

Promoting Lenten Faith Sharing Groups

1. Start Early for Promotion and advertisement

• Bulletin and Website

1. In the fall , let parishioners know that there will be a Lenten program for small groups.
2. Publish short blurbs to peak curiosity and interest in parish Lenten program
3. Upload links to *Disciples on the Journey* website at www.disciplesonthejourney.org where there will be more information about the program.

2. Small Group Leaders: Invite, Invite, Invite!!!

1. Again, in the fall call or email previous leaders to check if they are willing to be a leader again this year.
2. Invite others to become leaders.
 - A. Call personally those you think would be good leaders. Assure them that there will be group leader training. Give them a brief job description, what will be expected of them. Let them know immediately that they are facilitators and not teachers!! They are not expected to know any more than members of the group. They just need to be well prepared each week by becoming familiar with the material.
 - B. If you still need more small group leaders, advertise in bulletin and website. Again publish a brief job description, what will be expected of a small group leader.
 - C. A pulpit appeal can help if needed. Again, make sure that potential leaders know what is expected of them.

3. First Sign-Up Sunday: Again Invite! Invite! Invite! Parishioners to participate in the Lenten program!

- a. **Pulpit Talk** Six weeks before Lent, arrange for a pulpit talk at all the Sunday Masses.
- b. **Testimonies** would be great if you have people willing to share their experience in faith sharing in a small group, how this experience helped them in their spiritual and faith life
- c. **Encourage participation:** Let parishioners know that you want to encourage more and new participation. If they participated in the past, but not recently, encourage them to consider doing it again this Lent. If they have never been in a small faith-sharing group, tell them that there is no better time than now to join such a group.
- d. **Explain that the program**
 - is not a Bible study, but faith sharing.
 - There are no right or wrong answers. You will not have to answer every question, no pressure.
 - There will be various times and days to participate.
 - Invite parishioners to offer to host a group in their home and/or serve as a group leader.

- e. **Lenten Program Flyer** At the First- Sign-Up Sunday Mass/es, if needed. provide or pass out a flyer that explains the Lenten program and what is expected of participating parishioners.
- f. **Sign-up Forms** Have cards or forms in the pews or at the back of the church so that participants and leaders can indicate what day and time would be best for them to host or participate in *Disciples on the Journey*. See website www.disciplesonthejourney.org for sample forms.
 - They can drop forms in a basket at the back of the church, bring them next Sunday, or take them to the rectory during the week.
 - Give them a phone number or an email to sign up to participate if they prefer that to filling out a card.
 - If you have the capability for them to sign up on your parish website, that is also another good option.
- g. **Second Sign-Up Sunday**

Repeat the above process but more briefly.

 - Core group members might want to form a phone committee to encourage parishioners to sign up. A personal invitation works wonders!

4. **Step Five: Organizing the Small Groups**

- a. Have a committee take the forms that have been turned in and sort them into those who volunteered to host a group and those who signed up to participate.
- b. Then take the participant forms and put them with the host/leader who has indicated the same day and time that they have. When you have ten persons, start another group and continue until all those who signed up are in a group.
- c. If you do not have enough hosts/leaders, call parishioners who are leaders in other parish groups or whom you think might be able to do this and encourage and invite them to become a group leader.
- d. If you have more leaders than needed, put the extra leaders into a group that matches their preferred date and time. Perhaps they could co-lead the group.

5. **Step Six:** Continue to announce each Sunday that it is not too late to sign-up and encourage people to do so.

6. **Step Seven: Leader Training**

- a. Two or three weeks before Lent schedule a leaders' meeting
 1. To go over the leader's duties.
 2. To have a training session
 3. You may have to schedule two meetings because of people's busy schedules. Several dates and times give people a choice.
- b. **See website** for a suggested format for Leaders of Small Groups.