

Parish Directors: Catechist Retreat Day

Theme: Children of Light

Outline:

Gathering and Opening Prayer

Session 1

Break

Session 2

Closing Blessing

You will need:

- refreshments
- votive candles
- matches
- large candle on or near prayer table
- large clear bowl with Holy Water
- Bibles
- paper and pencils
- song leader or CD Player
- *Alive in Christ* Songs of Scripture CD, “Holy Spirit, Be My Guide”
- Video *What is Spirituality?*
- LCD projector
- copies of Handouts 1 and 2
- art supplies

Gathering and Opening Prayer

Welcome catechists. Invite them to get refreshments and then be seated in the prayer circle. When all are assembled, make these or

similar introductory comments:

- This is meant to be a special time apart to help nourish faith.
- Think of it as your time. There is a structure to the time together but feel free to go off by yourself or spend time alone reflecting if the Spirit moves you to do that.

Leader: *Please stand and sing together “Holy Spirit, Be My Guide.”*

Leader: *Let us open our hearts to the presence of the Holy Spirit. Please respond* **Come Holy Spirit.**

Leader: *Spirit of the Living God, grant us enlightenment and inspiration.*

All: Come, Holy Spirit.

Leader: *Spirit of the Living God, guide our thoughts and prayers to know your will.*

All: Come, Holy Spirit.

Leader: *Spirit of the Living God, grant us the courage to change and grow.*

All: Come, Holy Spirit.

Leader: *Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.*

All: Come, Holy Spirit.

Be seated

Leader: *A reading from the Letter to the Ephesians.*

Read Ephesians 5: 8-10.

Reflection:

In your own words and with one of your own experiences make the following comments:

- In the Baptismal Rite, after the child is baptized, the celebrant goes to the Paschal Candle and lights a baptismal candle which he then gives to a parent or godparent with the words “...this child of yours has been enlightened by Christ. He/she is to walk always as a child of the light. May he or she keep the flame of faith alive in his (her) heart.” par 180
- Use some examples of people who witness living as a child of the light to you.
- How did they get that way? We keep the flame alive by paying attention to it, by being serious about our imitation of Jesus.
- For all of us, that flame was lit at Baptism when we were joined to Christ who lives in us.
- It gives us the power to be light as he was.

Tell the group they will have a few minutes of silence to reflect on what being a child of light means for them today.

Ask the group to come forward and remember their Baptism by blessing themselves with Holy Water. One by one light the votive candles from the large candle and present each catechist with a lit candle saying: *[Name,] live as a child of the light.*

Play quiet background music during this ritual.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: *May the peace of the Lord be with you. Please share the Sign of Peace with one another.*

Session 1

The Cracked Water Jar

- Introduce this session by commenting on how often we don't think that we are enough. We feel that we don't give out enough light. We feel like **The Cracked Pot**.
- Read the Story **The Cracked Pot**. (There is a copy at the end of this outline.)
- Distribute Handout 1. Direct the Catechists to go off on their own in silence and write their thoughts about the questions on the handout. Give them a time to return. Ask them to observe silence during this time.

When catechists return, depending on the size of the group, have them sit in small groups or just one group.

Ask participants to share their feelings and insights about their meditation in the group about the Cracked Water Jar, including their experience of reflecting on the Scriptures.

At the conclusion of the discussion, ask catechists to stand facing a partner and sign each other on the forehead, saying the words, "You are a child of the Light."

Break

Session 2

Gather catechists back in a group(s). Show the video *What is Spirituality?* Distribute Handout 2. Give catechists a few minutes to answer questions individually. Then have them share their responses in the group.

If there are several small groups at the conclusion of the discussion, ask volunteers to share some of the insights they had.

Explain that during this next activity the catechists will create an art piece (clay, drawing, finger paint, collage, poem, dramatic reading...) that expresses how they feel or think about themselves as a Child of the Light after today's retreat. Give a time limit.

When they have finished, have them place their creations on a table. Ask everyone to circle the table and see the work. Then ask volunteers to explain their piece.

Closing Blessing

Extend your hands and pray:

*May the light of Christ be your guide,
May it be with you in your comings and your goings.
May you carry it to all you meet.
Amen.*