage participation*

**Weekend Coordinator** collects of watches and instruction cards for medicine dispensing

8:40 am **Introductions**

*Name, spouse name, name and ages of children, street address, occupation, time in the parish. Try to move through this quickly. Each table takes a turn at the podium. All applaud as each person gives name. Team members not at tables go last. An information card to be placed on podium for people to refer to*

9:15 am **Renewing Your Faith Life Witness** and prayer support to the chapel.

9:05 am **Bible Enthronement**

**Journey Leader** asks retreatants to write name in Bible and explains the purpose of Bible Enthronement

All rise for entrance song and Bible procession. Journey Leader reads Scripture verse (usually the theme of the weekend) and invites reflection. Journey Leader explains the Christ candle and invites one person from each table to light a table candle from the Christ candle. Journey Leader mentions the importance of Christ's light at the center of the tables. Everyone is invited to join hands at table and share prayer.

Journey Leader concludes with leading Prayer to the Holy Spirit or the Our Father

*Note: For the first Bible Enthronement the Sacristan-Liturgist should carry the candle and bible. For the remainder of the weekend, retreatants should be selected or volunteer for Bible Enthronement. Sacristan-Liturgist organize these volunteers. Before any Scripture reading, give chapter, verse and page number so all can follow.*

9:25 am **Restroom break**

9:35 am **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness to Witness Room

9:40 am **Renewing Your Faith Life Witness Talk**

**Journey Leader** explains witnessing

**Journey Leader** introduces witness by simply giving the person's name and the theme of the witness. Encourages retreatants to take notes.

**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness

*Note: If Spiritual Director is able to be present throughout the weekend, he can bless the witness in place of the Journey Leader.*

*At the end of the witness talks, team and retreatants may spontaneously provide affirmation hugs. Don't make a big line. Your table may need you. You can always affirm later.*

- 10:10 am      **Sharing on Renewing Your Faith Life**
- Renewing Your Faith Life Witness** goes to chapel.
- Journey Leader** invites all to share their experiences of Renewing Your Faith Life at their tables. This is not a conversation about the witness, but should be focused on the theme.
- 10:25 am      **Activity**
- Journey Leader** explains the procedure for preparing table presentations, then assigns activity to each table – Scripture, poem, poster, skit, prayer, song (these should be rotated so that each table does a different activity each time. The purpose of the activity is to get everyone out of their seats and out of their comfort zones. Table leaders should be prepared to coach, but should let the creativity flow from the retreatants response to the theme. This is not a competition and there are no prizes for great artwork or inspired poems.
- 10:40 am      **Weekend Coordinator** bring witness and prayer support team member back from chapel
- They will sit at chairs in back of room*
- 10:40 am      **Table Presentations**
- Each table, in turn, presents the fruit of their activity.*
- After presentations, Journey Leader asks each table to choose a table name. The name should be Christian, scriptural or spirit inspired.*
- Weekend Coordinator** makes sure “table name cards” are on each table for table names.
- 10:55 am      **Break for snacks**
- 10:55 am      **Finding Grace Witness** and prayer support to the chapel.
- 11:15 am      **Sharing of Table Names**
- All move back to Witness Room*
- Each table shares its name, writes name on card at the table*
- Weekend Coordinator** brings witness to Witness Room
- 11:20 am      **Finding Grace Witness Talk**
- Journey Leader** introduces witness
- Journey Leader** blesses witness
- 11:50 am      **Sharing on Finding Grace**
- Finding Grace Witness** goes to chapel
- Journey Leader invites tables to share their experiences of Finding Grace
- 12:05 pm      **Activity**



**Journey Leader** makes table assignments

12:15 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room

12:15 pm **Table Presentations**  
All move to dining area

12:30 pm **LUNCH**  
**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** says grace before meal

1:00 pm **Journey Leader** leads prayer of thanks

*All invited to return to chapel (may visit restrooms if needed). Remember to be reverent*

1:10 pm **Chapel Visit**  
*Background music as entering*  
**Journey Leader** explains shared prayer and initiates – team be prepared to share prayer  
**Spiritual Guide** ends prayer with Glory Be  
Conclude with hymn  
Growing in Holiness Witness and prayer support stay in chapel

1:35 pm All return to the Witness Room

1:40 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings Growing in Holiness Witness to Witness Room

1:45 pm **Growing in Holiness Witness Talk**  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness  
**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness

2:15 pm **Sharing on Growing in Holiness**  
**Growing in Holiness Witness** goes to chapel  
**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Growing in Holiness. Also asks table members to change seats and sit by someone new

2:30 pm **Activity**  
**Journey Leader** describes Reflective Writing exercise

2:30 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room

2:45 pm **Living the Eucharist Witness** and prayer support to chapel

3:00 pm **Snack break**  
*Remove candy from tables in Witness Room*

3:10 pm **Journey Leader** directs everyone back to the Witness Room

**Weekend Coordinator** brings Supporting Each Other Witness to Witness Room

3:15 pm **Supporting Each Other Witness Talk**  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness  
**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness

3:45 pm **Sharing on Supporting Each Other**  
**Supporting Each Other Witness** goes to chapel  
**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Supporting Each Other

4:00 pm **Activity**  
**Journey Leader** makes table assignments

4:15 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room

4:15 pm **Table Presentations**

Start with Table 4

4:40 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings Serving the Community Witness to Witness Room

4:45 pm **Serving the Community Witness Talk**  
**Co-Spiritual Director and Journey Leader** bless witness  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness

5:15 pm **Sharing on Serving the Community**  
**Serving the Community Witness** goes to chapel  
**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Spirituality

5:30 pm **Activity**  
**Journey Leader** makes table assignments

5:45 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings witness and prayer support to Witness Room

5:45 pm **Table Presentations**

6:15 pm **Sacristan and Physical Arrangements** set up church for reconciliation.  
*Each confessor should have a space that is lighted appropriately, separated and private*

6:00 pm **DINNER**  
**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** offers grace

6:30 pm **Spiritual Director** to chapel

6:55 pm **Journey Leader or Weekend Coordinator** lead all to church

- 7:00 pm      **Reconciliation Service**  
**Weekend Coordinator** brings Spiritual Director to church  
 No introduction needed  
**Spiritual Director** gives Reconciliation Witness as part of service
- 7:20 pm      **Sacristan** greets confessors; assigns them to stations within church
- 7:30 pm      **Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
 Journey Leader explains that priests are available for the sacrament of Reconciliation. Introduce and thank confessors, explain where they will be. All should use time for individual prayer and reflection. Remain in church until all have completed sacrament. Journey Leader explains Personal Commitment handout, and encourages prayerful reflection on writing a statement of personal commitment.
- NOTE: If multiple priests are not available to offer individual confessions, the Spiritual Director who offers the Reconciliation witness can lead a group Reconciliation service. If a priest is unavailable, a deacon or the Spiritual Guide may offer a simple prayer service based on the theme of reconciliation
- Sacristan** to ensure that things move smoothly
- Weekend Coordinator and Materials Coordinator** hand out Personal Commitment handout (See Weekend Retreat Handouts – Weekend Handout #1 – four pages)
- 8:40 pm      All return to Witness Room  
**Sacristan** thanks confessors and provides with thank you stipend  
**Sacristan and Physical Arrangements** coordinate clean up of church, set up for Mass in chapel
- It may be helpful to recruit additional help from past teams to assist in clean up*
- 9:00 pm      **Living the Eucharist Witness Talk**  
**Co-Spiritual Director and Journey Leader** bless witness  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness
- 9:30 pm      **Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Living the Eucharist
- 9:50 pm      All go to chapel  
**Journey Leader** leads all to chapel for Mass; bring Personal Commitment sheets  
 Last team member in Witness Room blows out candles on Witness Room tables
- 10:00 pm     **CELEBRATION OF EUCHARIST** - Sunday Liturgy for this weekend  
**Sacristan** reminds priest to have everyone read personal commitment prayer together during the Presentation of the Gifts (See Weekend Retreat Handouts – Weekend Handout #1 – four pages)
- 10:30 pm     Return to Witness Room

10:35 pm      **Bible dethronement**  
**Journey Leader** gives sleeping location instructions  
 Feel free to share Reconciliation/Eucharist feelings with each other!

**Sunday**

5:45 am      **Weekend Coordinator** rouses team  
 Team awake and smiling!!!

6:05 am      Team wakes up retreatants with music. Let them know they have about 30 minutes to get ready for breakfast.

6:30 am      **BREAKFAST**  
 Informal continental breakfast

6:55 am      **Journey Leader** gives 5-minute warning before chapel

7:00 am      **Chapel Visit**  
**Spiritual Guide** offers short reflection  
**Journey Leader** initiates shared prayer

7:20 am      All move to Witness Room  
**Listening to the Word Witness** and prayer support go to the chapel.

7:30 am      **Bible Enthronement**  
**Sacristan** select retreatants for bible procession  
 Invite one retreatant from each table to light table candles

7:35 am      **Weekend Coordinator** brings Listening to the Word Witness to Witness Room

7:40 am      **Listening to the Word Witness Talk**  
**Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness  
**Journey Leader** introduces witness

8:05 am      **Sharing on Listening to the Word**  
**Listening to the Word Witness** goes to chapel  
**Journey Leader** invites tables to share their experiences of Listening to the Word

8:25 am      **Activity**  
**Spiritual Guide** leads Scripture meditation

8:25 am      **Weekend Coordinator** brings Listening to the Word Witness and prayer support to Witness Room

9:15 am      **Snack break** near Witness Room

- Unconditional Love Witness** and prayer support go to the chapel
- 9:30 am **Retreatants** return to Witness Room
- Weekend Coordinator** brings Unconditional Love Witness to Witness Room
- 9:30 am **Team** goes to chapel for prayer and to retrieve Agape letters
- Agape Coordinator** brings bags/envelopes to letters to chapel (divided by table); leads prayer over letters.
- 9:35 am **Unconditional Love Witness talk**
- Spiritual Guide and Journey Leader** bless witness
- Journey Leader** introduces witness
- Journey Leader** goes to chapel for Agape letters. **Spiritual Guide** stays in room with witness.
- 10:05 am **Unconditional Love Witness** returns to chapel
- Spiritual Guide** reflects on Unconditional Love, reads general Agape letters
- All reflect silently on how each one can see God's loving care personally in own life*
- 10:15 am **Presentation of Agape letters**
- Team** returns to Witness Room with Agape letters
- Table Leaders** deliver letters to retreatants at their tables
- Allow time for reading.*
- 10:45 pm **Chapel Visit** by table
- Table Leaders** take turns taking their retreatants to the chapel; share feelings about letters and prayer support at table, pray and read Scripture
- Weekend Coordinator** coordinates time; about 5 minutes per team
- 11:15 pm **Brunch**
- 12:05 pm **Discipleship Witness** and prayer support go to chapel
- 12:15 pm All gather in Witness Room
- 12:15 pm **Weekend Coordinator** brings Discipleship Witness to Witness Room
- 12:20 pm **Discipleship Witness Talk**
- Spiritual Guide** blesses witness
- Spiritual Guide** introduces witness
- Witness talk should include reference to The JOURNEY Begins. Note date, time and location.*
- 12:55 pm **Sharing on Discipleship**

**Spiritual Guide** reflects on Discipleship and personal commitment

**Weekend Coordinator and Materials Coordinator** ensures that everyone still has their Personal Commitment handout from Saturday night (See Weekend Retreat Handouts – Weekend Handout #1 – four pages)

At tables, share response to the call to discipleship. Table Leaders share experience of JOURNEY with Christ and ministry. Retreatants take time to write their own Personal Commitment Prayer (on handouts)

1:15 pm **Sacristan** coordinates moving Blessed Sacrament from chapel

**Sacristan and Physical Arrangements Coordinator** begin set up for Last Supper Mass

1:30 pm Preparation for Eucharist

**Spiritual Director or Spiritual Guide** reflects on Last Supper

1:40 pm Bible dethronement

1:45 pm **CELEBRATION OF EUCHARIST**

Sunday closes with the celebration of the Eucharist, and typically includes a foot washing ceremony. This can set the stage for the personal commitment that each attendee will make at communion. This Mass can use the liturgy For the Unity of Christians, which can be found in the Lectionary Volume IV Masses for Various Needs and Occasions pages 729-743. That liturgy offers choices for first and second readings, responsorial psalms and the Gospel. The **Liturgist** can select the readings based on the needs of the team. For the Gospel, use John 13:1-15 which includes the foot washing. Set up for foot washing according to local practice (chairs near the altar, not directly surrounding the altar.)

Retreatants read their Personal Commitment statement to the priest as each receives Communion.

*Note: If a priest is unavailable to say Mass, this can be a prayer service conducted by a deacon or the Spiritual Guide. Option to be in the chapel with Blessed Sacrament or in the church with personal commitment to be read individually in front of tabernacle or Blessed Sacrament.*

2:45 pm All move to Witness Room

**Journey Leader** reminds all of date/time/location for Evening of Discipleship

Retreatants complete comment cards at tables

**Weekend Coordinator** returns watches, etc.

Conclude by forming a circle around the room. Retreatants can be in the inner circle with Team behind. Spiritual Guide shares Scripture quote or other sending forth message.

Conclude with appropriate song.

3:00 pm Retreatants free to leave

Team helps retreatants get belongings to their vehicles

**Physical Arrangements** oversees clean up. Ensure that all spaces are restored to their original state.

Team may remain for final closing with reading of comment cards if desired and final prayer

*Weekend Retreat Handouts and Reference*



Introductions

Name

Family (spouse, children,  
significant other, pets, etc.)

Occupation

Street Address

Time in Parish

## One-on-One Sharing Question

How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus?

How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus?

How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus?

How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus?

How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus?

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How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus?

How do I feel about my faith life and my relationship with Jesus?

*Sharing question for one-on-one sharing Saturday afternoon*

## Prayer to be Faithful of Serving God

*(A prayer of commitment)*

Father in Heaven,  
ever-living source of all that is good,  
keep me faithful in serving You.  
Help me to drink of Christ's Truth,  
and fill my heart with His Love  
so that I may serve You in faith  
and love and reach eternal life.  
In the Sacrament of the Eucharist  
You give me the joy of sharing Your Life.  
Keep me in Your presence.  
Let me never be separated from You  
and help me to do Your Will.

*Source: Catholic Online*

### Reflections:

- 2 Peter 1:1-10
- Acts 4:32-35
- John 13:12-17
- Luke 14:25-33

### Instructions

- Hand out after Reconciliation service
- Reflect on prayer of commitment and Bible verses
- On Sunday you will be asked to write your own prayer of commitment (on back)
- You will read your own prayer quietly before receiving Communion at the Sunday Mass.

# Personal Prayer of Commitment

*Weekend Signage*

**JOURNEY**

**Chapel**

**Entrance**

**JOURNEY**

**Food**

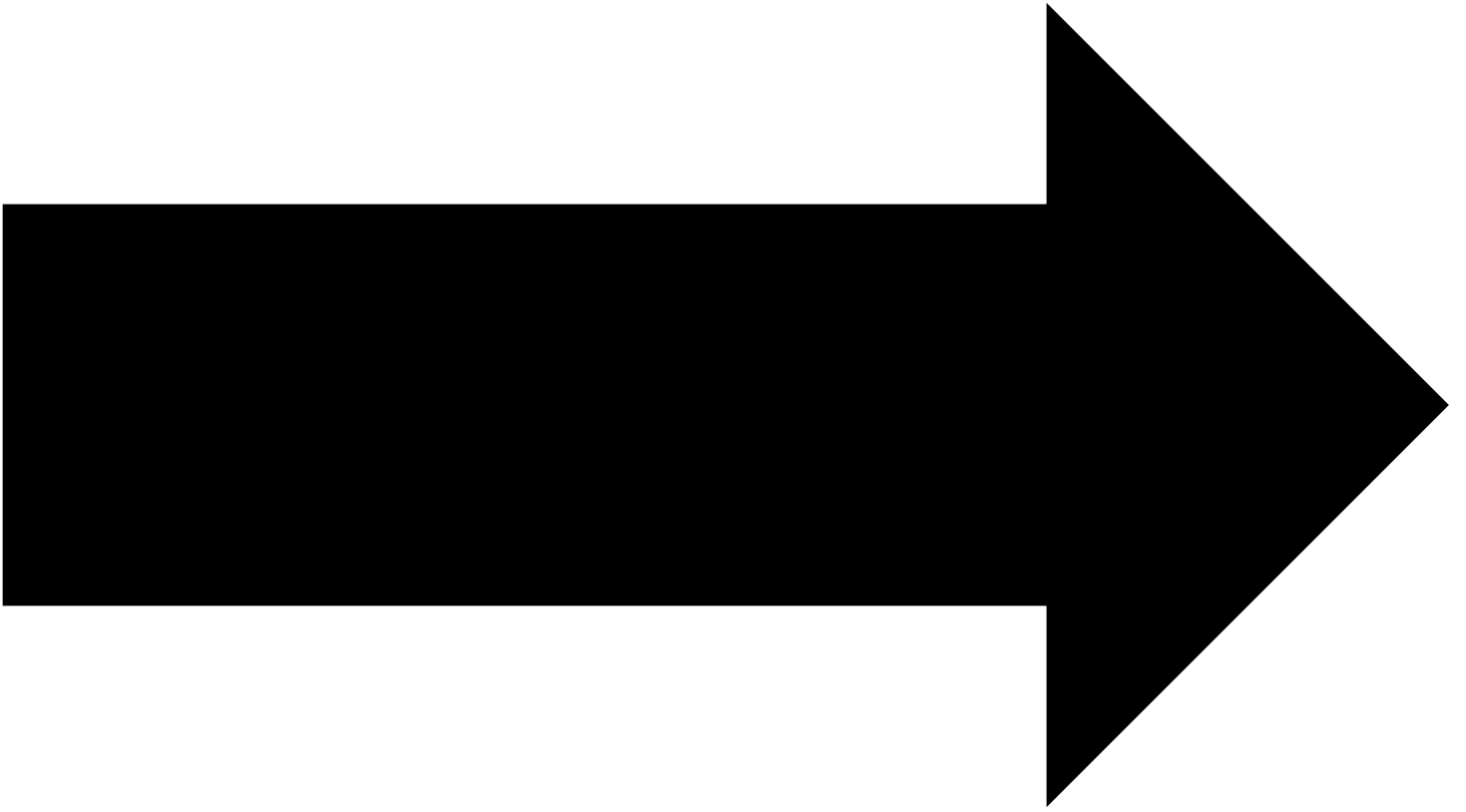
**Drop Off**

# God's Time



# **Men's Restroom**

# **Women's Restroom**



# Reimbursement Form

Complete and return to JOURNEY Continuation Committee

*Please staple receipts to form*

JOURNEY Team #: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	

## Stage 6: Living a New Life in Christ

Living a New Life in Christ, for the outgoing team, usually takes place about two weeks after The JOURNEY Begins. The date/time should be announced with the entire JOURNEY with Christ calendar. It should not be an afterthought.

Living a New Life in Christ affirms team growth and call individuals to a continuing commitment to spiritual growth and ministry. It allows for exploration of various ways to grow and serve and provides an opportunity to commit or recommit to activities that nurture spirituality or service.

Living a New Life in Christ is facilitated by a person identified by the Continuation Committee and trained in the process. The agenda put forth here calls for a two-evening process. If local needs require, Living a New Life in Christ can be done in one long session. Living a New Life in Christ takes about three-four hours, depending on the size of the team.

### Set up:

- Chairs in a circle in a large meeting room. A whiteboard or flip chart may be helpful

### Handouts:

- Resources on where to grow and where to serve
- Ministry Guide handout (Living a New Life in Christ Handout #1)
- Candles



# *Living a New Life in Christ Agenda*

## **Part 1**

### **Opening Prayer**

Spiritual Guide

### **Scripture**

Spiritual Guide

- Galatians 2:20
- Ephesians 4:17-24
- 2 Corinthians 5:16-18

### **Call to reflection**

Facilitator

- Affirm team for faithfulness to commitments
- Thank them for their service
- Remind of the personal commitments they made at the beginning of JOURNEY with Christ. Did formation help?
- Reflect on commitment to continue to grow in relationship with God through spirituality and service
- Ask team members to make notes about where they feel the need or desire to grow spirituality and what would help.

*Give team 5-10 minutes to jot down notes*

- Reflect on commitment to continue to grow in ministry and service
- Affirm team on the effectiveness of their ministry during the retreat weekend
- Express the parish's desire that they continue to be involved in ministry and service (it's a JOURNEY)
- Ask team members to make notes about how they are feeling called to serve God, the parish and the community.

*Give team 5-10 minutes to jot down notes*

### **Team Sharing**

Facilitator

- Each person shares their needs/desires for spiritual growth and ministry/service.
- Responses are recorded on whiteboard or flip chart
- This is an exercise in sharing and listening. Comments should not be made on what people share

### **Opportunities to Grow and Serve**

Continuation Committee Representative

- Where to Grow – this should be an updated list of the spiritual formation opportunities offered through the parish, as well as other resources available
- Where to Serve – this should be an updated list of the ministry/service opportunities offered through the parish, as well as other places to serve
- Answer questions and provide clarity

*These should be available through the parish office. The Continuation Committee should take responsibility for maintaining a list of other resources.*



- Pledge to support them in pursuing their spiritual growth and ministerial aspirations

**Closing**

Spiritual Guide

- Read Luke 10:1-9
- If people describe interest in similar ministries, suggest that they support each other through prayer
- Encourage team to continue to pray for each other

Living a New Life in Christ Facilitator Guide is available at [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org).



## *Living a New Life in Christ Handout #1*

### Reflection Questions

Read Matthew 4: 18-22

**How have I served the Lord in the past?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**What gifts or talents from God did I use in those instances?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Of what new talents or gifts am I aware?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**What kinds of spiritual growth activities would support me in my ministries?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Considering your answers to the reflection questions, complete the following:

**Where I am called to grow spiritually:**

- 1.
- 2.

**Where I am called to serve the Lord and His people:**

- 1.
- 2.

**Gifts and talents I will use in service to others**

- 1.
- 2.

- Do these activities conflict with other responsibilities?
- Would my family and friends support these activities?
- Would I need to rearrange any priorities?
- Is this the time to take on something new?

## Stage 7: More Food for the Journey

Between six and 12 months after Stage 6: Living a New Life in Christ, each team is encouraged to experience a spiritual gathering called Food for the Journey. This retreat revisits the themes of the retreat weekend and provides an opportunity for team members to renew their commitment to living a faith-based life in Christ. The retreat usually runs about four hours. Many parishes offer this as a parish-wide event, focusing the invitations on past JOURNEY retreatants. Men and women can be invited to the same event and spouses can be welcomed. Food for the Journey can also be offered for a single team.



*Note: The schedule can be adjusted to accommodate a morning retreat or an afternoon retreat. If the retreat spans lunch time, allow 45-60 minutes for lunch instead of the break.*

*Three other formats are available and can be adapted for this retreat. Go to [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org) Evening of Reflection, a two-hour event, Encounter, a day-long retreat and Evening of Grace and Light, a two-hour event.*

### *Food for the Journey Agenda*

Set Up: Room large enough for tables to accommodate those attending; about 6 per table. Podium and microphone. Equipment to play music. Christ Candle and Bible, Bible holder. Handouts. Engage immediate past team members for the agenda where possible. Select presenters to represent men and women, if the retreat is presented to a mixed group.

Opening Prayer 5 minutes	Pastor, Deacon, or Spiritual Guide
Bible Enthronement 5 minutes	Sacristan and Liturgist or selected by Facilitator Music selected by Facilitator
Welcome and Introductions  20 minutes	Facilitator Each person introduces self; one thing the person has done since that person's retreat weekend
Scripture Reflection 15 minutes	Spiritual Guide or Facilitator
Witness 1: Growing in Faith	Spiritual Guide

30 minutes

Table Sharing  
15 minutes

Self-led; questions on table

Break  
30 minutes

Count Your Blessings Reflection  
30 minutes

Led by Facilitator; worksheet

*(If location has outdoor spaces, allow those attending to reflect outside.)*

Witness 2: Responding to God's Call  
30 minutes

Journey Leader

Table sharing  
15 minutes

Self-led; questions on table

Where Am I Called? Reflection  
10 minutes

Led by Facilitator; worksheet

Group sharing of call  
25 minutes

Led by Facilitator

Bible Dethronement  
5 minutes

Sacristan and Liturgist or selected by Facilitator  
Music selected by Facilitator

Closing remarks/Sending forth  
5 minutes

Pastor, Deacon, or Spiritual Guide

# Continuation Committee

It is critical that all Continuation Committee members read the entire JOURNEY handbook and all the auxiliary materials so that all have a thorough understanding of the JOURNEY process. The Continuation Committee oversees the entire process for the current team and takes specific responsibility for Invitations, chapel and room set up, and meal planning/donations for the kitchen ministry.

## *Why have a Continuation Committee?*

- Ensure the JOURNEY process is experienced in a faithful manner over time.
- Be a serving organization in the Body of Christ, praying always for the parish community and the JOURNEY community and process
- Initiate policies and procedures to be followed by every team
- Give feedback to the Spiritual Director
- Take the lead on key support ministries: Invitations, Physical Arrangements, Chapel Support, Kitchen
- Be a repository of information past and present
- Keep an up-to-date website
- Maintain continuity between the Men's and Women's retreat schedules and agendas
- Ensure that the process remains true to our Catholic faith traditions
- Keep an inventory of materials and supplies
- Review each weekend and the comments for improvement purposes
- Help teams provide the weekend retreat and provide support where needed
- Attend The Journey Begins meeting to talk about team commitment and call to action to join the next team
- Present parish ministries during Living a New Life in Christ
- Identify a facilitator for Food for the Journey and assist the team in organizing this team retreat
- Train future facilitators for The Journey Begins, Sharing Our Journey, Evening with the Holy Spirit, Living a New Life in Christ and Food for the Journey
- Train future Spiritual Guides
- Evaluate the JOURNEY process



## *Continuation Committee Responsibilities*

1. Reserve all rooms for retreat weekend and JOURNEY with Christ
2. Establish a consistent evening for men's and women's JOURNEY with Christ meetings
  - Simplifies room reservations
  - Enables Spiritual Guides to proactively discern their HG/FS and Discernment Facilitators
  - Eliminates an early and significant obstacle for the newly formed team; simply announce the date at The JOURNEY Begins
  - Be sure to schedule a date for Living a New Life in Christ for the outgoing team; some parishes do the first evening on the same night as The JOURNEY Begins after the sharing with the new team is completed
3. Take primary responsibility for key support areas
  - Invitations
  - Physical arrangements – room reservations, set up and take down oversight, chapel logistics
  - Scheduling chapel support
  - Kitchen set up and food sign up
4. Act as liaison with current team in formation and with Regional Support Team
5. Support the immediate past team in organizing a Prayer Service or an Agape Service on the Friday before the retreat weekend
6. Ensure that facilitators and Spiritual Guides are trained/available
  - Discernment and training for facilitators (The Journey Begins, Sharing Our Journey, Evening with the Holy Spirit, Living a New Life in Christ)
  - Discernment and training for Spiritual Guides
7. Organize annual gathering event (Food for the Journey, Evening of Grace and Light, etc.) for past retreatants
  - Reserve appropriate retreat space (at church or off site)
  - Set date/time in cooperation with team Spiritual Guide(s)
  - Identify appropriate facilitator
  - Assist Spiritual Guide(s) in sending invitations, RSVPs
  - Arrange appropriate catering
8. Organize annual Invitations Event (see Invitations)
  - Reserve appropriate retreat space (at church or off site)
  - Set date/time
  - Identify appropriate facilitator
  - Assist in sending invitations, RSVPs
  - Arrange appropriate catering

### **Establish a calendar**

Most parishes schedule retreat weekends in spring and fall to avoid holidays and summer vacations. A typical calendar might look like this:

August:	Invitations Event
September-November:	Fall retreats
February:	Food for the Journey event
March-April:	Spring retreats

*Note: One of the options for a gathering event is the Evening of Grace and Light. This is structured as an Advent reflection and would be presented most appropriately in early December. The Evening of Grace and Light can also be used as an Invitations Event.*

### **Specific ongoing ministries for the Continuation Committee**

It may make sense to recruit others not on the Continuation Committee to assist the facilitators in these support ministries.

#### **Invitations Facilitator/JOURNEY Begins Facilitator**

(The [Invitations Facilitator Guide](#) provides more detail, worksheets, examples)

- One man and one woman take the lead for invitations, in cooperation with the pastor
- Define a system for your parish
- Establish goals for your parish
- Develop a Parish Invitations Worksheet
- Make follow up calls on behalf of the pastor
- Develop a database for future invitation outreach
- The person discerned as Invitations Coordinator for a specific team will be the liaison between the team and the Invitations Facilitator; team members will continue to be encouraged to invite people they know
- Invitations Facilitator also facilitates The JOURNEY Begins
- The Invitations Facilitators/JOURNEY Begins Facilitators will hold these roles over the course of several weekends

#### **Physical Arrangements Facilitator**

(The [Physical Arrangements Facilitator Guide](#) provides worksheets, examples)

- One man and one woman take the lead for organizing all the arrangements for each weekend
- Reserve all rooms for weekend and JOURNEY with Christ
- Inventory and procure all supplies for the weekend, including foot washing supplies
- Serve as the liaison for the team and the parish facilities manager.
- Develop a plan for the setup of all spaces (what needs to be moved, special arrangements) in cooperation with the Journey Leader, other support ministry coordinators and the Continuation Committee. Photos of the spaces before setup can facilitate clean up.

- Recruit volunteers from past JOURNEY teams to assist in setup and take down (especially take down as current team will likely help with set up.)
- Test audio/video equipment. Ensure that the Liturgists/Music Coordinator knows how to operate equipment.
- Schedule a walk-through of the space prior to the retreat weekend.
- Figure out parking arrangements for the weekend and communicate that information to the Invitations Facilitator so it can be shared with retreatants.
- Cover windows and glass doors to eliminate distractions.
- Train sacristans if needed
- Recruit and schedule chapel prayer support throughout the weekend
- Arrange for visiting priests for Reconciliation, including invitations, confirmations, stipends, thank you notes,
- Assist in identifying a Teen Witness, if needed
- Plan and organize the weekend chapel for all prayer sessions and sacraments.
- Arrange with the Spiritual Guide for a tabernacle for the weekend chapel.
- Arrange with priest or deacon for the Blessed Sacrament to be in the tabernacle in the weekend chapel.
- Arrange and facilitate Reconciliation, in cooperation with the Spiritual Guide and the pastor. Arrange space, greet confessors, ensure the smooth flow of retreatants to each confessor (if individual confessions are being heard).
- Ensure that all materials needed for Mass are present (chalice, purificators, hosts, etc.)
- Arrange with priest or deacon for the Blessed Sacrament to be returned to the main tabernacle.
- Return all materials from the chapel to their proper places at the close of the retreat weekend.
- The person discerned as Physical Arrangements Coordinator for a specific team will be the liaison between the team and the Physical Arrangements Facilitator. The Physical Arrangements Facilitator will also work with the sacristan/liturgist on each team.

### **Kitchen Facilitator**

(The [Kitchen Facilitator Guide](#) provides sign up forms, etc.)

- One man and one woman take the lead in organizing the kitchen
- Develop a process for food sign up; Plan menus that are simple, easy to digest and appeal to a wide variety of diets.
- Develop standard menus for men's and women's weekends
- Reserve kitchen and supervise set up/clean up; ensure that any special requirements of the kitchen are observed
- Recruit volunteers (not from the current team) to assist with prep, serving and clean up
- Inventory kitchen equipment and supplies.
- The Continuation Committee should set a budget if supplies/food must be purchased.
- Check with Invitations regarding any dietary restrictions.
- Develop a schedule for food preparation and clean up, including how many volunteers will be needed at what times.



- Develop a plan for any excess food.
- The person discerned as Kitchen Coordinator for a specific team will be the liaison between the team and the Kitchen Facilitator.

### **Chapel Support Facilitator**

- Recruit and schedule chapel prayer support throughout the weekend

Facilitators for The Journey Begins, Sharing Our Journey, Evening with the Holy Spirit, Living a New Life in Christ and Food for the Journey will start out as Continuation Committee members, but do not need to be members.

### **Reconciliation Support**

The Continuation Committee is also responsible for working with the Pastor and the church staff to secure confessors for the Reconciliation Service during the retreat weekend.

Two months before retreat:

1. Contact Parish Office to secure three to four priests for the Reconciliation Service held Saturday evening of the retreat. Ask for the specific priests' names and telephone numbers.
2. Request the priests arrive at the church by 8:00 p.m. Saturday evening.
3. Request checks for the priests from parish office.

One week before retreat:

1. Personally telephone priests to confirm Reconciliation Service details.

### *Continuation Committee Roles for Weekend*

What does the Continuation Committee do during a retreat weekend? PRAY, PRAY, and PRAY, more!

- Help set up Friday
- Attend Agape Service Friday night of the weekend (planned by prior team, not Continuation Committee)
- Attend Saturday night rosary for prayer support
- Assist with set up and tear down for liturgies
- Provide food for weekend
- Assist in kitchen
- Pray in the chapel when it is open
- Write Agape letters
- Help tear down Sunday

Remember to follow the handbook, listen to your priest and support the process as Continuation Committee members. Trust your Spiritual Guide to know what is needed. And trust in the JOURNEY.

Primarily, the Continuation Committee and all prior team members must remember this weekend is to be put on by the current Teams. The Continuation Committee is there as support, in prayer, and where we are called by the team. We must allow the current Team members to handle their ministries. Christ renews through them, as He renewed through each of us. Pray some more!

## Succession Planning

To not take a strategic approach to succession planning has the potential to be a critical and potentially fatal mistake.

Without a succession plan, a handful of parishioners might be “on fire” and carry the load until they “wear out”. Most of those who are “on fire” naturally gravitate to tasks that need to be accomplished. Unfortunately, over time, invitations will suffer. Further, once these individuals hit the stage of “burn out”, a great hole will exist and it can lead to cancelled weekends, numerous challenges and the potential end of the ministry.

It is recommended that the first 12 members of the Alpha Team become the first Continuation Committee for the parish. A group of 8-12, evenly distributed between men and women, is optimal. The Alpha Team members should draw lots to determine initial terms. It is recommended that a person serve for 3 years. The Pastor or his designee should be a permanent member of the Continuation Committee. It also may be appropriate to have a parish staff member as a member.

### Sample rotation

	Year 1	Year 1 Halfway	Year 2	Year 2 Halfway	Year 3	Year 3 Halfway	Year 4	Year 4 Halfway	Year 5	Year 5 Halfway	Year 6
Alpha 1-4			Rotate off 4								
Alpha 5-8					Rotate off 4						
Alpha 6-12							Rotate off 4				
Teams 1		2 join						Rotate off 2			
Teams 2			2 join						Rotate off 2		
Teams 3				2 join						Rotate off 2	
Teams 4					2 join						Rotate off 2
Teams 5						2 join					
Teams 6							2 join				
Teams 7								2 join			
Teams 8									2 join		
Teams 9										2 join	
Teams 10											2 join
Total	12	14	12	14	12	14	12	12	12	12	12

After the first retreat at the parish, the Spiritual Guides should help the Pastor identify who from the teams should be invited to join the Continuation Committee. Often the Journey Leader or the Weekend Coordinator is invited. Parishes also invite the current and immediate past Spiritual Guides to serve as ad hoc members. For example, one man and one woman from Team 1 would join the Continuation Committee the first year. Six months later, one man and one woman from Team 2 would join the Continuation Committee. At the end of the first year, four original members would rotate off and one man and one woman from Team 3 would join. You may want to tweak the number joining to keep the committee size manageable. (For instance, someone might need to rotate off early and you do not fill that position.)

Each member of the Continuation Committee has a specific ministry. New members should be trained in the facilitation and support ministries of the Continuation Committee. Those who rotate off Continuation Committee and those who complete a weekend may join subcommittees for Invitations, Physical Arrangements or Kitchen. Others may train to facilitate Sharing Our Journey, Evenings with the Holy Spirit or Living a New Life in Christ.

Continuation Committee members who have been trained as facilitators for Sharing the Journey, Evening with the Holy Spirit, Living a New Life in Christ or the Journey Begins can continue to facilitate those meetings after they rotate off the Continuation Committee.

While the first Spiritual Guides are taken from the Continuation Committee, that does not have to be the case going forward. The Pastor discerns or approves Spiritual Guides for future teams as needed. It is assumed that lay people who serve in the ministry of Spiritual Guide are Catholic and in good standing in the Church.

All of this is time consuming, requires a sustained effort of the Pastor and a team of individuals that are easily integrated and replaceable to avoid the loss of momentum that occurs when one or two individuals attempt to carry the load.

Although this is a lay driven ministry, the strong support of the Pastor is needed to keep the process focused on spiritual renewal and growth. These relationships built as part of JOURNEY should be nurtured and built upon and are the key to the renewal of the parish. JOURNEY could and should be energizing for the Pastor as many of those who attend a weekend will engage in parish ministries.

More resources for the Continuation Committee can be found at [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org).

- Background information
- Training the Continuation Committee
- Continuation Committee Structure – an example
- Agape Sample Program



## *Facilities and Supplies*

**Witness room.** Large enough for four to six round tables (42" in diameter), open space in front of room, rectangular table in back. MUST BE AVAILABLE FRIDAY APPROX 6 PM UNTIL SUNDAY NIGHT. (Number of tables determined by number of retreatants.)

**Chapel.** A room to use as small prayer chapel; seating all retreatants and team comfortably; Blessed Sacrament in the room if permitted; if lighting is fluorescent, please procure lamps; decorate space to support prayer and reflection. MUST BE AVAILABLE FRIDAY APPROX 6 PM UNTIL SUNDAY NIGHT. It is helpful to be close to the witness room.

**Sleeping Rooms.** Appropriate rooms for retreatants and team to sleep in. Window shades for appropriate privacy; space for cot/mat and chair for each person. If needed, may be vacated for Sunday morning religious education.

**Bathrooms.** Needed are toilets and sinks for use by all on weekend. If there are few sinks, perhaps change all rest rooms to accommodate one gender (all men or all women) for weekend use. Please be sensitive to have enough bathroom supplies for weekend use by retreatants, team and others who use facilities. Showers are optional.

**Dining area and kitchen.** Normal schedule for the weekend does not permit team members to prepare meals. Help outside the team is needed. Snacks should be generally available during the weekend.

Recommend simple, non-gaseous meals. May be different simple menus for men and women weekends. On late Friday and Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon, there is a need for special snacks. Appropriate snacks might be cookies, pizza, simple sandwiches, fruit, fresh vegetable tray, soft drinks, juices, cheese and crackers, nuts or trail mix, tray, coffee, decaf, tea. Out of respect for team members and retreatants who may struggle with addictions, we do not recommend alcoholic beverages.

**Break Area.** Weekend retreat needs a break area. If kitchen is close to witness room, that can be used. Otherwise, prefer a table or two in hall outside the witness room, with coffee, decaf, tea, maybe cookies, fruit, etc. for breaks.

**Team room.** Small room with table or desk space to store Agape letters discreetly and other supplies. Not a sleeping room.

**Rooms/spaces for Reconciliation (if Reconciliation will be offered on the weekend).** Needed Saturday evening. May need softer lighting - lamps.

*NOTE: Please be sensitive to make proper adjustments to school bells, heat on/off times, and air conditioning units.*

## Equipment

**Chapel.** Needs Blessed Sacrament if permitted, soft lighting (lamps), vestments for weekend liturgy, chairs for all on weekend, parish songbooks, candles and crosses for Reconciliation rooms, and stoles for confessors (if Reconciliation will be offered on the weekend).

**Witness Room.** Needs lectern, a place to write announcements if needed (blackboard, whiteboard, large Post-It poster paper), a round table for each table leader, chairs for all (cushioned are helpful), 6' or 8' rectangular table for directors and music player. Also needs a small table for Bible Enthronement, a processional Bible and a large crucifix/cross.

## Materials

**For retreatants and team.** Inexpensive Bible for all retreatants and team for all to keep. Recommended: New American Bible.

*Important Note:* There is great value in each retreatant and each team member having the same edition/translation of the Scripture for use on the weekend – so page numbers may be announced, minimizing searching for readings by book/chapter/verse for new Christians. Chapter and verse should also be cited to help those unfamiliar with the Bible learn.

**Nametags, folders, envelopes.** The Weekend-in-a-Box has lanyards in two colors, one for team and one for retreatants. Folder with notebook paper and pen for all retreatants and team. An envelope (9"x13") for each retreatant and team members; stored in supply room and used for Agape letters.

**Replaceable supplies.** For each table in witness room; one 5 or 7 day vigil light, one box of Kleenex, one set of magic markers, candy and one lighting taper. General supplies on back table; 5-10 sheets of newsprint or poster paper, pack of matches or a lighter, two rolls of masking tape, a supply of aspirin, Tylenol, Advil, Tums, antacid, shaving needs, female needs, toothpaste, combs, etc., for emergencies. Christ Candle for Bible Enthronement.

## Confessors

Generally, need a minimum of one confessor for every five retreatants. Confessors should be asked to arrive Saturday night either 9 or 9:30 p.m. Time may fluctuate based on availability of priests. Typically handled by the Continuation Committee.

## *Weekend in a Box*

The “weekend in a box” section contains all the handouts needed.

*These best practices were compiled based on almost 20 years of weekend retreats in several parishes. Typically, the discerned Weekend Coordinators collaborate with the Continuation Committee to inventory and procure the supply materials as they are used for both men’s and women’s weekend.*

*Hanging files and bins will help you keep track of materials you need for each part of the retreat.*

<u>TIME TABLE</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WHO</u>
90 Days Prior to weekend	Print Forms	Materials Coordinator
90 Days Prior to weekend	Purchase Holy Items	Weekend Coordinator
60 Days Prior to weekend	Purchase Supplies	Weekend Coordinator
60 Days Prior to weekend	Assemble Supplies	Weekend Coordinator
10 Days After weekend	Submit Expense Report	Weekend Coordinator

The Continuation Committee should be able to provide you with an inventory of what is available from the last retreat weekends. Typical items that might be available include:

- Labeled file folders
- Stock for Table Names
- Signs
- Laminate and sheet protectors
- Sand (enough to fill a small jar)

## Handouts and Signage

Print off one copy of each item (all on white paper is fine, with the exclusion of labels which need to be printed on label paper). Then, using the table below, place a sticky note on each document stating (1) number of copies, (2) color of paper (light shade), and (3) if it needs to be double-sided. You can take these to a printer to have them copied in bulk. (These are all the handouts and signs needed for the weekend and for JOURNEY with Christ.)

*\*\*Starred items should be printed front and back*

Document	Doc Type	Paper	# Copies	Prep	Final Location
<a href="#">01-Avery 8162 Hanging Folder Labels</a>	Word	Labels	1	Attach to hanging folders	Facilitator Bin
<b><i>Weekend handouts/signs</i></b>					
Introduction Sheet	PDF	White	1	Laminate	Hanging Folder #2
One-on-One Sharing Questions	Word	White	30	Laminate or clear plastic sleeve	Hanging Folder #6

Weekend Handout #1	PDF	Green	50		Hanging Folder #9
Chapel Entrance sign	Word	White	4	Clear plastic sleeve	Hanging Folder #1
Food Drop Off sign	Word	White	4	Clear plastic sleeve	Hanging Folder #1
God's Time sign	Word	White	12	Clear plastic sleeve	Hanging Folder #1
Men's Restroom sign	Word	White	?	Clear plastic sleeve	Hanging Folder #1
Women's Restroom sign	Word	White	?	Clear plastic sleeve	Hanging Folder #1
Expense Reimbursement Form	PDF	White	1	Fill out if desired by parish	
<b><i>JOURNEY with Christ Handouts</i></b>					
The JOURNEY Begins Handout #1	PDF	Blue	50		Hanging Folder #11
Evening with the Holy Spirit Handout #1	PDF	Yellow	50		Hanging Folder #12
JOURNEY with Christ Handout #1	PDF	Pink	40		Hanging Folder #13
JOURNEY with Christ Handout #2	PDF	White	40		Hanging Folder #13
Living a New Life in Christ Handout #1	PDF	White	40		Hanging Folder #13

Copies of weekend handouts and signs are found in this section. Handouts for The JOURNEY Begins, Evening with the Holy Spirit, JOURNEY with Christ and Living a New Life in Christ are found in their respective sections. A complete list of supplies can be found at [jnlic.org](http://jnlic.org).

## *Prayer Service before the retreat weekend*

*An Agape Prayer Service for the entire JOURNEY community can be held on Friday evening before the retreat weekend, after set-up is complete. This service provides prayer support for the team. The Continuation Committee and the immediate past team take responsibility for the organization. The Continuation Committee in collaboration with the team may determine that a simple prayer service just for the team is more appropriate.*

## *Community Agape Prayer Service*

**PURPOSE:** The JOURNEY and family members gather to pray with and for team members who are about to put on a retreat weekend.

**TIMING AND LOCATION:** The Agape Service is held on Friday night before the retreat weekend, after set-up is completed. The service takes place in the Sanctuary of the church. The previous Spiritual Guide coordinates with current Spiritual Guide as to time.

**SET UP:** On the altar, Christ Candle to be used on the upcoming weekend, as well as candles representing all past teams. Candles for each team member on the current team can be placed on a credence table. Candles for the team are decorated with the logo label for the upcoming weekend by previous team as a gift to current team.

Have lighting sticks, ceramic bowl of sand and lighter available to light agape gift candles also on credence table.

Programs to hand out at baptismal font

Music CDs and player or other music source

Leave space for Current Team Christ Candle on the altar that will be processed in.

**PROGRAM:** Previous team creates program to be handed out; includes schedule for evening, current team members and ministry and words to songs.

**ATTENDEES:** Team members, their families, past retreatants and their families are all invited to attend. The immediate past team plans and presents the Agape service for the current team and helps invite community to come as prayer support.

- **Opening Song**

Current team processes in singing opening song with Christ candle and is seated together in the front pews to the right. The team hosting the Agape service is seated together in the front to the left.

- **Opening Prayer and Welcome**

Welcome all in attendance, especially those who have not been through JOURNEY. Encourage everyone to participate fully in the evening.

*The team planning the Agape Service will determine who will fill each of the roles in the service. This is a good opportunity for those in service roles on the weekend to share their faith in a more public role.*



- **Reflection on meaning of “Agape”** (3 minutes)

Can focus on agape love from team to retreatants

A suggested definition of agape from Pope Benedict: “Love – ‘agape’ in Greek, ‘caritas’ in Latin – does not mean first of all a charitable act or sentiment, but the spiritual gift, the love of God that the Holy Spirit infuses in the human heart and that leads in turn to giving oneself to God, himself, and to one’s neighbor.”

- **Scripture Reflection** (3-4 minutes)

Can focus on gift of team to each other

This can be the Scripture Theme from the weekend the current team attended.

Time allowed should include reading of verses and reflection. To reflect on where they came from

- **Comments Cards from the retreat weekend**

The past Journey Leader will have comment cards from the weekend the current team attended. Can have a few members read these.

- **Scripture Reflection** (3-4 minutes)

Can focus on gift of weekend to retreatants

This can be the Scripture Theme for the upcoming weekend. To reflect on where they are going.

Time allowed should include reading of verses and reflection.

- **Introduction of Team for the current retreat weekend**

The team comes up in front as their names and ministries are called.

- **Signing of the Senses**

The immediate past team lines up facing the current team for the signing of the Senses (taken from RCIA.) Any past team member may fill in if more signers are needed. Signers need to have participated on past teams.

- **Passing on of the Light of Christ**

Ask current team to come forward and surround the altar then have past team members (this can be 5-10) come to the altar and light Agape Gift candles from Christ candle with lighting sticks or lighters and pass to the current team members.

- **Blessing of the Team**

Family members and JOURNEY community are invited to come forward to surrounding the team at altar. Father or Spiritual Guide concludes with prayer SPECIFICALLY invoking the name of the Holy Spirit upon the team.

- **Song of Blessing /Concluding Song: Go Light Your World**

Tradition to sing “Go Light Your World” as the team processes out with their candles, or other appropriate song.

There is no social time following Agape, as team members need to spend time with their families, and get a good night’s rest before the weekend begins. The Agape Services should not be lengthy for the same reason. REMEMBER Agape Service is about the current team and the retreatants that God is calling for the weekend, about passing on the gift of renewal to more in

the parish. Please have those that reflect on Scripture keep that focus and **keep the reflections short – entire service to be less than an hour.**

## *Team Prayer Service*

*(Adapted from Prayer Seeds by Sr. Joyce Rupp)*

- **Opening Song**

- **Welcome and Introduction – Journey Leader**

Opening statements about forming together as a team to give the weekend to a group of men/women longing to deepen their spiritual journey with Jesus.

Life often swings us between the rhythm of giving and receiving. Many times “giving” maintains a strong hold on us and “receiving” shrinks significantly when we are involved in service. As we enter into serving the retreatants on their spiritual journey this weekend, think for a moment about what you most want to share with others? What do you desire to receive? As we join in prayer this evening, let these questions be uppermost in our minds and hearts.

- **Reading 1 – Luke 6:38 – Team Member**

Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.

- **Reading 2 – 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 – Team Liturgist**

Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work.

- **Reflection on giving and receiving – Priest/Deacon/or Spiritual Guide**

- **Litany on Commitment to Give/Receive – Spiritual Guide**

Response: I give generously, I receive gratefully.

When I am asked to go the extra mile and then some ...  
When I listen to a retreatant with my full attention ...  
When I open my mind to set aside judgment and bias ...  
When I turn toward a difficult person I prefer to ignore ...  
When I accept another's help even if I can do it myself ...  
When I allow myself to be vulnerable instead of being strong ...  
When I listen to affirmation about the worth of my ministry ...  
When I sit before you, face to face ...

Jesus, we turn to you, our model and mentor of giving and receiving. We recall how you poured yourself out in service to those who crowded around you. We bear in mind, too, how you withdrew to the mountainsides to pray and restore what was depleted in your body and spirit. Grant us, O Lord, the wisdom, inspiration, and discipline to cultivate a healthy balance between generous service to others and compassionate care of ourselves. Amen.

- **Ministry Blessing – Priest/Deacon/or Spiritual Guide**

May you look for Christ’s presence within your ministry, especially in those persons that seem least likely to reveal this unshakable Love.

May you give generously and patiently of your time, energy, and talents when they are needed, and receive graciously the assistance that others offer you.

May you listen with a generous heart and mind to those who bring their sorrows and joys to you.

May you be clothed in the calmness of Jesus and the strength of his kindness, so that anxiety and fear do not overcome you.

May the love that overflows from your heart to others be returned to you a hundredfold from those who receive the blessing of your ministry.

May you walk faith-filled and confident through the emerging undertakings and surprising developments that come your way.

May you remember that your ministry finds its source in the One whose “power working through you can do more than you could ask or imagine” (Eph 3:21).

- **Final Blessing**

PRIEST OR DEACON BLESSING: May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

SPIRITUAL GUIDE BLESSING: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen

- **Closing Song**

### *Additional Materials*

Background for the Continuation Committee

Continuation Committee Structure – Example

Continuation Committee Training Outline

Agape Sample Program