

*Prayer

All that has been done in this session will be drawn together in prayer, either this or another chosen by the group leader.

Almighty God,

By your grace you have given us new life in Jesus Christ,

who called your Church to witness that through his death and resurrection you were reconciling the world to yourself.

Awaken in us such a love for you and your world that we will boldly share the good news of your love;

That all who hear it may be drawn to you, come to know you as Saviour and follow you as Lord; to the glory of your Name.

Jesus Christ, Son of God,
make yourself known through me.

Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
speak through me to others.

Amen.

* Other Resources

See the back of the Faith Sharing- a Simple Guide leaflet.

Leading the Way is a resource produced by the Diocese of Truro Discipleship Team. It is designed to help individuals, congregations and communities to explore the way of life which will enable them to flourish in Jesus Christ.

LEADING THE WAY

Way of Life - a pattern for Christian Living

Journeying Out
Sharing- our faith.



“Door. Bridget Macaulay. Used with permission

Participants' Notes.



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(You might like to ask people what they make of the church and what they understand the Christian faith to be about. This can be a difficult exercise, but can teach us a lot about how we are perceived by those beyond the church, as well as providing opportunities to speak out).

⇒ What are the messages we wish to convey to our community and what are the best ways to do that?

communicate - in the ways we treat each other/in the priorities we have/in our involvement in community activities beyond the church etc.?)

⇒ Is our communication 'full of grace' and what might that mean anyway?

(You might like to explore the ways in which negativism or gossip or similar behaviours can work against our faith-sharing?)

⇒ What opportunities do we have within our community to speak about our faith (or to model it)? Do we make the most of these opportunities, or could we make more use of them?

* Beginning where we are

Your group leader will light a candle and place it on a table and then lead this or a similar prayer.

Heavenly Father,
you reached out to the world in your Son Jesus Christ.
Help us to reach out in faith and love and witness to all.
Lord Jesus Christ,
you send your Holy Spirit to empower and gift your Church. By your Spirit help us to grow in unity, to grow as your followers, and to grow your kingdom in this world.

Amen.

* Icebreaker

In a few moments of silence think about how long you have been a Christian and whether you can remember the moment you registered this.

What does your faith mean to you?

In pairs share this with each other.

* Introduction

"Journeying out" in our faith is about sharing the love of God through acts of service and through our words.

As disciples of Jesus we are called to share the Good News of his story (and our story) with others. We need to do this with enthusiasm and with humility, making sure we listen to others as well as share our beliefs. But how? We will need sensitivity, confidence and clarity, making sure that our lives

bear witness to what we say, that our actions speak as well as our words.

When doing this it's helpful to remember that Jesus always seemed to meet people "where they were". In other words his words and actions were just right for the person or people he was with. He did it naturally in response to their needs in ways, or with words, that he perceived would be helpful for them. This means that we don't need to worry about following set patterns or remembering formulas - although it's always helpful to be able to bring to mind useful Biblical stories or quotes. We can most often share our faith in ways which come naturally to us as a part of conversation. As we listen to someone we can pray that the Holy Spirit will provide opportunities for us to weave into our conversation something which speaks about our faith and could be relevant and helpful to that person. It's also useful to remember that we are not responsible for converting people - that is the work of the Holy Spirit so we need not worry if our conversation doesn't seem to lead anywhere and sometimes our prayer is equally that we should sense when it is time to stop speaking!

The above material is taken from and supplements the information in 'Faith Sharing a Simple Guide' leaflet. Please make sure you have a copy and that you take the time to read it after this session.

Consider some of the following:

Courses like Leading your Church into Growth, or inviting a member of the Diocesan Evangelism group to come and talk to you or train you. Hold a Faith sharing event or weekend with a visiting speaker or pair up with a neighbouring parish to share resources.

Think about, identify and list how your Church weaves Faith sharing activities or events into your Church diary. This can be as a part of social as well as special events/activities?

- **Community**

Paul encouraged the Colossians to " Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone".

⇒How do we communicate with our Community?

(What conscious ways do we use to communicate - magazine/ posters/ local papers/ social media/ personal contacts etc.? How effective are they? In what subconscious ways might we also

⇒ **Congregational.**

Paul suggested that the Colossians pray for each other that they would have opportunities to share their faith and when they did so, they would do so clearly.

⇒ How can we encourage one another in Church to devote ourselves to praying evangelistically?

- to listening to God and watching for where he is opening doors for our message

- to learning how to proclaim it clearly? (*Reading the Christianity an Introduction leaflet might help your confidence.*)

⇒ What training or resources might we use to help us improve on this?
(*Reading 'Faith Sharing a Simple Guide may give you some pointers.*)

Bible 'conversation'

Prayer

Holy Spirit of God;
open our ears and our minds, our hearts and our spirits,
that we may hear you speaking to us
through these words of Scripture.

May we be ready to be encouraged and challenged,
guided and changed.

For the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

* Bible Text

Colossians 4: 2-6

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone”.

*Notes

* Questions

• Personal

St. Paul encourages the Colossians to be "devoted to prayer being watchful and thankful".

⇒ What might it mean to pray evangelistically? i.e. for people to come to faith.

⇒ Am I watchful for God to open a door for my message and for opportunities to share it? How?

⇒ What do I think about that? How do I feel about it?

⇒ How thankful am I to God and how do I express that in my life? In words? In deeds? In public?

The Christian faith, for most, is the very real story of doubts and questions, struggles and failures that can speak to people.

⇒ What doubts and questions remain with me?

⇒ What am I most sure about in terms of my faith?

⇒ How could the way I express myself in little ways in everyday life tell people that I am a Christian without actually saying so?

Would I consider going on a training course or joining a Faith sharing team? Who would I contact?