

The Gift of Small Communities to Parish Life

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The Catechism describes a parish as a stable community of the faithful. But what provides stability in a parish community? A parish does not gather around an idea but rather the person of Christ whose sacrifice of love is both a gift for us to receive and a call for us to live out in the world. Participation in small communities within a parish deepens parishioners' relationships with one another and shifts the responsibility for discipleship and mission from solely the pastor and parish staff to the whole parish community. Small communities are not one more faith formation program or activity within the parish but can become an essential foundation for strengthening parishioners' engagement with the faith and activating their own and one another's discipleship within and beyond the parish.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do your parishioners currently build meaningful, faith-based relationships with other parishioners?
2. How do you imagine small communities could help your parish to deepen parishioners' relationships with one another and to strengthen their sense of Christian discipleship and mission within and beyond the parish community?
3. What elements and considerations would you include in a pilot program of small communities in your parish to attract parishioners and help them to activate their own and one another's life of discipleship?
4. What next steps do you need to take to create small communities in your parish?



SPIRITUAL CONTEMPLATION

Hebrews 10:23-25

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not forgetting to meet together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”



RESOURCES

[BOOK] [Turn to the Lord](#) by Leonard DeLorenzo, Ph.D.

[ARTICLE] [Why Community Is Needed Now More than Ever](#)
by Leonard DeLorenzo, Ph.D.

[ARTICLE] [The Task of Building Catholic Communities at Schools and Parishes](#)
by Leonard DeLorenzo, Ph.D.



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