



# We Are the Light of the World

## An Online Confirmation Retreat

This free resource from Sadlier is available in English and in Spanish.

To access the retreat and its resources online, please go to:



(in English), click here\*: [We Are the Light of the World](#)



(in Spanish), click here\*: [Somos la luz del mundo](#)

This retreat, which focuses on letting your light shine, has a great connection with the celebration of Confirmation. The retreat can be facilitated through an online video platform and adapted as follows:

### PRIOR to the retreat:

1. Choose an online platform suitable and accessible to your group. (E.g. Zoom, Facetime, Go to Meeting)
2. Send an invitation to the candidates with appropriate links, dates, and times. The average time for the retreat is about one hour.
3. Send a link to handouts #2 (“List of Lights”) and #4 (“Letting My Light Shine”), along with instructions to run both off prior to the retreat.
4. Invite candidates to find Matthew 5:14-16 in their Bibles and to have the passage at hand during the retreat.

\* If you prefer, go to [www.Religion.SadlierConnect.com](http://www.Religion.SadlierConnect.com). Click on the **purple box** and scroll to the icon shown above.



## We Are the Light of the World



### Getting Started — 10 minutes

After the group has assembled online, offer a word of welcome. Using the microphone or the chat box, invite participants to introduce themselves individually.

Introduce the theme of light that will be used as a focus of the retreat.

Refer to handout #2 – “List of Lights.” Explain that, instead of working in groups, each person should compile their own list of lights. Give the signal to start, giving the participants one minute to list as many types of light as they can.

At the end of one minute, have each person share their list, adding only the items that have not been named previously. Give the person with the most answers a round of applause.

### Opening Prayer — 10 minutes

Explain that, in coming on retreat, we set aside other concerns so that we can open our hearts to God. Even though we are not able to gather together in person, we still form a community of faith through praying and sharing together.

To help prepare for this time of prayer and the proclamation of the Gospel, invite the young people to quiet themselves and remove any distractions. Guide the group in taking 3-4 long, slow breaths. Allow silence to be part of the process for a minute or two.

Explain that you will be using the practice of Lectio Divina for this short reading from the Gospel of Matthew. It will be read three times with a short pause after each reading.

Invite the young people to close their eyes and to open their hearts in order to listen to the Word of God. If desired, ring a small hand bell to signal the start of the prayer.

Read Matthew 5:14-16 and allow a minute of quiet reflection.

Before reading it a second time, ask the young people to listen for a word or phrase that stands out for them. Read the passage again and invite the participants to name the word or phrase aloud or in the chat box.

Before reading it a third time, ask the young people to listen for a word or phrase that has meaning for them as they prepare for Confirmation. Ask: *What might God be saying to you?* Read the passage and pause for a minute or two of quiet reflection.

Invite the group to take a deep breath and then to open their eyes in order to come back together. Ring the bell to signal the end of the reflection time.





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### Letting Our Light Shine — 20 minutes

Explain that this reading is found in the part of the Gospel of Matthew called the Sermon on the Mount. It contains a number of Jesus' teachings about how to live as faithful disciples.

Lead a brief discussion on the Gospel reading, using these or other questions to provide direction.

*What do you think Jesus meant when he said to the people, "You are the light of the world"? Draw out specific responses that have to do with sharing our gifts, talents, and resources.*

*He also told them not to hide their light but to let it shine. Why might people hide their light? Draw out responses that name how people might not recognize the light they have to share, their reluctance to "stand out," or their uncertainty about their own goodness.*

Explain four different sources of light that that can be used to symbolize a different way to let one's light shine:

**Flashlight**—Brainstorm with the entire group the uses for a flashlight. Note that a flashlight provides a way to find our way through dark places. It symbolizes *guidance*.

**Candle**—Brainstorm with the entire group the uses for a candle. Note that a candle is sometimes set in a window or in a room to create a warm, inviting atmosphere. It symbolizes *welcome*.

**Headlamp**—Brainstorm with the entire group the uses for a headlamp. Note that a headlamp provides light to find one's way along uncharted paths. It symbolizes *leadership* and how we *witness* to others by the way we live our faith.

**Nightlight**—Brainstorm with the entire group the uses for a nightlight. Note that a nightlight is often placed in a young child's room to provide reassurance through its steady glow. It symbolizes *presence*.

Point out that these four symbols of light provide some ideas about how young people can let their lights shine as disciples of Jesus.

Revisit each one and invite participants to share ideas for ways in which young people can let their lights shine through guidance, welcome, leadership, and presence.

### Letting My Light Shine — 10 minutes

Point out that these four ways to share our light are only some of the ones we can use to let our light shine. Each of us has a unique light to share because of our individual gifts, talents, and resources.

Invite the candidates to consider how they can let the light of Jesus Christ shine in their lives as well as how they may be failing to recognize or hiding that light.

Ask them to take out handout #4, "Letting My Light Shine". Invite them to reflect on the light that each of us has and how God is calling on us to let it shine.

Point out that the handouts serve as a personal guide to help participants through the reflection. They can write their responses to the questions and then continue to reflect on the questions as they prepare to celebrate Confirmation.

As time allows, give them time to fill in their responses to the questions. If desired, engage the group in sharing some of their responses.



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### Closing Prayer — 10 minutes

Ask the group to open their Bibles to Matthew 5:14-16. Invite a volunteer to read the passage.

Proceed with the prayer, inviting the candidates to pause after each one to consider how they will share the light of Christ.

- Leader:** *Jesus, let the light of wisdom shine in us. Show us how to light the way for those who need our friendship and support.*
- All:** *Amen.*
- Leader:** *Jesus, let the light of love shine in us. Remind us to be warm and welcoming to those who are new to our school, team, neighborhood, or family.*
- All:** *Amen.*
- Leader:** *Jesus, let the light of witness shine in us. Give us the courage to live our faith each day and to be a model of love and caring for others.*
- All:** *Amen.*
- Leader:** *Jesus, let the light of compassion shine in us. Help us to remember that our parents, our sisters and brothers, our teachers, counselors, and coaches all need our love and understand-*
- All:** *Amen.*
- Leader:** *Jesus gave us a beautiful prayer to light the*
- All:** *Our Father...*

Thank the participants for joining in the retreat and encourage them to keep considering how they are sharing Christ's light as they prepare for Confirmation.

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