A *New Evangelization* Resource Booklet

THE
LIVE CHRIST, SHARE CHRIST
MOVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The holy Roman Catholic Church has sounded the call to the New Evangelization.[1] This is an urgent call of the highest importance, given the dire urgency of the times. A tsunami of evil is overwhelming the whole world. The assault on faith, family and life is in full force. When the Lord Jesus returns, will he find faith on earth?

While things seem hopeless, and we seem helpless in stemming the onslaught, there is always hope. Where sin abounds, grace abounds even more. Jesus has already won the victory. As we hurtle to the end of time, we already know how it all ends.

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[1] For greater understanding of the universal call to the New Evangelization, read "The New Evangelization—A Work of the Divine Family" by Frank Padilla.

In the meantime, the world and the Church suffer. In the meantime, souls will still be lost. We cannot just wait for the return of our victorious Lord, but we must engage, here and now, in the spiritual war that rages.

This is the call to the New Evangelization.

Throughout salvation history, God has called individuals, peoples and nations. The Almighty God has deemed it right to work with His creatures, to give them the privilege of being agents not only of their own salvation but also that of others. Oftentimes God calls and uses those who are the least and the last, even the lost. This is the mystery of election. God called Israel, the smallest of all nations (Dt 7:7), Jeremiah, who was too young and knew not how to speak (Jer 1:6), Gideon, who was the most insignificant in his family which was the meanest in Manasseh (Jgs 6:15), Saul, who persecuted Christians.

In doing so, God manifests that our effectiveness is entirely up to Him. We are mere instruments. We in fact often get in His way. God does His work in spite of us. But this is cause for great joy. We who are nothing can be something in God's hands. We who are weak can be strong in the power of His Spirit.

Our part is to respond to God's call, and then to give our all. The fruit is up to God.

This booklet is about a lay response to the call to the New Evangelization by both Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. It focuses on reaching out to those Catholics whose faith-life has been eroded, to those who have drifted from the Faith and the Church, to those who have succumbed to the culture of a materialistic world. Its focus is on re-evangelizing nominal, cultural or lapsed Catholics. Its goal is to bring Catholics back to Christ and to an active life in the parish.

This then is the ***Live Christ, Share Christ*** (LCSC) Movement. It is intended for Catholics to meet Christ, to live Christ and to share Christ. It is designed for rapid and massive evangelization, accompanied by the systematic empowerment of laypeople to participate in the work.

It is hoped that through this lay movement, the Church will be able to mainstream Catholic lay evangelization, bring as many Catholics as possible to vibrant faith in Jesus Christ, and prepare the bride of Christ for the coming of the Bridegroom.

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THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

The New Evangelization is a return to missionary principles that characterized the apostolic Church established on the day of Pentecost. During those first centuries, the Church grew tremendously, eventually conquering the mighty Roman empire. Today the whole world is one-third Christian.[2]

The New Evangelization is a process by which people meet Christ, live Christ and share Christ. People must meet and enter into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Then they live out their faith, manifested in lives of holiness, discipleship and striving for

[2] Though many are nominal Christians, not really living out the authentic faith.

Christian perfection. Finally, they participate in the work of evangelization, proclaiming the salvation Jesus won on the cross for all.

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THE LOST SHEEP

We are familiar with the parable of the lost sheep (Lk 15:4-7). A man lost one sheep and so left the 99 in the desert to look for the one. Finding it, he rejoices and celebrates with a party. Jesus then says, “there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.”

This is followed by the parable of the lost coin (Lk 15:8-10). When the woman finds the lost coin, she throws a party. Jesus then says, “there will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Actually, if it were the case in the world that there is only one sinner among 99 righteous people, then *that* would be cause for tremendous rejoicing in heaven. Unfortunately that is not the case. In fact, it is the opposite! Among the people of God, only 1% are righteous people who have no need of repentance. Though it is true that all of us are sinners who fall short of the glory of God, the 1% may be said to be basically in right relationship with God. They are those who are living Christ.

What is the situation of Catholics today? Though there are no statistics to support this, it would not be far from the truth to view the situation of Catholics today as follows:

50% are nominal and secular, many of them in serious sin. They are living in the world and outside the life of the Church. They are not Christians at all.

25% are fairly good people, but their faith is something separate from their secular lives. They have compartmentalized their life as to spiritual and secular. They may go to Mass every now and then, but the rest of the week are doing things that may not be pleasing to God.

15% are regular churchgoers, but still live according to their own personal priorities, agenda and desires. They do not live out the two greatest commandments (which sum up the whole prophets and the law). They have not turned their lives over completely to Jesus for him to run as he pleases.

9% are good Christians, basically transformed in Christ, but are not actively striving for holiness, living out discipleship, or doing evangelization. As such, they still fall short of the fullness of what it means to be a true Christian.

1% are true Christians who have no need of repentance (again, everyone is a sinner and still needs to repent, even of venial sin). Their lives belong to Jesus. They live righteous lives. They are those who live Christ and share Christ.

Evangelization is about seeking the one lost sheep that has strayed from the sheepfold. The New Evangelization is about seeking the 99, even as these are already within the sheepfold. It is actually re-evangelization. It is going after those who are just nominally Christian and have lost the way. It is bringing them back to the sheepfold, the Church of which they should rightfully be a part. Evangelization is for pagans, and the New Evangelization is for baptized pagans.

The New Evangelization is not just about those Christians who can be considered pagans, that is, who have no place at all for Jesus in their lives. It is about those who are not living out the fullness of their calling as Christ's followers. It is not only about those who commit sin, but also about those who omit the fullness of grace. It is not only about those who have gone astray and veered away from the right path, but also for those who are still walking along the right path, but not walking fast enough!

The New Evangelization is not only about expanding the sheepfold, but cleaning it up. It is about realizing that the enemy is not only out there, but also already within. It is not just about maintaining the life of the sheep, but ensuring that the sheep are healthy and strong.

For a very long time, the 99 have not been given adequate attention, simply because they could still be counted as among the sheep (whether they were within or outside of the sheepfold). Thus they have deteriorated in their spiritual health. In fact, wolves have already infiltrated the sheepfold, covered in sheep's clothing. The flock continues to weaken and be threatened.

Now there is the call to the New Evangelization. It is a call to meet Christ, live Christ and share Christ. It is what the Chief Shepherd had always intended his flock to do.

There will always be great sinners in the world, until the Lord returns in glory. But let it be the one and not the 99. Then there surely will be the greatest rejoicing in heaven.

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GREATER THAN SOLOMON AND JONAH

"This generation is an evil generation" (Lk 11:29b). These words of Jesus are very appropriate for today's generation. There is unprecedented evil in the world. We see the holocaust of the unborn, the incessant assault on marriage and family, the attacks on faith and on our Catholic Church, the rampaging of the culture of death upon the whole face of the earth.

What is the solution? It is massive evangelization. People need to meet Christ, live Christ and share Christ. Now more than ever this is greatly possible. The word of God has been preached since before Jesus, then by Jesus, and now by us in the name of Jesus. But today we have resources unknown in ancient days. And so today there is the call to the New Evangelization.

Jonah was used by God to effectively preach repentance to the Ninevites. Then the Son of Man came and it became God Himself preaching repentance. Then Jesus sent us his Spirit in order that we might preach repentance. First it was God with Jonah, then

God the Father and God the Son in Jesus, now finally the Trinity in and through us. That is a much greater force for evangelization.

Further, the queen of the south "came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon" (Lk 11:31b), a wisdom that was a gift from God. Then with Jesus, he himself is Wisdom personified. Now we have the Spirit of truth who guides us to all truth, who takes what is from Jesus and the Father (Jn 16:13-15). Today indeed "there is something greater than Solomon here." (Lk 11:31c).

Still further, "at the preaching of Jonah they repented" (Lk 11:32b). But Jonah was an inexperienced and reluctant preacher. At heart he did not even want the Ninevites to repent. When he was successful in his mission, he was displeased, angry and even wanted to die. Jonah preached God's message, then Jesus himself became the message, and now we are equipped with God's own Spirit to proclaim salvation in Jesus. We have the Bible, the Church, the catechism, and bountiful resources to support the work of evangelization. Today indeed "there is something greater than Jonah here." (Lk 11:32c).

God has provided everything we need for the New Evangelization. There are greater resources--electronic copies of the Bible, Internet links to Catholic teachings and writings, the accumulated wisdom of the Church through the ages. There are greater means--jet travel to any part of the world, social media that can reach millions in an instant, financial resources, networking among Church groups.

God used a reluctant prophet. Think what God can do with eager, zealous and committed evangelizers. God gave Solomon wisdom. Think what God can do with one who is similarly gifted with wisdom, which is a free gift of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:8a). God touched the hearts of the Ninevites with one proclamation. Think what God can do to bring the nations of the world to repentance, if only we too proclaim the gospel to them.

The call to the New Evangelization has been sounded. Let us respond.

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MAJOR ASPECTS

While there are many things that should be looked at in order to strengthen the Church and prepare her for the ongoing struggles of this third millennium, we should focus on the most important fundamentals. These are the following:

(1) Re-evangelization. Living transformed lives in Christ.
(2) Family renewal. Strengthening the nuclear family, with special emphasis on the youth.
(3) Defending the culture of life. Engaging in pro-life advocacy.
(4) Building the Church of the Poor. Working at social justice.

Re-evangelization is crucial. Nothing much else can be done unless our people are renewed in Christ and living in the power of the Holy Spirit.[3] This is for both laity and

[3] For the lapsed or nominal Catholics, they have to be brought back to the Church first.

clergy alike. To be God's light in and to the world, we must grow in the very holiness of God.

Family renewal is crucial. The family is the basic unit of society, and as Pope John Paul II has said, the future of humanity passes by way of the family. The enemy, knowing this, seeks to destroy the family. The family is the most basic ecclesial community and is the mission base for doing evangelistic work outside the home.[4]

Defending the culture of life is crucial.[5] This is the fight of the third millennium. The evil forces are concentrated on promoting the culture of death, and are committed to spread its errors throughout the whole world. The US government is leading the charge, with a strong commitment to having abortion as a universal human right.

Working against poverty and social injustice is crucial. The very mission of Jesus is to bring good news to the poor—spiritual, material, emotional, societal. Building the Church of the Poor is the only way true peace and even prosperity in the land can be achieved.

Re-evangelization

There should be a program that is effective in bringing people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The program should be replicable throughout the parishes, to be conducted by laypeople under the guidance and oversight of the clergy. The program should provide for an ongoing support environment, so that the initial transformation in Christ will deepen.

It should be a program that has proven effective in bringing people to Christ in every situation and with people of different backgrounds. Such a program is the Life in Christ Seminar (LCS). This consists of 9 different sessions. With simple training, mature parish leaders can handle this program. The LCS effectively leads people to accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord, and to look to living their lives in the power of the Holy Spirit. It promotes a charismatic spirituality, which is the spirituality of the early Church.

After the LCS, the graduates find their ongoing support group in the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) of the parish, as well as in the many different groups or associations within the parish. These groups or associations have many different formation programs, which can serve to deepen the faith of their members.[6]

Family renewal

While the program starts with individual renewal, since each individual needs to personally meet Christ and begin to experience transformation in Christ, it must move on to renewing marriage and family life. Family is crucial to the well-being of individuals

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[4] For deeper insight into the utmost importance of the family, read "Families in the Holy Spirit" by Frank Padilla.

[5] The culture of life is of course much wider than what we understand to be pro-life issues, such as abortion, contraception, divorce, same-sex unions, etc. It is about fullness of life as God intends. For a fuller treatment of this, read "Forty Days of Life" by Frank Padilla.

[6] An important aspect of formation is the Biblical apostolate, with a program such as the Liturgical Bible Study (LBS) that builds capability to proclaim/share the Good News to neighborhood groupings such as the BEC model of being Church.

and of the whole nation. Family is also the most basic educational institution for raising God-fearing men and women.

Crucial to the evangelization of the family is the role of the men. Traditionally many of those who are active in the Church are the women. But family renewal cannot happen unless the men assume their proper role as head of the home according to the plan of God.

Here there should be marriage enrichment seminars and retreats, as well as youth and family formation courses. Further, there should be smaller cell groups to which couples and other individuals can belong to,[7] where they relate to their peers and support each other in the Christian life.

The culture of life

There should be intensive pro-life formation. The different pro-life groups already have all the material. What is needed is to have a deliberate and sustained pro-life teaching and training, conducted by laypeople but supported and even pushed by the parish priests.

Pro-life groups should also form an effective coalition (not necessarily formal) where there is united effort whenever needed, where there is a sharing of resources, and where functions would not have to unnecessarily overlap.

Work with the poor

This should be a program that effectively works at poverty alleviation, while providing the poor with spiritual inputs. It should be concerted and replicable, and able to be done by parishioners on an ongoing basis.

One such program is the building of a Restoration Village, a holistic work of poverty alleviation that involves values formation, building homes, and providing soft programs for education, health, livelihood and environment. It builds physical communities among the poor, which communities would be perfect as Basic Ecclesial Communities.

Under the leadership of the parish priest, this work would involve all parishioners and all parish organizations. Funding will come not only from parishioners but also from the national and international organizations of the parish groups, from national *diasporas* that have formed associations abroad (connecting rural and regional associations with their own provinces and towns), and even from sister parishes in the First World.

This program, if supported by all the parishes, can rapidly work at poverty reduction, without necessarily straining the resources of particular individuals or groups. At the same time it strengthens the faith, the family and the culture of life.

How are these programs different from existing ones?

There are already many pastoral programs and activities in the Church. Do we need another one? It is precisely that there are many programs and activities, but still there is

[7] These can be the BECs, or other forms of small groups.

that downward direction, that we need another fresh approach, one that hopefully would truly be Spirit-inspired.

What distinguishes this approach from others? There would be a number of distinct elements:

* It would be a concerted effort of the whole Church, through the parishes, mandated by the hierarchy and pushed by the bishops, and strongly supported by parish priests.
* It would focus not on the “choir” but on the 82% that are not regular churchgoers.
* It would target the critical basic areas that are needed for revival, and those are re-evangelization, family renewal, defense of life, and work with the poor.
* It would mobilize the laity through means that enable massive implementation from the top down, all the way to each and every Catholic throughout the whole nation. This includes the culture of person-to-person evangelization.

What is needed is a concerted, deliberate, insistent, persistent, committed program of action, supported at the very top and by all the clergy.

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FOUNDATIONAL ASPECTS

There are five very important, if not crucial, foundational aspects of evangelistic spirituality to be considered, if this evangelization program will be effective, and result in revival in the Church.

For purposes of this paper, we do not include in this list other all-important aspects such as the Eucharist and the Bible, the critical importance of which is presupposed and accepted. By and large, these five aspects are those not emphasized in current official Church programs.

(1) Receiving the power of the Holy Spirit

This is what is known in charismatic renewal as “baptism in the Spirit.” It is intended for growth in holiness and worldwide evangelization. Jesus himself said, “But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8). It is the baptism in the Spirit that will enable us to become witnesses (to be so, we need to grow in holiness) and to be empowered to effectively proclaim the gospel to the whole world.

Baptism in the Spirit happens in the sacrament of Baptism, and then is reinforced in the sacrament of Confirmation. But many baptized and confirmed Catholics are not living Christian lives, not growing in holiness, not evangelizing. What is needed is a renewed infilling of the Spirit, that will result in a renewed outpouring of the Spirit. The Life in Christ Seminar (LCS) is designed to start that process.

Baptism in the Spirit confers spiritual gifts. There are two kinds—the sanctifying gifts and the charismatic gifts. The former help us grow in holiness. The latter help us serve

and do the work of evangelization. Both are crucial. There are seven sanctifying gifts (Isaiah 11:2-3a). There are 9 basic charismatic gifts (1 Cor 12:4-10). There are additional charismatic gifts (1 Cor 12:28, Rom 12:6-8, Eph 4:11, 1 Pt 4:9-11). In the Church the sanctifying gifts are often spoken of. The charismatic gifts are less so, or in may cases, not at all. But for the work of massive evangelization, the charismatic gifts are crucial.

Baptism in the Spirit results in a so-called charismatic spirituality. Such is very important for growing in holiness, for vibrant worship, for building community, for service to the Church, for zeal to evangelize.

Consider that the spirituality of the early Christians, reflected in their worship, was charismatic. Even our ancestors in the faith, as reflected in the book of Psalms, were charismatic in their worship. Consider that charismatics in the Catholic Church and Pentecostals in the other churches are the fastest growing segments of the Christian churches in the world.

No one of course is forced to become a "charismatic."[8] Other types of spirituality are valid and desirable in the Church. But the evidence in the experience of many Christians is that more are prone to grow in holiness and to become evangelizers if they experience charismatic spirituality.

(2) Growth in holiness

Holiness is hardly talked about, and certainly not emphasized—whether in homilies, teachings, even recollections and retreats. But holiness is the one key aspect that is necessary if a Christian is to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

Many Catholics are unrepentant sinners who need to repent. But it is not just a question of turning away from serious sin. It is not just being a good person. The call is to be like Christ, to be holy as God is holy (1 Pt 1:15-16), to be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect (Mt 5:48). The call is to deny self, take up one's cross, and follow Jesus (Mt 16:24). The call is to a life of integrity, of living the truth, of self-sacrificial love.

This is not about theology,[9] or catechism,[10] or fulfilling Church obligations,[11] which are of course all important, but it is a matter of knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection (Phil 3:10a). It is about having the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16). It is being filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18b). It is leaving all and living all for God.

(3) A covenant

Christians have a covenant with God, by which God reveals to us that He is our God and we are His people. If we live the life He has prescribed for us, we will experience peace and prosperity.

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[8] Every true Christian is a charismatic, that is, he has the gift of the Holy Spirit. Here we talk not of this reality but of a particular type of spirituality.
[9] There are in fact many dissident theologians.
[10] Head knowledge will have to be applied to day-to-day Christian living.
[11] Many Mass-goers do not live Christian lives the rest of the week.

It would be helpful to have an actual written covenant that we would voluntarily enter into that would describe important aspects of our relationship with God and commitments that we make to Him. Those who finish the LCS and wish to participate in the New Evangelization would then be like “card-carrying members.” We would have a concrete and constant reminder of God’s call to us. It will be a tool for growing in holiness.

The covenant is as follows:

Trusting in the Lord’s help and guidance:

1. I shall live as a follower of Christ.
   * Pray and read the Bible daily.
   * Strive for holiness and Christian perfection.
2. I shall be a committed and active member of my parish community.
   * Love and serve my parish.
   * Relate in love, loyalty and respect with all parishioners.
   * Actively participate in parish events.
   * Support the parish with my time and finances.
3. I shall be a witness to the world of God’s love.
   * Build a strong family for Christ.
   * Actively evangelize.
   * Live out and defend the culture of life.
   * Love and care for the poor.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, with the intercession of our blessed Mother Mary, help me to faithfully live this covenant, for His greater honor and glory and for the good of my brothers and sisters. Amen.

(4) Evangelization and mission

Most Catholics have no idea about being evangelizers or missionaries. But this is a fundamental call to all Christians. In fact, if we are aware of the Great Commission and do not do it, then we are committing a sin of omission. It is a serious matter, as the salvation won by Jesus on the cross can be experienced by people only through the work of proclaimers of the gospel (Rom 10:13-17).

The program of re-evangelization can only reach every Catholic in a rapid and massive way if those who are evangelized become evangelizers themselves. Everyone can participate because we promote person-to-person evangelization in the normal day-to-day environments of our lives. Without having to go out of our way, we reach out to those whom we interact with on a regular basis—relatives, friends, co-workers, schoolmates, neighbors, parishioners.

Becoming evangelizers also help move us into holiness, as we more and more think and speak about Christ, and deliberately amend our lives to become more effective witnesses.

(5) Lay empowerment

The laity need to be empowered. Whole nations cannot be re-evangelized unless the laity take their proper place and role in the mission of the Church. The laity comprise over 99.9% of the Church, and are the ones inserted in every nook and cranny of the nation.

The laity need to know their inherent dignity as Christians, and the attendant privileges and responsibilities. They participate in the life and mission of the Church not as a concession given by the Church hierarchy. They are not extensions of the parish priest, but of Jesus himself. They are co-responsible for the life and work of the Church.

In this decade of re-evangelization, much of the actual work will be done by the laity.[12] The clergy are already burdened with what they are doing, and so will just basically oversee and provide guidance to the work of the laity. For good order, the bishops, and through them the clergy, exercise overall responsibility and authority over the Church (each bishop in his diocese).

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THE LIVE CHRIST, SHARE CHRIST MOVEMENT

Our lay response to the call to the New Evangelization is the ***Live Christ, Share Christ*** (LCSC) Movement. It is mainly intended for nominal, cultural or lapsed Catholics to meet Christ, to live Christ, and to share Christ. However there is also much that can be offered for already active parishioners for their further growth in living Christ.

LCSC intends to do rapid and massive evangelization in the parishes. It is a work by, for and in the parish. It moves from the top down, ultimately reaching the grassroots, where the programs are brought to them. It is about acquiring a vision for the New Evangelization and having an opportunity to live that vision in a vibrant way. Those who are evangelized become evangelizers themselves. Those who are served later on serve others in the same ways.

LCSC is about mainstreaming Catholic lay evangelization.

LCSC does not compete with or replace any parish program, ministry or group. In fact, LCSC would enhance all such parish offerings. Its focus is raw evangelization, bringing parishioners back to Christ and to the Church. LCSC will not adversely affect existing services of parish leaders, as these services should go on.

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MEET, LIVE, SHARE CHRIST

The New Evangelization is about meeting, living and sharing Christ. This actually is what ought to happen to all Christians, to be worthy of being considered a Christian. But the sad reality is that most Christians have not met Christ, are not living in Christ, and do not share Christ.

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[12] If not for anything else, this would be due to sheer numbers.

What does it mean to meet Christ?

It is to have an encounter with Jesus. This perhaps would not be as radical as the encounter of Saul with Jesus on the road to Damascus. But it would be an encounter nonetheless with the risen Jesus. It is meeting the risen Lord. Jesus is alive.

It is not an intellectual knowledge of Jesus. He is not just the God who became man, suffered and died for us, and has returned to heaven. Now he is so far off. How could sinful man hope to connect with a divine Being?

Rather, Jesus is with us. He is our brother and friend. He walks with us. He guides us. He speaks to us in our hearts. We trust in him. We know that he only wants the best for us.

We meet Christ in prayer. Daily prayer. As friends we set aside time to be with him, so that we can grow in our personal relationship. Jesus becomes an intimate part of our lives. We desire to live for him and for him alone.

What does it mean to live Christ?

Once we have met Jesus, we need to grow in our relationship with him. We need to be transformed in Christ. We enter more deeply into our life in him. We need to be changed, as we are restored to the image and likeness of God in which we were created. We become worthy children of the Father. We become true temples of the Holy Spirit.

God provides us the tools to grow in Christ. Aside from prayer, we have the Bible and Christian formation. We have the privilege of doing Christian service, by which we grow in loving our neighbor. We have the support of the Christian community. We have the sacraments, especially the Eucharist.

Living Christ is living a life of holiness. We are not just to avoid sin and be good people. We are to be holy people. We are to be holy in every aspect of our conduct, to be holy because God is holy (1 Pt 1:15-16). We have been set apart. We live in the world but are not of it. We walk along God's righteous path.

Living Christ is being a true disciple. Jesus defined discipleship: we are to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him (Mt 16:24). Against the world's self-concern and lust for pleasure, we are not to have ourselves at the center of our earthly existence. Jesus is at the center. Against the world's seeking for comfort and convenience, we are to embrace the hardships and suffering that come with authentic Christian living. This was the very way of Jesus.

To live Christ is to be another Christ.

What does it mean to share Christ?

If we met Christ and started to live Christ, but kept that wonderful experience all to ourselves, we would be the most selfish of people. The gift we have received we are to give as a gift. Love is all about sharing. And what, or who, we share is Jesus himself.

To share Christ is to evangelize others, to proclaim the good news of salvation in Jesus to others, so that they too might meet him. Every Christian is supposed to be an evangelizer. The Church herself is a missionary community. To evangelize is to obey Jesus' final instructions before he ascended into heaven.

This is not just the task of bishops, priests and nuns, or a few lay servant leaders. It is the task of all, especially the laity, since they represent over 99.9% of the Church. It is

the lay people who are out there in the world, in contact with everyone else, especially those who are not churchgoers.

If a Christian is one who has met Christ, is living Christ, and is sharing Christ, then you can see that most so-called Christians today do not qualify. Most probably including yourself.

This is why there are many nominal and lapsed Christians. This is why there is so much evil in the world, perpetrated by such Christians (among others). This is why, 2,000 years after Jesus defeated the enemy and won for us our salvation, many are still dying in their sins, and darkness still hovers over the whole world. Here then is the urgency of the work.

So we see why there is a need for a New Evangelization. It is not a new message. It is not a new calling. It is not a new way of life as intended by God.

Rather, it is a living out of what God had intended from the very beginning. It is a life centered and founded on Jesus, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is about being a true Christian.

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LCSC AND THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

LCSC will bring about 3 major aspects that will be crucial for the New Evangelization.

(1) Mainstreaming Catholic lay evangelization.

The harvest is rich but the laborers are few. These laborers can only come from the laity, the sleeping giant of the Church. But the majority of Catholics are nominal or lapsed. Many of those who are not nominal are not cognizant of their right and duty to participate in the work of evangelization. The hierarchy looks to the laity as workers, but is unable to mobilize the greater majority.

It might even be said that generally, the predominant thinking is that the hierarchy takes care of the spiritual while the laity takes care of the social. We know that the laity has full dignity as baptized persons to participate in the life and mission of the Church, but in practice this participation is limited and unappreciated, or perhaps is seen as an unknown equation.

LCSC will do systematic, sustained, deliberate, committed, unrelenting re-evangelization. Its goal is to ultimately bring every Catholic into a vibrant relationship with Jesus and live a Spirit-empowered life of holiness and discipleship.

(2) Integrating the domestic church, the local church, the particular church and the universal Church, that is, the family, the parish, the diocese and the worldwide Church.

LCSC strengthens the family, the basic unit of society and of the Church. At the same time, it looks to the local church as a family of families, and situates its work within

the parish. It seeks to eliminate the tension between autonomous trans-parochial associations and the parish.

LCSC is localized, but is also missionary, which is a fundamental characteristic of the Church. With parishes as bases, it seeks to do rapid, massive and worldwide evangelization. Its vision is both micro and macro, neatly integrating the two. It is parish-based without having a parochial mentality.

(3) Merging the spirituality and experience of the new ecclesial movement with the institutional Church, thus harmonizing the charismatic and the institutional/hierarchical.

For some years now, both popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI have encouraged the acceptance by bishops and priests of new ecclesial movements, the new reality raised by the Holy Spirit for the life and work of the Church for this third millennium. However, there is still a lot of strain, tension, misunderstanding, searching for a *modus vivendi,* and working at cross purposes. LCSC hopefully can bridge the gap.

LCSC safeguards lay charism while being closely supervised by the hierarchy. As a lay movement based in the parish, the Church herself takes ownership, but leaves it up to the laity to step up to the plate in the fullness of her life and mission. LCSC works within the structures and strictures of the parish, but continues to be led by the Holy Spirit.

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LIFE IN CHRIST SEMINAR

LCSC's banner program is the Life in Christ Seminar (LCS). The LCS is an integrated course intended to lead seminar participants into a renewed understanding of God's call to them as Catholics. It comprises a total of 9 separate sessions. The sessions have basic ingredients: prayers, a teaching, a group discussion.

The LCS has one basic purpose: bringing participants to a personal relationship with Jesus, and getting them started on living a truly Spirit-filled Christian life. It is about transformation in Christ and renewal in the Spirit. It is about bringing nominal or lapsed Catholics back to God and back to the Church.

What is the content of the LCS?

The LCS is divided into 3 modules of 3 sessions each. The topics of the 9 sessions are as follows:

Module #1: MEETING CHRIST

1) The Love of God
2) The Grace of Jesus
3) The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Module #2: LIVING CHRIST

4) Repentance and Faith
5) Loving God
6) Loving Neighbor

Module #3: SHARING CHRIST

7) Empowered by the Spirit
8) Growing in the Spirit
9) The Live Christ, Share Christ Movement

What is each module and talk about?

The first module, entitled "Meeting Christ," is about meeting and knowing God. The foundation of our relationship with God is His love for us, manifested in sending His very own Son Jesus to suffer and die for us. Jesus the Son is our Savior and Lord. As he has ascended to heaven, he sent his Spirit to be our guide and to empower us to proclaim the good news of salvation in him.

The Love of God speaks about God's wanting to bring us out of the confusion and disorder that is being experienced in the modern world, and to bring us all back to Himself, to restore our fellowship and intimacy with Him. There is something seriously wrong with the situation in the world today, and behind most of the disorder and evil is Satan. Only God can bring us out of this, and He has done it by sending His own Son Jesus into the world to suffer and die for us. In Jesus we have our salvation.

The Grace of Jesus is about the second Person of the Trinity, the God who became man. Jesus is not just a great man or a great religious leader, but he is actually God. As Jesus himself claimed to be God, he is either a liar, a lunatic or indeed the Lord.

The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit is about the third Person of the Trinity, who was sent by Jesus to empower us to live our lives according to God's plan. The Holy Spirit provides the power from above that enables us to live a normal Christian life. True Christian living is not just a matter of human willpower but a new heart, a new life from God. The Holy Spirit enables us to experience God, a living relationship with Him, and His action in our lives. With the Holy Spirit, we again experience union with God and gain a new nature, spiritual power, and the power to serve.

Having met Christ, we need to live our life in him. The second module, entitled "Living Christ," is about living the like that God intends for all who profess to follow Jesus. It starts with our turning away from our old lives. Then we need to live the way of God, summed up in the two greatest commandments of love of God and love of neighbor.

Repentance and Faith is the proper response of one who has known God's love, who accepts Jesus as Lord, and who desires to live a life in the Spirit. Repentance and faith is a double-action response that goes together. Repentance involves a turning away from sin, wrongdoing and running our own lives, and a turning to a life of obedience to God. Faith, in turn, is belief in Jesus as our personal Savior.

Loving God is the first and greatest commandment. This talk explains in detail what it really means to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. To truly love God is a high ideal, and Jesus himself is our model.

Loving Neighbor, together with loving God, forms the core of the Christian life. The talk contrasts God's love with the world's idea of love. Love is not only having positive feelings, not always saying "yes," not defensive, not self-seeking or manipulative. Rather, Christian love is connected with keeping God's commandments and means a self-sacrificial love, best exemplified by Jesus himself. On the practical level, Christian love means committed service to our fellow men.

An important part of living Christ is to share Christ, that is, to proclaim the good news of salvation in Jesus to others. True disciples of Jesus ought to become evangelizers. The third and final module, entitled "Sharing Christ," helps participants to become a part of the evangelizing mission of the Church.

Empowered by the Spirit is essentially a prayer session where the participants are prayed with for a renewed infilling of the Holy Spirit in their lives, to enable them to manifest a renewed outpouring of the same Spirit for the life of the world. This is the "baptism in the Holy Spirit." This is essential to become true witnesses to Christ and to be able to boldly proclaim the gospel. This introduces participants to evangelistic spirituality.

Growing in the Spirit teaches the five tools to growing in the Christian life. These are prayer, study, service, fellowship and the sacraments. This paves the way for people to become witnesses who can credibly share the gospel.

The Live Christ, Share Christ Movement brings everything together in a parish-based movement committed to bring Catholics back to God and to the Church, through the ongoing process of meeting Christ, living Christ, and sharing Christ. As the LCS is just the start of our life-long walk with Jesus, we look to ongoing transformation in Christ. Though the LCS has come to an end, the new life in Christ is just beginning. In order to grow, much more is needed—learning more about the Christian life, the strength and support of others, having an environment where one can serve God, being leaven in the parish, proclaiming the good news to others. The participants are invited to continue their journey, and they make a commitment to the Live Christ, Share Christ movement through a covenant.

The LCS can be mounted in different ways, such as:

(1) Over one week-end;
(2) Over 3 weeks, with one module of 3 sessions per week;
(3) Over 9 weeks, with one session per week.

Everyone goes through the LCS, hopefully including the clergy. For the clergy this is desirable for the following reasons:

* So that every Catholic will be on the same page on this common journey of faith and renewal;
* So the clergy, especially the parish priests, can be fully knowledgeable about the LCS and thus be able to better promote and support it; and
* So that their own spirituality can be further enhanced.

The LCS is first mounted for lay leaders already involved in the dioceses/parishes and in the various religious groups and lay movements. This is so that they can

understand the methodology and then be trained to mount the same program for parishioners down the line.

From the initial batches, participation in the LCS is fueled by the person-to-person evangelization of those who have already gone through it. This is actually important for the evangelizers themselves because such a lifestyle of evangelization goes a long way to deepening one's spirituality. Further, it is the only way to eventually reach everyone.[13]

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PROGRAMS

After the Life in Christ Seminar (LCS), for continuing support and formation, there will be a **monthly prayer assembly** in the parish. In this activity there will be worship, personal testimonies, teachings and fellowship.

Further, LCS graduates are integrated into the structure of the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) of the parish. Here they also meet at least once a month.

The LCS graduates are expected to enter into an active life in the parish. As such, the richness of parish programs, ministries, groups and services are available to them. For those who desire greater growth, they are encouraged to join any of these support structures.

In case the parish support structures are inadequate, or upon request by the parish priest, LCSC can also make available its formation programs and other offerings. Among others:[14]

* For married couples -- Marriage Enrichment Retreat
* For youth -- Youth Camps and various youth formation modules, including the LivePure movement for youth chastity
* For Bible appreciation -- Liturgical Bible Study
* For pro-life – NFP and other pro-life modules
* For work with the poor -- Church of the Poor Retreat
* For servant leadership -- various leadership modules

4 basic pillars

In particular, LCSC would like to present 4 basic pillars that can supplement its work in the parish. These are: (1) Live Pure, (2) Live the Word, (3) Live Life, and (4) Live Full.

<u>Live Pure</u>

We proclaim the gospel of PURITY.

"Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure, as he is pure." (1 Jn 3:3)

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[13] Especially the lapsed or nominal Catholics who cannot be reached by the parish priest or by parish groups.

[14] This is not an exhaustive list.

The challenge: The culture of death will more and more bring young people into sexual licentiousness. The next generation is seriously under threat. How can we protect and empower our young people to live for Christ?

Live Pure is a movement for chastity for the youth. Young people are helped to strive for purity of mind, eyes, speech and body, as they live out the values of human dignity, relationships, waiting and love.

Live the Word

We proclaim the gospel of PERFECTION.

"So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt 5:48)

"All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work." (2 Tm 3:16-17)

The challenge: Catholics are very weak on knowing and using the Bible, the very word of God. But ignorance of the scriptures is ignorance of Christ. How can Catholics grow to Christian perfection without the Bible?

Live the Word is a program that promotes the Liturgical Bible Study method of appreciating and studying the scriptures. It is a practical method of doing Bible study in small groups, as well as in the family setting.

Live Life

We proclaim the gospel of PROSPERITY.[15]

"Here, then, I have today set before you life and prosperity" (Dt 30:15a)

"Then the Lord, your God, will generously increase your undertakings, the fruit of your womb, the offspring of your livestock, and the produce of your soil; for the Lord, your God, will again take delight in your prosperity" (Dt 30:9)

The challenge: Life and prosperity go with having a covenant with God. On the other hand, the culture of death brings with it economic woes, hitting the poor the hardest. How can we defend and promote the culture of life, thereby ensuring the prosperity that God desires for His people?

Live Life is advocacy for faith, family and life. It staunchly opposes reproductive health forces that promote a culture of death.

Live Full

We proclaim the gospel of POVERTY.

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[15] This does not refer to the “prosperity gospel” or the “health-wealth gospel,” which says that it is always God’s will for all Christians to be perfectly healthy and wealthy. The basic message is that if you give money, God is obligated to bless you with health and wealth. If you give money but are not blessed as such, then you either did not give enough or you did not have enough faith. The gospel of prosperity here refers to God’s promise that those who choose life will prosper.

"Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied." (Lk 6:20b-21a)

The challenge: Most of the people of the world are poor, and living beneath their dignity as children of God. But there are enough resources in the world to satisfy the needs of all. How can Christians share what they have so that there is no one in need, so that all may be fulfilled (full-filled)?

Live Full is about building the Church of the Poor. As the icon of poverty is hunger, then the opposite is a full stomach. More than that, this work looks to building parish-based communities through holistic development, providing shelter, health, education, livelihood and values formation. In the model of the first Christian community, the haves share with the have-nots, thus also sharing in the blessing. "Those who give alms will enjoy a full life." (Tb 12:9b).

The dynamics of the program for the poor

There are many ways to serve the poor. Many of these ways are already happening in the parish, and of course should continue. Especially for the developing nations where poverty is widespread, LCSC proposes a bolder program of building physical communities among the poor. It is the construction of Restoration Villages,[16] which is a holistic approach to address all the important needs of the poor—shelter, health, education, livelihood and values formation.

This program gives parishioners a live situation where they can truly care for the needs of the parish's poor on an ongoing way. It is building the Church of the Poor—both physically and spiritually.

The Restoration Villages will become vibrant models for Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC).

The program starts with parish acceptance, first by the parish priest and then by his parish leaders, especially the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC).

Next is to solicit a piece of land, good for perhaps 30 to 100 homes, with each home lot perhaps 50 square meters.[17] This is not difficult in the rural areas, where we can usually find a land-owning Catholic willing to make such a donation.[18] There should also be space for a multi-purpose hall cum chapel, a pre-school, a courtyard, and perhaps space for agricultural purposes, such as vegetable patches, etc.

LCSC then trains the parish team.

Beneficiaries are selected, and given values formation. The different parish groups can be allocated a certain number of beneficiaries,[19] for whom they will find the funds for the house,[20] and help build the house.[21]

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[16] The name is appropriate, to signify the restoration of the dignity of the poor through decent housing and community living.

[17] The house itself is 20 to 25 square meters.

[18] If this comes from a larger parcel of land of the donor, then it does not need to be a big financial sacrifice, as the nice development of the Restoration Village will enhance the value of the rest of the donor's property.

[19] They can choose from among their own poor, homeless members.

[20] The groups can tap on to their national and even international organizations.

The support programs of health, education and livelihood follow.[22] In these, the expertise and resources of the different parish groups will be tapped—doctors, nurses, nutritionists, teachers, catechists, trainors, etc.

For the developed nations, LCSC can arrange for their parishes to adopt RVs in parishes in the developing world. These parishes can provide funding. They can also send their parishioners to have a Third World experience of actually building RVs for their poor brethren in other nations.

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LOGO

There are 4 basic elements in the LCSC logo--the cross, the dove, the host and the star.

<u>The Cross</u>

Our task is to proclaim Christ and the salvation he won on the cross. This is the LCSC basic mission of evangelization. Our desire is for all Catholics to know Christ, to live Christ and to share Christ.

Christ and his cross are at the very center of our lives and our mission. We live for Christ and we die for Christ (Phil 1:21).

The color is red, signifying the precious blood shed by Jesus on the cross, and also the call to us to lay down our very lives for the cause of Christ. It is a call to self-sacrificial love and martyrdom.

<u>The Dove</u>

The dove represents the Holy Spirit. We are a people who live a life in the Spirit, and who are empowered for mission by the Spirit (Acts 1:8).

The color is gold. Through the fire of the Holy Spirit, we are purified (Sir 2:5). We are to be sacrificial offerings to God (Wis 3:6). We look forward to wearing crowns of gold in heaven (Rev 4:4).

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[21] The *bayanihan* style will help bond rich and poor in the parish.
[22] These can of course also be simultaneous if warranted.

The Host

The host represents the Eucharist, which is central to our Roman Catholic faith. LCSC is about mainstreaming Catholic lay evangelization.

The white color points to the purity of our lives. We are called to a life of holiness (1 Pt 1:15-16). In fact, we are to be perfect just as the heavenly Father is perfect (Mt 5:48).

The Star

The star represents Mary, who is the Star of Evangelization. She is crucial to our work of evangelization and mission, being there through salvation history, from Genesis (Gen 3:15) to Revelation (Rev 12:1-7).

The star is also a stylized figure of a person leaping and dancing with joy, with Christ in his/her heart and anointed by the Holy Spirit. We reflect the joy of Mary in our life and our mission (Lk 1:47-49).

The blue color signifies our consecration as a people to Mary.

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BOOK RESOURCES

The New Evangelization requires continued growth in Christ. There are many resources and materials available--in books, magazines, DVDs, the Internet. One does not just rely on formation courses in LCSC or the parish, but can secure these materials and move deeper into a life in Christ at his own pace.

LCSC recommends the following books. They help Christians understand and move forward in a vibrant Spirit-empowered life in Christ. They are very much scripture-based.

Personal spirituality

A Future Full of Hope
Amazing Truths that will Change your Life
Focused on Christ
Following Christ
Showing His Power and Majesty
Worship

Evangelization

BE.LI.EV.E!
Fishers of Men
Forty Days of Wonder-Working Faith
Renewing the Face of the Earth
The New Evangelization--A Work of the Divine Family

Family Life

Families in the Holy Spirit
Females are Fabulous
Forty Days of Life

Building the Church of the Poor
Bringing Glad Tidings to the Poor
Forty Days with the Poor
Freeing the Captives

On Leadership
Servant Leadership

On Mary
Forty Days with Mary
Forty More Days with Mary
Mary in the Work of Evangelization and Family Renewal

Published by Restoration Movement for Family and Life Ministries Inc. Available at FFL Shoppe, Apartelle 12, Starmall Complex, Shaw Boulevard corner EDSA, Mandaluyong City, Philippines. Telefax: (632) 722-0293. Email: cfcfflshoppe@yahoo.com.

For inquiries and more information
Email: fapcfc@gmail.com
Website: www.livechristsharechrist.net

For inquiries and more information about the Live Christ Share Christ (LCSC) Movement and how your parish can get started,

For the Greater New York Area, Contact:

Efren London	*Cell 516.375.1984*	*ef.cfcfflny@yahoo.com*
Pepe Ruffy	*Cell 917.373.2931*	*yosephus7595@aol.com*
Jerry Fordan	*Cell 631.943.8483*	*jojasjer@aol.com*
Ernie Gimeno	*Cell 516.312.5681*	*egimeno@aol.com*
Carlos Cruz Jr.	*Cell 646.245.3586*	*cfcsiny@gmail.com*