

Speak in the Light Leader Guide – Session 5: I Can Speak in the Light

Set up

Set up a quiet room for reflection and prayer. Arrange a table with a Bible, candle, purple table cloth, and any other vehicles for prayer you wish.

Take time beforehand to determine if you will project the Scripture references (personal reflection), the Small Group Discussion Questions, etc. or if you would prefer to give a handout to everyone. See **Handout 5** if you choose to print copies for everyone.

Opening (5 minutes)

Gather participants in the space and arrange them in groups of 4-5. Play music as participants enter (consider using Catholic Lenten Hymns found on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF6BDBF2433184A49>) and invite them to enjoy refreshments (if provided). Have participants fill out nametags, if appropriate.

Introduce yourself and lead participants in the opening prayer:

Begin the prayer with a reading from the Gospel of Matthew 10:6-7, 27

Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' ... What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.

Then continue with the Intentions and Prayer from **Family Prayers** (as you have in every session: [https://www.cathdal.org/Family_Prayers\[4\].pdf](https://www.cathdal.org/Family_Prayers[4].pdf)). This is a resource published by the USCCB. There is a prayer intention and prayer for everyday of the week during Lent. So, if you are meeting on a Monday for Speak in the Light, use the Monday intention and prayer. Meeting on Tuesday, use the Tuesday intention and prayer, and so forth. If you want to have a different prayer for every one of your five gatherings, use five of the seven prayers available in the Family Prayers.

Reflection on Missionary Discipleship (5 minutes)

Introduce the following passage from the *Joy of the Gospel* with these or similar words:

The Holy Spirit has deepened our understanding of Scripture and the role it can play in our lives. Now in this session we will consider how we are called to share the word of God with others. Pope Francis and many other Church leaders have focused on our common vocation to be "missionary disciples" - people who evangelize with our words and actions while always growing deeper in love with Christ. Let us hear from a short passage of Pope Francis' letter The Joy of the Gospel, in which he describes our Catholic identity as "missionary disciples."

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Read the passage below or invite a participant to read it aloud:

The Joy of the Gospel, 120

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Matthew 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God’s saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are “disciples” and “missionaries”, but rather that we are always “missionary disciples”. If we are not convinced, let us look at those first disciples, who, immediately after encountering the gaze of Jesus, went forth to proclaim him joyfully: “We have found the Messiah!” (John 1:41). The Samaritan woman became a missionary immediately after speaking with Jesus and many Samaritans come to believe in him “because of the woman’s testimony” (John 4:39). So too, Saint Paul, after his encounter with Jesus Christ, “immediately proclaimed Jesus” (Acts 9:20; cf. 22:6-21). So what are we waiting for?

Personal Reflection – Look Inside (7 minutes)

Invite participants to privately look up biblical events, themes, or persons that Pope Francis mentions in this passage from *The Joy of the Gospel*. Participants can choose to review any and all of these passages, as they wish. Feel free to play reflective music in the background as participants look up the scenes. You may choose to write these passages on a white board or projector for participants to review:

- ❖ Matthew 28:16-20 (The Great Commission)
- ❖ John 1:35-51 (The Calling of the First Disciples)
- ❖ John 4:4-42 (Jesus and the Samaritan Woman)
- ❖ Acts 9:1-22 or Acts 22:1-21 (The Conversion of St. Paul)

Small Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Gather responses from the group on the passage from Pope Francis and the scenes they read from Scripture:

- *What comes to mind when you hear the phrase “missionary disciples”? How does Scripture inform your sense of being a missionary disciple?*
- *Pope Francis asks: What are you waiting for? What keeps you from sharing Jesus the Word where you are?*

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Where do we go from here? (25 minutes)

We now transition to reflecting on what we feel called to do once the Speak in the Light journey is over. First, we are going to watch a brief video clip that speaks a little more about living as a missionary disciple. (Show video clips now)

Video 1: Sharing the Difference Jesus Makes (3:35) <https://youtu.be/zrG-jpaPziU>

After showing the video clip, invite everyone to choose a partner and share around the questions below. This is your faith story so there is no right or wrong way to share it.

Share your personal story of faith with your partner: (10 minutes – 5 minutes apiece)

- How have your encounters with Jesus in Scripture, service to others, participation in your parish community, loving your family and yourself led you to a deeper relationship with Jesus? What difference has Jesus made in your life? What struggles have you experienced in your journey of faith?

Large group Sharing (10 minutes)

Come back together as the whole group (if you have more than 15 or so participants do this sharing in table groups). Let's talk about ways that we can be missionary disciples after Lent so that we may "speak in the Light" the Good News of Jesus Christ. Again, there are no right or wrong responses here. Consider these questions to help you frame your response:

- What have you heard in this study that others may like to hear?
- What opportunity for further study of Scripture and mission attracts you the most?
- What support will you need from the parish, your friends, or your family to follow-through on this next step?
- What is one way, given my talents, time and energy that I can "Speak in the Light" to share with others the Good News of Jesus Christ that I am living? Who is in need of the love of Christ?

Accept all responses and write these down as they may give you some ideas of future things to offer to adults in your parish

Closing (8 minutes)

Thank participants for their time in this study. Offer your contact information for further connection with participants. Pass out participant surveys or direct participants to complete the survey by following this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SpeakintheLight> .

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Closing Prayer

Close your time together with the following prayer:

As a sign that you are open to God's call to Speak in the Light, with tenderness and mercy, let us pray together:

God of mercy and love, we have chosen to journey with you this Lent by creating a new pattern, a new habit of looking for you in Scripture, prayer, the food we eat, in practicing generosity and penance. We know that you have journeyed with us because you love us and you focus on who we are – not on the mistakes we have made. We ask humbly that you journey with us again through Holy Week, through Jesus' death and resurrection and that you help us to see that death is not the end and that our hope lies in you.

We offer up our hopes to you as we listen for your call, commending these hopes to the Holy Spirit in all of the ways God yearns to work in our lives.

And so we pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

Let us pray for each other on this journey, especially those who need and desire a change of heart on this pilgrimage to Easter joy.