



# Radiating Christ – Witnessing Faith

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Archdiocese of Hartford

Mission Conference

September 19, 2020

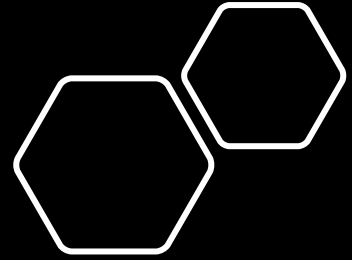


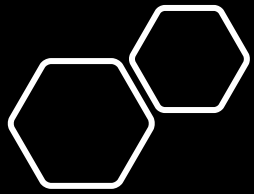


# adulting:

verb

To do grown up things and hold responsibilities such as: a 9-5 job, a mortgage, a car payment or anything else that makes one think of grown-ups





# Vision for Adulthood



You Could be  
Holy







# Radiate Christ

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... (Young people) will be better integrated into **communities that are open, living their faith, eager to radiate Christ, joyful, free, fraternal and committed.** These communities can be settings where they feel that it is possible to cultivate precious relationships.

# 220- *Christ is Alive – Christus Vivit*

April 2, 2019



# The Need for Genuine Witness

“When we meet Christ and accept His Gospel, life changes and we are driven to communicate our experiences to others. ...the Church needs genuine witnesses: men and women whose lives have been transformed by meeting with Jesus, men and women who are capable of communicating this experience to others.”

Pope John Paul II

World Youth Day - Toronto, 2002



# Need More Witnesses

The Church has no shortage of words; what she needs are more witnesses.

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The **JOY**  
of Adolescent Catechesis

# Need to Be Apprenticed

Our young people not only desperately need to see and hear what it means to be Catholic: they need to be apprenticed into the faith.

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The **JOY**  
of Adolescent Catechesis



# Witnesses

Who is someone that has been a witness to you? How did they witness Christ to you?

Share about the person who was your witness.





“This is the essence of witnessing: simply sharing your personal experiences regarding the Lord. In a courtroom, a witness is not expected to argue the case, prove the truth, or press for a verdict. That is the job for attorneys. Witnesses simply report what has happened...You may not be a biblical scholar, but you are the authority of your life. And it’s hard to argue with personal experience.”

Rick Warren, *A Purpose Driven Life*, Zondervan Publishing: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2002, 2011, 2012, page 288



A pair of hands is shown from the bottom, cupped together and holding a large amount of white sand. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Be my  
witnesses

- ▶ **Share the story of God in your life.**
- ▶ **Your life is your witness.**
- ▶ **Be true to your values.**
- ▶ **Sometimes our witness is subtle and sometimes we are called to be bold.**

# Be a Witness to Christ

A witness sometimes has this pattern:

- ▶ I was feeling (blank), then God broke into my situation.
- ▶ Then, I felt (blank) and
- ▶ I was surprised by, I learned that / or was reminded that God (is always there for me, always calls me back, is merciful beyond my imagination, loves me...).
- ▶ I felt called to grow in (blank)



## Be a Witness to Christ

To prepare for a witness, recall the situation when you experienced God's presence.

- What was happening before? What is the background or context for the story?
- What were you feeling?
- How did you experience God's presence? What surprised you?
- What happened? What were you feeling? What did you notice?
- What did this experience help you to learn about God or remember about God?
- How did this encounter call you to change and grow?

How did you experience God's presence?

What surprised you?

- I experienced God's **friendship** when I was feeling all alone.
- I experienced God's **mercy** when I was feeling ashamed.
- I experienced God's **love and care** for me when I was feeling unlovable.
- I experienced God's **power in the beauty of creation** when I was feeling depressed.
- I experienced God's **reassurance** when I was feeling overwhelmed and anxious.
- I experienced God's **call** to me when I was feeling lost.
- I experienced God **working through me** when I was feeling empathy for someone in need





## Be a Witness to Christ

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- Then, I felt (blank) and
- I was surprised by, I learned that / or was reminded that God (is always there for me, always calls me back, is merciful beyond my imagination, loves me...).
- I felt called to grow in (blank)

# Story of Victoria





# I have seen God at work...

To testify—to witness—is to say, “This is how I have seen God at work in this person, in my life, or in our communal lives right now,” then to name in specific ways the action of Christ’s Spirit they have seen.

Diana Macalintal

Codirector and Cofounder of TeamRCIA.com





# Be a Witness

- Review the pattern for a witness.
- Recall an experience of God's presence.
- Reflect on the questions.
- Share a witness with your partners.
- Listen to their witness.



# A Witness of Faith

- Engaging a faith witness element
  - As a catechist
  - As a faith companion to youth
  - Bringing in witnesses from the community
  - Engaging and preparing youth as faith witnesses
- Providing faith witnesses and engaging youth in faith sharing and affective prayer throughout catechesis and ministry with youth.



# Family Witness

- Consider all family relationships
  - Parents
  - Grandparents
  - Aunts / Uncles
  - Siblings
- Empower parents and family to listen and witness faith
- Engage families in service and ministry for shared witness



# Parish Witness



Those of us who are no longer young need to find ways of keeping close to the voices and concerns of young people. **“Drawing together creates the conditions for the Church to become a place of dialogue and a witness to life-giving fraternity”.**

*# 38- Christ is Alive – Christus Vivit, April 2, 2019*

# Parish Witness



We need to make more room for the voices of young people to be heard: “listening makes possible an exchange of gifts in a context of empathy... At the same time, it sets the conditions for a **preaching of the Gospel that can touch the heart truly, decisively and fruitfully**”.

*# 38- Christ is Alive – Christus Vivit, April 2, 2019*





## The Parish Accompanies Young People

**The community has an important role in the accompaniment of young people; it should feel collectively responsible for accepting, motivating, encouraging and challenging them.**

*# 243- Christ is Alive – Christus Vivit*

April 2, 2019

# Begin with the parish relationship with youth

- Look at the engagement of youth in liturgy, community life, service
- Look for involvement of youth in ministries, leadership and decision making
- Look for the engagement of members of the parish community with young people







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# 220- *Christ is Alive – Christus Vivit*

April 2, 2019



# Radiate Christ Prayer

By Saint John Henry Newman

**ALL:** Dear Jesus, help me to spread Your fragrance wherever I go.  
Flood my soul with Your spirit and life.

**1:** Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly, that my life may only be a radiance of Yours. Shine through me, and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Your presence in my soul.

**2:** Let them look up and see no longer me, but only Jesus! Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as You shine, so to shine as to be a light to others.

**3:** The light, O Jesus, will be all from You; none of it will be mine.  
It will be you, shining on others through me. Let me thus praise You the way You love best, by shining on those around me.

**ALL:** Let me preach You without preaching, not by words but by my example, by the catching force of the sympathetic influence of what I do, the evident fullness of the love my heart bears to You.

Amen