



CHRISTLIFE™

CATHOLIC MINISTRY FOR EVANGELIZATION

SUMMER 2010

Dear Friend,

In the Acts of the Apostles, Paul asked some Christians, “*Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?*” (19:2) He apparently observed something that led him to ask this question.

Now for those of us who have been baptized into Christ, our answer to this question is, “yes, we have received the Holy Spirit.” However, it is easy to imagine how the Apostle would ask many Christians now a days that same question and they also could easily respond, “no, we didn’t even know there is a Holy Spirit.” (Acts 19:2b). The reality is that many Catholics today don’t know *experientially* that the Holy Spirit is the one who empowers us to live a Christian life (Jn 1:12).

Before Jesus ascended he insisted that his disciples wait till they received power from on high. He told them that they were to be baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4,5). Just as he was anointed with the Holy Spirit for his mission as Messiah, he told his disciples they too would be anointed to carry on the mission. For it’s the Spirit who reveals Jesus as Lord and that we are personally loved by the Father (Rom 5:5; 8:5). As a result we are empowered to live in relationship with God and to tell others this wonderful news!

“Let us rediscover, dear brothers and sisters, the beauty of being baptized in the Holy Spirit; let us be aware again of our baptism and of our confirmation, sources of grace that are always present.”

— Pope Benedict XVI
Pentecost Sunday, 2008

for ourselves but for him who for our sake died and was raised.” (2 Cor. 5: 15) Here are a couple examples of the life-changing good news of God’s love from participants of *Discovering Christ*:

“I am not a Catholic, not baptized and never had any religion in my life. This course helped me to open my heart to Jesus and ask him for forgiveness, strength and courage...I truly know that he is there for us and all we have to do is ask.”

“I realized in a more profound way that God loves me so very much and I am able to finally forgive myself for years of sin and distance from my God.”

We are humbled and filled with joy and gratitude as we see people’s lives being transformed by the Holy Spirit – as they surrender to Jesus as leader and Savior (Acts 5:31) in the context of our ChristLife process.

Please continue to help us spread the good news!

Come Holy Spirit enkindle within us the fire of your love! Your brother,

Dave Nodar



Meeting with Archbishop O'Brien

By Pete Ascosi

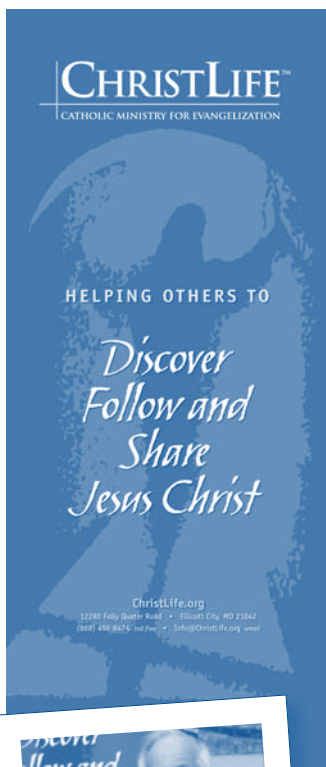
It was really a great privilege to meet with Archbishop Edwin O'Brien of Baltimore. Here is a man who was the Archbishop of the Military Services and a chaplain on the ground in the Vietnam War. He comes across as a real leader: decisive and action-oriented. Which is great when it comes to evangelization.

The big news were his words of encouragement and blessing for our work with *Discovering Christ*. "Just don't grow too quickly," he said, which, to us, really affirmed the flexibility and missional nature of a small ministry and the real sense of the Holy Spirit calling us to be faithful over "the little" that He has given us for now.

We were overjoyed to receive the letter of endorsement for *Discovering Christ* (included in the newsletter). It is a great encouragement to have our bishop's support and blessing. Please consider sharing this letter with your pastor or other Catholic leaders to help begin *Discovering Christ* in your parish or ministry. A copy of the letter is also available for download at <http://christlife.org/discover>



ChristLife staff after meeting with Archbishop O'Brien in March 2010



Conference Trains Catholic Leaders

On two beautiful days in spring, April 15-16, ChristLife hosted the second *Discovering Christ* training conference at St. Louis Parish in Clarksville, MD. 25 Catholic leaders from seven states and Slovakia attended. Conference attendees were trained in how to run the *Discovering Christ* course through presentations on course dynamics, small groups, administration, inviting guests to the course, and prayer ministry.

"The conference was direct to the point, the examples were brilliant and touching and all done by lay people like everyone else," shared one participant at the end of the conference.

When asked at the conclusion of the conference if anything significant happened, one attendee shared they felt *"a deep sense of calling for evangelizing."* Another, as a result of the conference, felt *"a renewal in my own faith commitment."* Many others shared similarly and left with genuine enthusiasm to begin inviting others to know and love Jesus through *Discovering Christ*. Thank you Father! For pictures from the conference visit <http://christlife.org/conference>



Leo Rudegeair speaking at the conference

Fall Conference in Slovakia

Joining ChristLife for two weeks in April were two young adults from Slovakia, Veronika and Daniel, who are both part of the conference team preparing for a September *Discovering Christ* conference in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Earlier this year, the Church in Slovakia invited ChristLife to train Catholic leaders in Bratislava to use *Discovering Christ* as follow-up to a citywide Catholic evangelization mission in October. The training conference will be held September 6-7, giving parish leaders a month of preparation before the citywide mission begins the 2nd week of October. To learn more about the city mission visit

<http://misieba.sk> or

Discovering Christ in Slovak visit <http://christlife.org/objavkrista>



Veronika & Daniel (seated) from Slovakia after being picked up from the airport by John & Pete

Discovering Christ around the nation

To date nearly 1200 people have participated in a total of 16 *Discovering Christ* courses from six states: MD, DC, OH, FL, NH, and NY. After each course it is an absolute joy to hear the feedback from participants. "I can't even begin to say how much peace and happiness and love fill me now," shared a young woman after a recent course at St. Louis Parish. "My whole life has changed. I am so hungry to know him and am on a personal journey to find and keep him close to my heart. I love life now. I love God."

At St. Anthony's parish in DC many shared at the final session how God touched their lives through *Discovering Christ*. The course helped one participant "put Jesus in the center in my life, whatever I do, wherever I am. I realize more and more how much I need Him in my life." Another



Four *Discovering Christ* participants at St. Anthony's in DC

participant shared simply, "Jesus loves me and that is really good to know." Many others were deeply impacted the genuine community they felt during the program. "God broke down barriers to community - fear, self-reliance, etc. Great! Thank you so much!!"

Are you interested in learning how to run *Discovering Christ* in your parish or ministry? Visit <http://christlife.org/discover> or contact ChristLife at info@christlife.org or 410-531-7701

Taking Discovering Christ to the Bar

Discovering Christ is in the bar this summer. Under the name *Discover* this course begins this June in the Diamondback Tavern in Ellicott City, MD. Pete and Ally Ascosi and 15-20 young adults who attended last summer's *Discovering Christ* course are running this course. "The idea is to meet people where they are," said Pete during preparation for the course, "it is so exciting to be a part of bringing the Gospel, literally, to the streets. We think it is what Jesus would be doing if He were here today." The young adults designed beer coasters with a well-known quote by Benjamin Franklin to spark interest in the *Discover* series. For more information, visit <http://discover2010.com>



A "beer coaster invitation" to the *Discover* series

"WHAT'S NEXT?" Following Christ

During the *Discovering Christ* course, participants often make an adult renewal of their baptismal commitment and are baptized in the Holy Spirit, experience deeper conversion to the Lordship of Jesus, or come to Christ for the first time in their lives and enthusiastically ask, "what's next?"

What's next is *Following Christ*. *Following Christ* is eight weeks long with a retreat following the sixth session.

FOLLOWING CHRIST TOPICS:

- Living as a Disciple
- Beginning a Life of Daily Personal Prayer
- Reading Scripture as the Word of God
- The Importance of Forgiving One Another
- How God Guides Us
- The Charisms of the Holy Spirit
- Retreat: We are at War
 - The World and the Church
 - The Flesh and the Power of Risen Life
 - The Devil and the Triumph of Christ
- The Sacramental Life of a Disciple
- Serving and Sharing Christ with Others

Many who've attended the pilot courses have experienced a dramatic life change and a new commitment to following Jesus as Catholic disciples.

Young adults sharing in small group discussion



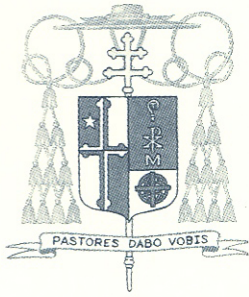
The following several testimonies are from the *Following Christ* at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ellicott City, MD:

"This course has helped me develop a deeper relationship with God. I can't wait for my daily prayer time."

"Thank you very much for the session you offered last night on the charisms of the Holy Spirit. What I experienced was supernatural and I could've never imagined doing. I guess with God all things are truly possible."

"I am now more comfortable praying with a group. The Holy Spirit gave me the gift of courage to be more vocal with my prayer."

Please help us make *Following Christ* a reality through your prayers and donations (it will cost us \$70,000 to produce *Following Christ*). The plan is to video produce the series this November-December and to release it at the Spring 2011 ChristLife conference. For more information visit <http://christlife.org/follow>



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 16, 2010

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are called as Catholics to witness to the truth, that the fullness of life comes only through friendship with Jesus Christ. We exist as the Church to call those who have never met Christ to experience the power of his love, to know the grace of conversion.

Discovering Christ is a new evangelization program developed by ChristLife, a lay apostolate of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, to introduce people to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

For several years ChristLife has worked with parishes and other Catholic ministries to reach out to parishioners, lapsed Catholics, and the unchurched through *Discovering Christ*. The course, now available on DVD, is touching the lives of many and beginning to spread here in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and nationwide.

Consider Jen, a parishioner at St. Agnes Parish in Catonsville. Before participating in the *Discovering Christ* program, she was struggling as a young adult to live her Catholic faith. On the *Discovering Christ* retreat she describes a profound conversion:

“For the first time in my life, I was completely filled with the Holy Spirit. I felt a sense of calm and breathtaking love that is indescribable. All I could do was fall to my knees and cry at the overwhelming presence of God. I knew at that moment God wanted me more than anything in the world. He had patiently waited for me to come back to Him and yearned every moment of every day for me to find His light.”

Jen’s story reveals the hunger evident in every human heart for a personal encounter with God’s love in Jesus Christ. Jen is now actively involved in her Catholic faith and spreading God’s love to everyone she meets.

Please consider using *Discovering Christ* to ignite faith in your parish, campus ministry or small group. I pray that the Holy Spirit will guide your efforts to evangelize and bring many people to a vibrant friendship with Jesus Christ in the Church.

In the Lord,

+Edwin F. O'Brien

Archbishop of Baltimore

SAVE
THE DATE!

ChristLife Conference

Spring 2011 *March 30 – April 1, 2011*

Mark your calendars! In Spring 2011, ChristLife will make available for the first time, all three components of our evangelization process: *Discovering Christ, Following Christ, & Sharing Christ*. The conference will equip parish and ministry leaders with a complete process of Catholic evangelization.

The major focus of the conference will be upon the *Discovering* and *Following Christ* courses. Conference training will equip leaders with practical resources to invite people, inactive in their faith, to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The conference will also equip leaders with the training and resources to help people embrace a life of discipleship in the power of the Holy Spirit as members of the Church. For more information visit <http://christlife.org/conference>

Get Connected

Are you on the web a lot? Sign up to receive our biweekly e-updates at <http://christlife.org/getinvolved.html> or email us at info@christlife.org.



For those on twitter, follow us at
<http://twitter.com/ChristLifeInc>

CHRISTLIFE is a tax exempt ministry dedicated to equipping Catholics for the work of evangelization. To continue in this work, we depend entirely on the donations of fellow Christians like you. Please send donations to: **CHRISTLIFE:** 12280 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042 USA, *We appreciate your support!*
For more information on our mission and activities visit our web site: www.christlife.org

EVENTS CALENDAR

Please intercede for these events

Discover series for young adults

Monday nights, 7-9pm, June 14 – July 26
Diamondback Tavern, Ellicott City, MD

Following Christ

Weeknight TBD, 7-9pm, Sept-Oct
St. Louis Parish, Clarksville, MD

Discovering Christ Conference in Slovakia

Monday-Tuesday, September 6-7
Bratislava, Slovakia

Following Christ Video Production

November-December 2010
Exact dates, times, & location TBD

ChristLife Conference

March 30 – April 1, 2011
Location TBD

For more info:

www.christlife.org/events.html

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