

This prayer service is best used at the conclusion of the book *Our Catholic Faith*.

Prayer Service: “Living Our Life in Christ”

Needs:

- a decorated prayer table with the Bible
- Each student should have a prayer journal or paper on which to write reflections.
- oil (such as baby oil or olive oil)
- If possible, provide for every student some external symbol of Christianity, such as a cross pin.
- soft music to be played during the ritual

Prayer Introduction

Part 3 of our text is entitled “We Love: Our Life in Christ.” These chapters reminded us of what the Church teaches about living as Catholic Christians. We studied the teachings of Catholic morality, precepts, Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, virtues, types of prayer—all we need to *know* about what it means to live our life in Christ. We have the knowledge and we have the teachings.

In 1 John 3:18, we hear, “Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.” All that is left to *do* is to *live* our faith. St. Paul reminds us in our first reading that without the living of the faith, there is no faith. We know that this is no easy task, especially in a world that commonly thinks that it does just fine without God. Today let us remember that living our life in Christ is our surest way to happiness and that when this gets rough, Jesus will be walking with us. Let us pray for the courage to live as Christians.

Opening Prayer

Christ Jesus,
before you ascended into heaven,
you promised that you would be with us always.
This life to which you have called us
is sometimes difficult and lonely.
Remind us of your promise in those times
and walk with us on this journey.
Give us the courage to take what we have learned in this course
and practice it, so that we will become the people
you have created us to be. Amen.

Reading 1: James 2:14-18

Faith without works is dead.

Pause for Reflection/Journaling

James cautions us not only that “actions speak louder than words” but that words are useless without action. Think about your daily life as a Christian. If someone were to rate on a scale of

1 to 10 you as a Christian based on your actions alone, how high would you score? Write some of the actions that boost your rating and some of the actions that lower it.

Reading 2: Matthew 28:16-20

Remember, I am with you always.

Pause for Reflection/Journaling

Write a letter addressing Jesus directly. Tell him which parts of being a Catholic you find most difficult. Be honest. Trust that Jesus will both understand and help you.

Ritual

Leader: Acknowledging our fears and our difficulties in living our Christian life, let us pray for the courage and strength to know that Christ walks with us on our journey. When you are ready, come forward one by one—please do not form a line—to have your hands marked with the sign of the cross. This anointing is a symbol of strength for the actions, the work of your hands, that your Christian life calls you to. I will also give you a symbol of our faith. I challenge you to wear it openly as a sign of your commitment to Christ.

Begin soft music. As each person comes forward:

Leader: *(Marking the student's hands with a cross of oil:)* Student's name, may Christ's strength be with you. *(Giving the student a cross/symbol:)* Christ be with you.

Leader: United in our faith, let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us:

All: Our Father...

Leader: Remembering that we need to support and strengthen one another in Christian love, let us offer to one another a sign of peace.