

**MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST (MFC)
CHRISTIAN LIFE SEMINAR
TEAM MANUAL**

The Christian Life Seminar (CLS) is the initiation course leading to membership in Missionary Families of Christ (MFC).

This team manual is intended for the use of CLS discussion group leaders.

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OVERVIEW OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE SEMINAR (CLS)

A. Rationale:

In this time and age, there are many Christians (Catholic and non-Catholic) who can be labeled as nominal since they are engaged in the worship life of their church and yet appear to live lives that are contrary to the principles espoused in the congregations they attend in at least every week. There is a need to bring these Christians into a gradual exposure and yet non-intimidating introduction to Catholic doctrine and into a renewed and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from bringing these people into a renewed experience of their faith, it is necessary to provide a support environment to sustain the new found relationship and the gradual discovery of the other facets of their faith. This seminar is meant to be such an initiation. However, more than that, and in a more subtle way, it is a step-by-step living out of the way of life in Missionary Families of Christ community.

B. General Objectives:

The CLS is intended to achieve the following:

1. Bring the participant to repentance and a renewed faith in Jesus.
2. Empower the participant in the Christian life through baptism in the Holy Spirit.
3. Integrate the participant into a strong environment of support and ongoing formation.

C. Participants:

Participants may be any Christian individual or couple.

D. Seminar Description:

The Christian Life Seminar (CLS) is an integrated course intended to lead the seminar participants into a renewed understanding of and response to God's call to them as Christians. The seminar has a total of six (6) separate sessions, that can be done over a day and a half (1-1/2 days) sessions.

The topics of the sessions are:

- Session 1: Jesus, The Messiah
- Session 2: Called to Witness
- Session 3: Repentance and Faith
- Session 4: The Gift of the Holy Spirit
- Session 5: Growing in the Spirit
- Session 6: The Life and Mission of MFC

E. Methodology:

The standard format of the CLS is the following, with variations on certain sessions depending on the specific objectives:

Introduction and opening prayer/worship	30 mins
Talk	30-45 mins
Discussion	30-40 mins
Closing remarks and prayer	5 mins

Note: 30 minutes is usually given for snacks after the discussion.

Handouts are given out to participants at the end of each talk. They include a brief talk outline, a discussion starter, Scripture readings and recommended additional readings (if any).

F. Attendance.

The CLS is open to all Christians, whether Catholic or not. As an exception, depending on circumstances, a non-Christian may be allowed to attend (subject to approval of the Chapter Servant). Participants need not have any current religious or spiritual involvement.

Every participant is expected to attend all sessions, since the CLS is offered as an integrated package for spiritual renewal. However, some absences can be expected. In such cases, the participant should be given a make-up session by his/her discussion leader. If either husband or wife expects to be absent for any reason, the spouse should still be encouraged to attend.

G. Personal Dialogue (one-to-one)

The discussion group leader meets individually and privately with each of the members of his group, after the talk on Repentance and Faith.

These meetings are often referred to as “one-to-one” meetings.

NOTE: Please see the appropriate section in this manual for the general guidelines for personal dialogues. It is likewise presumed that the discussion group leader has undergone basic training in communication and leading discussions in a group setting.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. THE TEAM

The Lord reaches out to men and women through the members of His body. The new life He wants to give He offers through men and women in whom His Spirit lives. More than anything else, the CLS is the forum whereby the body of Christians who have been given a fuller life in the Spirit come together to share that gift with others.

The team members are above all witnesses. They are men and women who are living the life of the Holy Spirit and who can witness to its reality and effectiveness for themselves. In order for them to be witnesses, they have to be able to speak the truth in a simple way. People should not only see the life in them but also learn about it from them.

It is essential for the team members to be faithful and reliable. They have to be persons who can be counted on. They need to do their best to care for the persons who are entrusted to them. And in order to be faithful, one has to have certain characteristics:

1. He/she has to be growing in commitment to the Lord and to the life and mission of MFC.
2. He/she has to be committed to the renewal of individuals in the power of the Holy Spirit. He/she has to believe in the message of the talks and to see the importance of helping a person become firmly established in Christ.
3. He/she has to be committed to his/her part in the CLS.

B. THE TEAM LEADER

He oversees the entire seminar. He focuses his attention on the participants and the dynamics of the CLS. He cares for the team members and helps them to better serve the Lord. He should get to know everyone in the seminar by name and be available to them to some degree. All administrative tasks should be entrusted to his wife, to the assistant team leader and to the servant.

C. THE TEAM LEADER'S WIFE

She listens with a special ear to the sensitivities and peculiarities being reported at the women's discussion groups.

She supports and advises her husband (team leader) in addressing and meeting the needs of the women in the CLS.

In some cases, she coordinates with the servant-couple in administrative and practical work.

D. THE ASSISTANT TEAM LEADER

He assists the team leader in running the seminar, and is in training for leading a future CLS. He takes over in case the team leader is absent. His wife serves with him.

E. THE SERVANT

He carries the main administrative burden and should assume that he needs to cover every need that may arise. He should not be a part of a discussion group. His job includes the following (which may be delegated to others):

1. Man the reception table, have a checklist of those attending, give out name tags.
2. Make available song sheets and handouts.

3. Arrange for a book table.
4. Make available a guitarist and lead singer.
5. Set up the sound system.
6. Set up the physical facilities like chairs, lights, lectern, etc.
7. Tape the talk.
8. Arrange for refreshments.
9. Clean up after the sessions.

F. THE DISCUSSION GROUP LEADERS

They take responsibility for the over-all care of individuals in their groups. They will personally oversee and bring to issue each person's relationship with Christ during the CLS.

THE SESSIONS: GOALS, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND DISCUSSION STARTERS

A. SESSION No. 1 - JESUS THE MESSIAH

1. Goal.
 - a) To meet Christ and to know the truth that God loves us and has a plan for our welfare.
2. Main points.
 - a) The situation in the world today.
 - b) The world needs Jesus.
 - c) What we need to do.
3. Discussion guides (see note below).
 - a) Who is Jesus Christ to you? How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ now?
 - b) What can you do to respond to His invitation of having a personal relationship with Him?

B. SESSION No. 2 - CALLED TO WITNESS

1. Goal.
 - a) To understand what it means to live Christ as a living witness to him.
2. Main points.
 - a) Authentic Christianity is all about meeting, living and sharing Christ.
 - b) God wants us to make loving Him our highest ideal. Thus God made it into a commandment of the highest priority.
 - c) We are to love God with all our heart, mind, strength and soul.
 - d) We are to love our neighbor as ourselves.
3. Discussion guides.
 - a) How have I loved God in a concrete way?

C. SESSION No. 3 - REPENTANCE AND FAITH

1. Goal.
 - a) To start to live Christ by repenting of sin and turning to a renewed faith in Jesus.
2. Main points.
 - a) God loves us, God sent His own Son to die for us, God has initiated a relationship with us as Father. Our proper response to all God has done for us is repentance and faith.
 - b) The Greek word for repentance is “metanoia,” which literally means a change of mind.
 - c) Specific serious sins we must renounce: participation in non Christian religions; spiritualism and the occult; sexual wrongdoing; serious crimes (murder, rape, etc.); drunkenness and drugs.
 - d) Faith is belief in the good news of salvation in Jesus.
 - e) Consequences of repentance and faith:
3. Discussion guides.
 - a) Share with one another areas where you need to turn more fully to God.
 - b) Share areas where you need to grow in faith.

D. SESSION No. 4 - The GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Goal.
 - a) To understand the role of the Holy Spirit, and to receive the baptism in the Spirit.
2. Main points.
 - a) To overcome sin, to reform our lives, to be holy, to be true disciples, to love our neighbor, all these are very difficult. We cannot do this on our own strength. We need a power outside ourselves. That is the Holy Spirit.
 - b) Receiving the Holy Spirit (what does it mean?).
 - c) We would like to pray for and with you for the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - d) The prayer session. **(Please refer to the “Guidelines on Prayer for Baptism in the Holy Spirit on this Manual).**
3. Should there be time for sharing or discussion after the Session or even during fellowship/dinner, the following could be considered as discussion or sharing guides:
 - a) “Have you experienced the work of the Holy Spirit? If so, how? What more can you see that the Holy Spirit would like to do in your life?”
 - b) “Do you understand what it means to be baptized in the Holy Spirit?”
 - c) “Do you understand what the gift of tongues is and why such a gift is important for the life of a Christian?”

E. SESSION No. 5 - GROWING IN THE SPIRIT

1. Goals.
 - a) To teach the basic tools to growth and maturity as Christians.

2. Main points.
 - a) The first tool: prayer.
 - b) The second tool: study.
 - c) The third tool: service.
 - d) The fourth tool: fellowship.
 - e) The fifth tool (for Catholics): the sacraments.
3. Discussion guides.
 - a) “How are you coming along in your personal prayer time and daily reading of the Bible?”
 - b) “How have you enjoyed our time and discussions together as a group?”
 - c) “Do you see the need for regular fellowship with other committed Christians?”

F. SESSION No. 6 - THE LIFE AND MISSION OF MFC: TRANSFORMATION IN CHRIST

1. Goal.
 - a) To explain the life and mission of Missionary Families of Christ (MFC) and to inspire people with the desire to be a part of this committed group of Christians.
2. Main points.
 - a) What is Missionary Families of Christ (MFC)?
 - b) How do we support one another in MFC?

Note: The CLS ends here with the announcement of the household groupings and the respective household leaders. The CLS will culminate with a Dedication Ceremony, welcoming the graduating participants to the MFC community. A graduation fellowship will follow on the forthcoming next weekend, whichever is practicable.

DISCUSSION GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

A. PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION GROUPS

1. To help the participants to understand and digest the material presented.
2. To allow them to express their thoughts and feelings, and to give them a chance to ask questions.
3. To help people to open up and respond to God's invitation and grace.
4. To develop friendships among the participants, which are a big encouragement for them to continue and finish the whole CLS.
5. To provide a place for them to begin to experience Christian fellowship, preparing the way to participation in Christian community (MFC) after the CLS.

B. THE ROLE OF A DISCUSSION GROUP LEADER

1. To help set the right tone.
 - a) Come promptly to each session at the time indicated by the team leader, so that the team meeting may be held as scheduled and there will be enough time for you to greet the participants as they come in, especially the members of your discussion group.
 - b) Be warm and friendly, even if people are a little stiff at first. New people will warm up as you are warm with them. Take special care to establish an atmosphere of love and interest in the group.
 - c) Be joyful and outgoing. Meet other men and women who are not in your group. Encourage your group members to get to know more people outside their own group.
 - d) Participate enthusiastically in whatever is going on. Sing the songs, listen attentively (even if the talk is familiar), and follow quickly any lead the team leader gives.
 - e) Pray out where there is an opportunity. Express your prayer in a way that teaches the new people how to pray, but does not overwhelm them (e.g., "grant that we may be martyrs"), and does not use unfamiliar jargon (e.g., "Jesus, thank you for your all-sufficient and substitutionary sacrifice, that purchased my redemption").
2. To help evangelize those in your discussion group.
 - a) Remember the names and important details of your discussion group members. By this you communicate a great amount of concern.
 - b) Tailor the seminar inputs to your members' needs during the discussion. You have

freedom to lead discussions as you think best, with the goal of making the message of the talks connect with each one in a personal way.

- c) Follow up regularly with your group members during the week. If necessary, meet with them for further discussion. Encourage them to be open, to persevere and to turn to the Lord to seek out His will for them. Contact those who miss talks and get together with them for make-up sessions.
 - d) Intercede for them and do spiritual warfare on their behalf. Fast and pray for them.
 - e) Do whatever is appropriate to bring to issue each one's relationship with Christ. It is your responsibility to help them personally and to do all you can to bring them to commitment to Christ.
3. Important general comments:
- a) The team members' love for one another and for the participants is a crucial element of the seminar.
 - b) Participating in the singing and fully in the prayers is crucial, because that is the way the participants will learn how to pray.
 - c) Faithfulness to all meetings is absolutely essential. Being punctual is presupposed.
 - d) Prepare for the sessions by studying the goals and content of the sessions beforehand. Pray and think about the discussion starters and guides. Know what your members should be taking home from the session and help them to appropriate that.
 - e) **READ AND STUDY THIS TEAM MANUAL!**

C. LEADING A DISCUSSION GROUP

1. The discussion groups form and begin right after the talk. The men meet separately from the women.
2. When first meeting as a discussion group, try to establish a relaxed atmosphere. Don't be overly serious, but maintain control. Inspire confidence in others that you know what everybody is supposed to be doing. Remember that many people have never been in this type of discussion group. Be clear about instructions like sitting in a circle, etc.
3. Start and end every discussion with a short prayer. You may ask others in your group to lead the prayer if they seem ready, but don't put them on the spot.
4. For the first session, start with introductions and let everyone get to know one another.

5. Assure them that the principle of confidentiality is at work in your discussions. Whatever is shared basically remains only within the group. General reports during team meetings maintain the anonymity of sharers.
6. Let the group know that they are free to ask relevant questions or bring up relevant problems.
7. If the participants are still not very open or are still shy, you may have to begin the sharing yourself. This also is a good way of showing them how the discussion/sharing is to be handled.
8. If the group is eager to respond to the talk, allow them to, without bothering with the discussion starter.
9. Encourage shy people who don't speak much by asking them questions. Don't put them on the spot, however. Start with easy general questions at first, then work your way up to more specific things about themselves. Make sure everyone gets to talk during the discussion. Don't allow anyone, including yourself, to take too much time and dominate the discussion.
10. One way to control dominant people in discussion groups is to speak to the person before the session begins. Encourage their sharing but impress them with the limited amount of time and the need for everyone to share.
11. Don't let the discussion get off the subject. Gently but authoritatively tell them that it is time to stop this line of conversation. Suggest another time or place for such discussion to the people involved.
12. It is usually best to open up the discussion to any questions only after you are sure they have understood the main points of the talks, or if they won't share. Quite often questions asked do not have anything to do with the talk.
13. When answering questions, you don't need to offer everything on the subject, but only what will help the person most at this time in his/her life. On the other hand, be willing to say "I don't know" and/or "I'll find out."
14. Don't take up serious theological issues in the discussions.
15. Don't talk down to people or appear to be an expert on something you are not.
16. Avoid Christian jargon. There is a way in which new people cannot enter into the meanings of the phrases we know so well.
17. Take notes and write down significant details of conversations in your group so that you can keep track of your people's progress and also as a basis for the team meeting afterwards.

18. As you listen to the talk, discern which points your people especially need to hear and try to bring those out in your sharing or in theirs.
19. Keep your eye on the time. Make sure that there is enough time for everyone to share.

D. TEAM MEETINGS

Team meetings are usually held both before and after the session itself. The pre-session meeting helps prepare for the session. The post-session meeting is for evaluating what happened in the session.

The team meeting is almost the only opportunity that team members have to discuss the progress of the CLS. It should be a time for support and encouragement, a time that builds unity, faith and love. The team should spend time not talking about administrative details but having a concrete discussion of the problems and situations they are facing.

Aside from these, the team meetings also help to create a spiritual unity among the team members, help the team members to learn to better serve the Lord, and communicate what is happening in the CLS as a whole.

E. GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL DIALOGUES (one-to-one)

After the talk on Repentance and Faith, the discussion group leaders meet individually with each of the members of their group.

The purpose of this meeting is to see how the participants are doing, and more importantly, to see whether they are ready to go on.

Readiness to go on consists in being willing to repent and turn away from serious wrongdoing. Has the person repented for serious sin? You need to ask them directly and get a direct response. If they are unclear as to what is serious sin, go through the list. Note that what is important is willingness to turn away from sin. Sometimes the actual turning away may not be accomplished in a single, immediate act (e.g. breaking off with a mistress or giving up addiction to liquor). But if they are willing to repent and continue with the CLS, they may be allowed to go on. Work out with them a timetable for finally

setting their lives right, and follow up on them through the succeeding weeks.

Readiness also involves a willingness to follow Jesus and to learn more about him.

These individual meetings may be held at any place convenient to both leader and participant. It may be at either's home or office, in a church, in a restaurant, at a park, etc. The only requirements are privacy and a peaceful atmosphere.

If there are any issues on wrongdoing that you cannot resolve, refer them to the team leader. Also inform the team leader of any participant who cannot be allowed to go on, prior to the start of Session No. 4.

Guide questions for the meeting

- a) We have been talking and discussing basics of our faith. Are there any questions that have not been answered? Is there any unclarity that I can help you with?
- b) The first step to a full and committed life with the Lord is repentance, i.e., turning away from serious wrongdoing and turning toward the Lord. If there is serious wrongdoing in your life, are you willing to make a definite break with it? Serious wrongdoing includes the following:
 - * Participation by a Christian in non-Christian religions and non-Christian practices (e.g., Freemasonry, New Age, Transcendental Meditation, etc.)
 - * All forms of the occult, spiritualism, witchcraft.
 - * Sexual wrongdoing (adultery, masturbation, active homosexuality, perversity, etc.)
 - * Murder, stealing, cheating.
 - * Lying, slander, gossip.
 - * Drunkenness, drugs.

Note for Catholics: To make repentance full and effective, go to sacramental confession and make a firm resolution to lead a new life acceptable to Jesus.

- c) Is there anything you wish to share or discuss with me? Is there any other way I can help you?
- d) Are you ready to turn away from sin, confess (if there is serious wrongdoing) and commit your life to the Lord? Accept Him as Savior and Lord?

The primary purpose of this individual meeting is to help the participant prepare for the prayer session where the participant is prayed with for a renewed outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Called “Baptism in the Holy Spirit,” this session sometimes causes unclarity in the mind of the participant. The discussion group leader will try to clear up any question concerning this. The meeting also serves to give encouragement and support to the participant and to find out specific areas where he/she needs to be strengthened and prayed for.

Guidelines for the meeting

- a) Start with a prayer. Foster an atmosphere of concern, friendliness and informality.
- b) Find out if there are any questions regarding what has transpired in the seminar or if there are any problem areas. Discuss these.
- c) Check the participant’s understanding of baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues. Explain these concepts again. If there is any hang-up or fear in any of these areas, help the participant to get over them.
- d) If the participant has any involvement in the occult and the like (fortune telling, card reading, spirit of the glass, etc.), which may or may not have been brought out in the first individual meeting, lead the participant to renounce verbally this involvement.
- e) Make sure that any serious wrongdoing which the participant disclosed during your first individual meeting is no longer present in his/her life. Find out if there are other areas of wrongdoing, which the participant has not disclosed.
- f) Find out if there are other obstacles to the full release of the Spirit in his/her life. Check areas of unforgiveness, resentments, hatred, bitterness, etc. Lead the participant to forgive the cause(s) of all these negative emotions. Pray for a repentant and forgiving heart.
- g) Find out if the participant has had any traumatic experiences, so that you can pray for healing of memories during the prayer session.
- h) Find out if there are other areas of concern or difficulties that the participant would like to share with you.
- i) Ask if the participant has any prayer intention, or any specific areas that he/she would want to pray for during the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

- j) Encourage the participant (if Catholic) to go to confession, to go to Mass and receive Holy Communion, and to pray prior to the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - k) Pray together at the end of the meeting.
3. Reminders.
- a) The principle of confidentiality is still very much in force. Keep to yourself whatever information is brought out, except what you cannot handle, in which case you should bring the same to the team leader. Any discussion of serious problems should be only with the team leader (or if necessary with the supervising Unit Servant or the Chapter Servant), and should not be specifically taken up during the team meeting. The team meeting is a time of sharing in general, to see where people are at. Always avoid gossip, slander, or any wrong way of speaking about any participant.
 - b) Inform the team leader immediately of any problem you cannot handle or of any obstacle to being prayed with for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Don't wait till prior to the prayer session itself.

COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

Do you renounce Satan and all wrongdoing?

Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died to free us from our sins, and that he rose to bring us new life?

Will you follow Jesus as your Lord?

Lord Jesus Christ, I want to belong to you from now on. I want to be free from the dominion of darkness and the rule of Satan, and I want to enter into your Kingdom and be a part of your people. I will turn away from all wrongdoing, and I will avoid everything that leads me to wrongdoing. I ask you to forgive all the sins that I have committed. I offer my life to you, and I promise to obey you as my Lord. I ask you to baptize me in the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

GUIDELINES ON PRAYER FOR BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Much of the effectiveness of the prayer session on the participants will be related to the kind of atmosphere which the team itself establishes. Thus the atmosphere should be one of:
 - a) FAITH. We need to turn to the Lord and put our faith in Him. We need to be centered on the Lord. And the more we have faith, the easier it will be for the participants. Faith is infective. In an atmosphere of worship and faith, it is much easier to have faith.
 - b) PEACE. We do not want to encourage emotional excitement. Rather, we want to encourage relaxed joy. Those conducting the prayer should be warm and friendly and relaxed and should themselves convey a mood of peace and calmness to the participants.
 - c) OPENNESS. We should be especially open to spiritual gifts during this time. The Lord will work through the team with prophecy and words of wisdom, with discernment and faith, and even with healing. If we obey the promptings of the Spirit, we will see God work in many ways that we might not have expected.
2. The gift of tongues.
 - a) The participants should come to see tongues as another means of growing closer to Christ. It is a gift we can all use right from the start of our new life in the Spirit. A person should claim this gift in confidence when he is prayed with to be baptized in the Spirit. No one needs to wait for this gift or shy away from it because of unworthiness. It is a gift God gives freely, simply because we ask for it. No one has to psych himself up to feel emotionally ready to receive the gift.
 - b) Three conditions dispose a person to receive the gift of tongues:
 - * He should desire the gift. Simply because it is a gift that comes from God.
 - * He should ask in faith for the gift. Faith means relying on God's promise (Lk 11:13) and looking expectantly to Jesus to give the gift.
 - * He must cooperate with God by speaking out in faith and expecting God to give him the utterance. What is needed is active, not passive, faith.
 - c) There are some people who come seeking to be baptized in the Spirit who say that they do not want to have the gift of tongues. This is a wrong attitude because it would be placing limits on God's working. It is not being open to the Lord. Everyone should want to receive the gift of tongues.
 - d) Tongues may not be of first importance in itself, but it has great consequences in a person's spiritual life. It can revolutionize a person's prayer life. A person who prays in tongues can normally pray more easily, and his prayer will be more likely to be filled with praise and worship. But even more significantly, tongues usually turns out to be the

gateway to the charismatic dimension. It builds a person's faith in a very concrete way. It gives him a clear experience of what it means to have the Holy Spirit forming something new through him. Yielding to tongues is an important first step, and it is worth putting effort into encouraging a person to yield to tongues.

- e) At the same time, we should make it clear that speaking in tongues is neither a necessary sign, nor by itself a certain sign, that a person has been baptized in the Spirit. We should encourage the participants to be open to this gift, as a valuable way of praying, especially in praising God, but we should not put too much stress on it that their attention will be on tongues and not on the Lord and his gift of the Holy Spirit.

3. Suggested Procedure in Praying For Baptism in the Spirit.

- a) Ask the participant to sit down, just relax, and be open to the workings of the Holy Spirit.
- b) Ask if there are any other specific areas that he wishes you to pray for, aside from those already discussed in your individual meeting. Ask if he desires any specific gift(s) from the Holy Spirit. This should be done briefly and quickly, so as not to delay the praying over.
- c) Start with praising the Lord. Ask the participant to join you here. Then ask the Lord's protection for the participant and his loved ones and also for yourselves. Claim God's power and victory over the situation.
- d) Do a short prayer of exorcism, which means the casting out of evil spirits or the telling of spirits to leave a person or place free. It should be done simply and undramatically, in a quiet voice, so that only those praying for a particular person will hear it. Simply command whatever evil spirits there are to depart. If you have any discernment as to the kind of evil spirit present, then simply command that spirit to depart. (NOTE: This is not the kind of exorcism called for when an individual is actually possessed. It is simply the same kind of prayer that is part of every Catholic celebration of the sacrament of Baptism. To avoid misconception some prefer to use the term "praying for deliverance from evil spirits"). Then always ask for an infilling of the Holy Spirit for the void left by evil spirits.
- e) Pray that the participant be delivered from the bondage of sin. Pray for all those areas of wrongdoing or of weaknesses, all negative emotions, all areas of concern and difficulty, and any other obstacles to the full release of the Spirit in his life.
- f) Pray for healing of memories and for inner healing.
- g) Pray specifically for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For example:

"Father, we now ask you, in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, that you pour upon _____ the Holy Spirit so he/she may receive new life."

Or any other variation. The important thing is that you ask specifically that the Holy

Spirit descend upon the participant. And Jesus will respond by baptizing the participant with his Spirit.

- h) Pray that the participant receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially those he/she specifically desires.
- i) Pray in tongues. Then you can ask the participant to pray in tongues. But you may have to help the participant to yield to tongues. Many will not understand or follow the instructions given in the opening remarks. Thus after praying with a person to be baptized in the Spirit, you should lean over or kneel down and suggest that he should try to start praying in tongues. You should encourage him to speak out, making sounds that are not English or any other language he knows. You should then pray with him again. When the person begins to speak in tongues, you should encourage him. Many will still be afraid that it is “just them.” You can often supply the faith that will allow them to yield to the Spirit. Once the participant is able to pray in tongues, say a short prayer of thanksgiving to the Lord. If no tongues come, or the person feels inhibited, try encouraging but never force the person.
- j) Pray that the participant be given the grace to become a strong Christian. Pray that he/she commit himself/herself to the Lord.
- k) Have a closing prayer for the participant, some words that will encourage and upbuild him/her. End with the Glory Be.
- l) Let the participant go back to his/her seat, exhorting him/her to continue praying until everyone is finished.

4. Pastoral notes.

- a) You should get a prayer partner to provide support. However, you as the discussion group leader will lead the prayer. The prayer partner is in a supporting role. It is the discussion group leader who has been with the participant for the past 6 sessions and who has had two individual meetings with him/her. Thus he/she best knows the participant and what his/her needs are. However, as is called for, the prayer partner gives support to the extent necessary. And in some cases where the discussion leader himself/herself does not have the gift of tongues, it would be the prayer partner who should handle this portion.
- b) Pray in a low but audible voice. Usually there will be other praying teams in the same room. Your prayer should be loud enough to be heard by the participant and your prayer partner, but not too loud as to disturb the other groups.
- c) Apply the right amount of encouragement and understanding for each participant. Some people will yield to the Spirit beautifully without any encouragement at all. Some will need just a little push. Some will need patient encouragement. Some should not be pushed at all. Let the Spirit lead you and give you wisdom on how to help your people.

- d) Should the participant become restless, immediately pray that the peace of the Lord be upon him/her.
- e) If the participant cries, alleviate his/her embarrassment by telling him/her that tears are a gift from the Lord. It is called the gift of tears or the gift of cleansing.
- f) Be aware of what is happening to the participant. Don't be lost in your own prayers. Be sensitive to the situation and adopt your prayers, your procedure and your whole self to it.
- g) There is no set length of time to the prayer of this sort. It can range from as short as five minutes to as long as 30 minutes or more. It is not how long it takes that is important, but how effectively the participants are led to baptism in the Holy Spirit. However, your prayers should also not be so long that the whole session is stretched out. A good rule-of-thumb is to take no more than one hour to pray over your whole group.

5. Remember:

- a) Study this guide and other available materials well.
- b) Prepare yourself spiritually, throughout the week but especially on the day of the prayer session. Pray, read Scripture, fast and intercede for your people.
- c) Have faith and trust in the Lord!

PRAISING THE LORD

Praising the Lord is an essential element in our lives as Christians. We in m MFC are a people who are to live and serve for the praise and glory of His name.

Why praise the Lord?

1. Because the Lord is our Creator and we are His creatures. It is but proper and fitting that creatures should acknowledge and give glory to their Creator.
2. Because it is our vocation as Christians.
 - * Eph 1:11-12. Eph 1:14.

As Christians, we are God's people. If the purpose for which He made us His people is "to praise His glory," then praising the Lord must be the most important act we can ever do. In fact, it must be our main occupation so that every moment of our life should be an occasion of praise to the Lord.

3. Because the Word of God explicitly tells us to do so.
 - * Psalm 22:24a. Ps 104:33. Ps 150:6.
 - * Heb 13:15.
4. Because praise is the key that unlocks the power of God.
 - * Joshua 6:15-16,20 - The walls of Jericho collapsed after the Israelites praised the Lord in procession around the city.
 - * Acts 16:25-26 - Paul and Silas are delivered from their chains and imprisonment while they were praying and singing praises to the Lord.
5. Because this is how Jesus taught us to pray.
 - * Luke 11:1-4 - The Lord's prayer has two parts. The first part is a prayer of praise and the second is a prayer of petition. Thus one thing Jesus teaches us here is to start our prayers always with praise.

How do we praise the Lord in group prayer?

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Speaking out loud our praises to the Lord. <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Psalm 66:1-2,8.* Hebrews 13:15. | 4. Clapping of hands <ul style="list-style-type: none">*Psalm 47.2 |
| 2. Songs and singing in the Spirit. <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Eph 5:18b-19.* Col 3:16b. | 5. Dancing. <ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Chr. 13:82 Sam. 6:14-16Psalm 149:3Psalm 150:4 |
| 3. Raising of hands. <ul style="list-style-type: none">* 1 Tim 2:8. | |

One way we praise the Lord is by saying out loud who He is.

TITLES OF JESUS

A. From the book of Revelation.

1. Alpha and Omega (Rev 1:11)
2. First and last (Rev 1:17)
3. Lord God almighty (Rev 4:8)
4. Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5)
5. Root of David (Rev 5:5)
6. Faithful and True (Rev 19:11)
7. Word of God (Rev 19:13)
8. King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16)
9. Beginning and end (Rev 21:6)
10. Root and offspring of David (Rev 22:16)
11. Bright morning star (Rev 22:16)

B. From the prophets.

12. Emmanuel (Is 7:14)
13. Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace (Is 9:5)
14. Root of Jesse (Is 11:10)
15. Son of man (Dan 7:13)
16. Shoot (Zech 6:12)

C. From the gospels.

17. Messiah (Mt 1:16)
18. Son of God (Mt 4:3)
19. Lord (Mt 7:21)
20. Son of David (Mt 15:22)
21. Holy One of God (Mk 1:24)
22. Lamb of God (Jn 1:29)
23. Bread of life (Jn 6:35)
24. I Am (Jn 8:58)
25. Gate (Jn 10:9)
26. Good shepherd (Jn 10:14)
27. Resurrection and the life (Jn 11:25)
28. Way and truth and life (Jn 14:6)
29. True vine (Jn 15:1)

D. Others

30. Holy and Righteous One (Acts 3:14)
31. Author of life (Acts 3:15)
32. Judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42)
33. Blessed and only ruler (1 Tim 6:15)

FASTING

The team is greatly encouraged to fast during the entire course of the seminar, not only as a means of personal spiritual growth, but more so as a personal sacrifice for the intention of the participants, the people whom the Lord has entrusted to our care.

What is fasting?

Fasting refers to abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. Fasting is not:

1. Dieting, which stresses abstinence from food for health or physical reasons. It is motivated by vanity.
2. Hunger strike, which has for its purpose the gaining of political power or the attracting of attention for a certain cause. It is motivated by the desire for power.

How do we fast?

Fasting can be full or partial. Full fast means abstaining from all food, solid or liquid. Partial fast is a restriction of food intake but not total abstention. Just consider what your body can take or how far you yourself want to go.

We can fast on the day of the session itself. We can start our fast after the previous night's supper or at midnight and end our fast with supper before the session or continue the fast until the session's fellowship.

Who should fast?

The list of Biblical personages who fasted is like a "Who's Who" of Scripture: Moses the lawgiver, David the king, Elijah the prophet, Esther the queen, Daniel the seer, Anna the prophetess, Paul the apostle, and of course Jesus Christ the Son of God. So we're in good company when we fast.

Generally, the whole team should fast once a week during the whole course of the CLS. But obviously there will be some people who for physical reasons should not fast. For example, diabetics, expectant mothers and heart patients. If you have any questions about your fitness to fast, seek medical advice.

What is the Scriptural basis for fasting?

Mt 6:16-18 - Jesus says, "When you fast..." Jesus already assumed that people would fast, and what was needed was instruction on how to do it properly.

Mt 9:14-15 - Jesus says "When the day comes that the groom is taken away, then they will fast".
The "day" refers to the present church age. Jesus expected his disciples to fast after he was gone.

Why should we fast?

1. The first and most important reason is that fasting is a means of worshipping God and centering our lives and our existence on the Lord.
 - * Like the prophetess Anna, we need to worship in fasting and prayer (Luke 2:37).
 - * As in the case of the apostolic band at Antioch, fasting and prayer go together (Acts 13:2-3).
2. Fasting is also a weapon for spiritual warfare (Mt 17:21). We can expect Satan to be angry at the work we are doing, and he will be trying to stop us and the participants from receiving what God has to offer. We need to fast in our fight against evil forces.
3. Fasting is a way by which we can control our body and the desires of the flesh. In life we crave for so many things (not just food) which we do not need until we become controlled or enslaved by them. By fasting, we learn to discipline ourselves and to keep our desires in the proper perspective. Fasting helps us keep our balance in life.
4. Fasting reveals the things that control us. We cover up what is inside us with food and other good things, but in fasting these things surface. If pride controls us, it will be revealed. Anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, fear -- all these will surface during fasting. And knowing these things within us is a great benefit to one who longs to be transformed into the image of Christ. We can now come before the Lord and pray for healing in these areas.
5. Fasting is a way by which we grasp the reality that we live not by bread alone, but more importantly by the Word of God (Mt 4:4). We are totally dependent on the Lord for our existence. And our spiritual life is much more important than our physical life.
6. Fasting is a way by which we can relate, though admittedly in a very small way, to the sufferings of people who don't have adequate food or other necessities of life. By actually experiencing doing without, we can empathize more with their plight.
7. Other values of fasting are increased effectiveness in intercessory prayer, guidance in decisions, increased concentration, deliverance for those in bondage, physical well-being.

COVENANT OF THE MISSIONARY FAMILIES OF CHRIST

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 dedicate myself to the task of building a strong family for Christ.
 - * Invest myself in time and effort for home and family.
 - * Live out and defend the culture of life.
3. I shall be a committed and active member of Missionary Families of Christ.
 - * Faithfully attend meetings and participate in official activities.
 - * Give generously of my time and finances for the furtherance of our mission.
 - * Undergo all formation courses and participate in community events.
 - * Relate in love, loyalty and respect with all members of the MFC family.
4. I shall be a witness to the world of God's love.
 - * Actively evangelize and do mission.
 - * Love and serve my parish.
 - * 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.