



DVD Script

for

Six Challenges - Six Mysteries A Charter for Lutheran Education

**The following six DVD scripts
are essentially the text of the Narrator used in the DVDs.**

**These scripts do not include the text of students,
staff or principals of the various schools involved in the DVDs.**

**These scripts are included in this manual
to assist groups and group leaders in their deliberations.**

Six Challenges - Six Mysteries

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DVD Script

Challenge Two

Sequence 1 – Introducing the Challenge

I am looking at paintings from students at Cornerstone College. I wonder what these paintings mean for the students who painted them? Do they reflect a search for meaning—for the spiritual? I wonder.

And I wonder what Lutheran Education will be like 10 or 20 years from now for searching students like these? Will we be able to meet their needs?

Or, putting it another way, what role will contemporary spirituality play in Lutheran schools of the future?

The 2004 ACLE Conference threw out a number of challenges for Lutheran Schools to consider as they plan their futures.

And those challenges have been condensed into a new charter for Lutheran schools to explore. We now look at the second of these challenges.

Challenge Two

A 2020 Lutheran School will be spirit sensitive discerning the personal spirituality of students and listening to their inner search for meaning as the work of the Spirit.

Spirit sensitive! The second challenge in our 2020 charter is that the Lutheran school should become sensitive to the spirituality of its students today.

The chapel has long been a symbol of the spiritual in our school, the place where we worship God and celebrate Jesus Christ.

Is that still true, today?

Does the school chapel still stimulate the spirituality of our students? Or does it turn them away?

Why are many of the students in a Lutheran chapel silent rather than singing? Are their spiritual needs being met?

Sequence 2 – The Challenge from Kath Engebretson

One of the presenters at the 2004 ACLE Conference who challenged us to rethink how we understand student spirituality was Kath Engebretson.

According to Kath, young people today have a wide range of experiences that reflect their spirituality.

Some experience a sense of mystery and awe in their world—they sense something more than matter in, for example, the majesty of a mountain.

Some have a sense of kinship with nature, whether it be the delicate touch of a butterfly or the companionship of a wild animal.

Some find spirituality in their search for meaning with friends, with those who explore the unknown, especially the unknown within.

And some find the message of non-Christian religions a source of spiritual strength; it's like an ancient song that resonates with their spirit.

Sequence 3 – Exploring the Challenge

All of this suggests that many young people no longer find our portrayal of the Lutheran God relevant or the Lutheran way of worship meaningful.

This was confirmed at Immanuel College in 2004 when we completed a survey of student beliefs and attitudes.

The following are some of the results of that survey:

<p><i>65% have never read the Bible</i> <i>30% believe in God</i> <i>10% find church OK</i> <i>70% find meaning in friends,</i> <i>their own ideas</i> <i>and personal experience</i> <i>40% believe in karma</i></p>

A similar pattern can be discerned in other Christian schools, including Lutheran schools.

It is clear that the institutional church and institutional Christianity is not where a majority of teenagers find meaning, even at a Lutheran School.

For them, the Church and the chapel seem to have become obsolete. The pastor does not have the answers they seek—or so it seems. Karma is appealing, even if it is a pop version derived from novels and songs.

Sequence 4 – Voices from Lutheran Schools

If the institutional church is no longer the haven for students to explore meaning, mystery or the spiritual—is the school?

Can the school connect with the spiritual in students?

So where do young people find spirituality and meaning?

These are the thoughts of some students from Immanuel, Redeemer and St Peter's College.

They explore what one student called the 'spiritual X factor'.

In practical terms, the spirituality challenge means more than modifying current courses, content, or worship style—it means starting where the students are and wondering with them.

It means doubting with them!

It means searching inner worlds with them.

It means valuing their experiences

--in other words--

it means connecting with them.

Sequence 5 – Introducing Mystery Two

For many people, the bush is a spiritual place.

To reorient our thinking and to learn the language of contemporary spirituality will not be easy, especially for those of us trained in the traditional way.

Where will it lead, you ask? Where will all this study of modern spirituality take us?

And who will lead us? Who?

The Spirit! God's Spirit! Why? Because this challenge is grounded in another mystery of our faith,

a mystery known in Latin as

Spiritus Sanctus, The Holy Spirit!

Mystery Two

Spiritus Sanctus and the spirituality principle.

The mystery that the human spirit deep in the searching mind and searching heart of the child is being moved by the Spirit of God!

Sequence 6 – Exploring the Mystery

Spiritus Sanctus! We have long associated the Spirit with baptism. The Spirit working through the water creates faith in the child.

The Spirit working in creation brings nature to life. The Spirit is that breath of God that gave life to Adam and all living beings.

But the Spirit is also that impulse from God that stirs within us a sense of wonder when we behold God's creation.

The Spirit is that whispering from God that moves us to search for meaning and mystery in life as we face birth, death and the unknown.

The Spirit is that silent voice from God that leads us beyond ourselves to connect with others and finally with God. The Spirit is the power that leads us to search for God and ultimately find faith in Jesus Christ.

The Spirit is with our children as they leave chapel, leave school and return to their communities.

Yes, the Spirit is the impulse stirring the spirit in each child. And we are challenged as schools to nurture that stirring, that spiritual searching, that whispering of the Spirit.

That may mean, in fact, that schools are in a position to stir the spiritual dimension of our youth in a way that the churches can no longer do.

As our children leave school, will they remember their school as the place where they searched for more than maths?
Where they were free to explore more than geography?

Sequence 7 – The Closing Challenge

A 'Spirituality revolution'! That's what one writer it! The youth of today have a very different sense of the spiritual—something that most of us never even considered spiritual.

Do we ignore this difference? Do we throw up our hands in frustration? Or do we listen, and learn and wonder – and listen again?

After all, the Spirit of God is stirring the spirit deep within each child, even if that stirring sounds different from what we have known in the past.

We are listening for a spirituality stirred by the Spirit, much like listening to the mysterious flight of a dove!