

HOW TO RECRUIT FOR YOUR FAITH STUDY GROUP



Leadership Toolkit for Faith Study Coordinators

PERSONAL INVITATIONS

Recruiting participants for your small group can be a challenging experience. It involves having to reach out, meet new people and communicate to them the value of Discover Discipleship in a way that will inspire them to be a part of it. At the same time, this experience is very exciting and personally enriching. It is a great opportunity for you to grow as a leader.

Here are some practical tips that can help in the recruiting process:

Personal invitations:

- **Stay motivated.** Remember the great value of what we are doing: helping people enter into a relationship with Jesus for the first time or in a deeper way. We are helping to build community and genuine Christian fellowship in our small group. We are forming multiplying missionaries.
- **Develop an Impact List.** Make a list of friends, neighbours, co-workers and parishioners who you would like to invite to participate. Your list may include people who already regularly attend Mass as well as people who may be struggling in their faith. Never assume people will not benefit from this program. Include people in your list who you feel have the potential to be good leaders themselves. Remember that people you lead could one day go on to lead their own study!
- **Make personal contact.** Contact people on your Impact list. Personal contact, either in person or on the phone is best. Be prepared to communicate to them what you are doing in a way that that inspires them to join. For example, “a group of us are gathering for a small group faith study. I personally have

found this to be a great experience. It helped make my faith more alive. Would you like to come out too?” Communicate that the group will meet only once a week, for an hour, over six weeks. Encourage them to try it out. If they are interested, see what day of the week/time works. Write it beside their name in your Impact List. Follow up as necessary.

PARISH WIDE INVITATIONS

You can advertise to the wider parish community in many ways, including the following:

- **Bulletin.** Ask to place a short announcement in the parish bulletin. Here are a few examples:

Come and experience your faith in a new and exciting way by joining the Discover Discipleship faith study group for (specify audience: men/women/mixed/age) starting in mid-September. Rediscover the essence of your faith and a personal relationship with God. Learn simple but powerful tools to help you share your faith with others. Contact (put info here) for more details.

Tired of falling back into the same old Lenten resolutions? This Lent, take a little time – an hour a week for six weeks – to discover or deepen your relationship with Christ. By taking the first study, Discovery, you will join with a small group of fellow parishioners (or: “men/women from the parish” if it’s gender-specific) to explore, learn more about, and increase your faith. To register... Note that space is limited and registration will be taken first-come, first served.

You can focus on a specific audience, such as teachers.

Teachers, here's something not just for you but also for your students! As spring comes along, dedicate a little time – an hour a week for six weeks – to deepen your relationship with Christ. By taking the Discovery study, you'll learn more about your faith with other teachers. You'll also learn tools to simply and effectively share the core Catholic message with your students. To register... Note that space is limited and registration will be taken first-come, first-served.

- Announcement. Make a short announcement after Mass. Be sure to keep it short. Make yourself available at the back of the Church after Mass if people have further questions.
- Flyers. Personally hand out the study flyers provided by the Ministries and Outreach Coordinator. (include a link to the postcard)
- Advertise through parish groups. Contact parish groups listed in the bulletin (Prayer Group, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women's League). Ask for the opportunity to personally invite group members at their next meeting.
- Host a recruitment weekend (see the Running a Successful Recruitment Weekend guide).

RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT WEEKEND

As a Faith Study coordinator, running a parish recruitment weekend a couple of weeks before the first Faith Study is an excellent way to get parishioners interested. Here are some suggested steps.

First, announce the recruitment weekend in the parish bulletin so people expect it and know how to register.

At all Sunday Masses have someone share a short testimony about their experience in Discover Discipleship and invite parishioners to sign up. If no one is available from your parish, other parishes will have people willing to share their testimony.

Enlist your Faith Study leaders' help by asking them to join you at the back of the church with clipboards and signup sheets.

Around Lesson 5 or 6 of your Faith Study, have invitation cards made for each participant to hand out to their friends for the next round.

Ask your pastor to:

- Speak about the faith studies in his homily.
- Include it in the prayers of the faithful.
- Invite people at the end of Mass to register as part of a Faith Study by letting parishioners know there are people at the back of the church with signup sheets.
- Greet people at the door by inviting them to sign up for the Faith Study.