

Small Group Invitations

5 Simple Steps...

1. Strike Up a Conversation

A lot of times you see people sitting by themselves at church, or who don't seem to know many people - you can see it in their face, often they're not talking to anyone. Introduce yourself and get to know them! Ask them where they're from, how long they've been going to Holy Family, and then, after a couple of encounters with them, casually ask if they are in a Small Group.

2. Extend an Invite

Let people know you are in a Small Group, and how beneficial that community has been in your own life. It's a great way to meet people! Invite them to check out your group but let them know there are groups that meet nearly every day of the week. It's a way to let someone know they're invited, but also gives them the opportunity to explore other groups if they wish.

3. Don't Be Afraid to Try Again

Don't be discouraged if someone turns down your invite, try to engage them every time you see them—just say hi to them. Don't try to push small groups, but maybe ask them about it a few weeks later.

4. Don't Underestimate How God Can Use You

You never know who God puts in your path, if you have a feeling - act on it!

5. Not Outgoing? That's OK Too.

If bringing people together isn't your gift, find the person in your small group who's a natural connector. It doesn't have to be the leader.



MARCH 2022

HAPPENINGS THIS MONTH...

With the exception of the first day, the entire month of March falls during the liturgical season of Lent which is represented by the liturgical colour violet or purple — a symbol of penance, mortification and the sorrow of a contrite heart.

TUESDAY MARCH 1: We finally see more lifting of restrictions and a light at the end of these difficult Covid times. Holy Family will be open to 100% capacity! With this easing pray on bringing your Small Group back to in person. Remember, not everyone will be comfortable right away so consider having in-person sessions but continue to offer a zoom link for those that may not be ready just yet.

WEDNESDAY MARCH 2: Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent with Mass being celebrated at 9:00am and 7:00pm with the distribution of Ashes being offered at both Masses.

FRIDAY MARCH 4: Eucharistic Adoration starting at 12noon until midnight. During this time, there will be **Guided Adoration** after the 7pm Mass until 8:15pm followed by continuation of Solemn (silent) Adoration until midnight. There will also be **Stations of the Cross** at 6:30pm. On Friday, as a parish, we will pray for Peace in the World all day long.

THURSDAY MARCH 17: St. Patrick is called the "Apostle of Ireland." He established the Catholic Church throughout Ireland on lasting foundations. He traveled all over the country preaching, teaching, building churches, opening schools and monasteries, converting chiefs and bards, and everywhere supporting his preaching with miracles.

FRIDAYS: Eucharistic Adoration every Friday 12noon to 7:00 (until midnight on the first Friday of each month) with the Stations of the Cross every Friday during Lent.

SATURDAYS: There is always a priest in the confessional waiting to hear confessions every Saturday from 4:00 to 4:45pm.





What can you do for an amazing Lent?

Lent is the time in the Church year when we prepare for Jesus' suffering, death, and Resurrection. The purpose of Lent is to help us grow in our faith and become spiritually stronger. We have the opportunity during Lent to spend time in the desert with Jesus.

Pray and ask God to enlighten your mind and heart to what you should do for Lent. Give yourself time to pray and listen. God may not answer you in one day or give you an obvious answer. He may quietly shine a light in an area of your life that He wants you to focus on. Trust in Him to guide you. It is more likely one will stick to and succeed in any self improvement journey if they have someone with whom they can travel that road with. This is true with our faith journeys and where our Small Groups can us.

Why not use your next Small Group meeting to discuss together your Lenten intentions, help each other and hold each other accountable? It is easier to say "I'll start tomorrow" when no one is asking how your progress is.

Some things to consider...

PRAYER: Take time to look at how you communicate with God in your life right now. How is your current prayer life? Lent is a time to go deeper in prayer... What changes can you make to improve your prayer life? You don't need to make a big change for it to be a worthwhile one. Is there a prayer you have been wanting to pray, but have never prayed? Lent may be the perfect opportunity for you to begin praying it. Do you just want to make more time for prayer in your daily life? Set your timer for 5-15 minutes a day and pray.

FAST: The Church requires the faithful who are in good health and not nursing or pregnant from ages 18-59 to fast from eating between meals on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. We are also asked to avoid meat on these days and on all the Fridays during Lent. You can also fast from anything your are drawn to for Lent, social media, sweets etc. The idea of a fast is to offer a sacrifice to God of something that is currently part of your life. Fasting's aim is to bring you closer to God. Think about what sacrifice will help you to draw closer to God.

ALMSGIVING: When you give alms, you give part of your time, talent, or treasure to help someone in need. You give up something for the good and benefit of another. Be creative, call a lonely friend or do an act of service for someone, teach someone something that you know, like how to balance a chequebook, make a meal, or knit a scarf, donate money to your church or to a worthy charity, donate food or clothes. Almsgiving does not just mean giving money. It means giving of part of your treasures-your time, talent, and money-to help others in need. Almsgiving reminds us that all we have comes from God; it does not really belong to us. God gave you the gifts and talents He did so that you can grow in faith and help others.

For resources to help you prepare for an amazing Lent visit: holyfamilywhitby.ca/lent-2022/

TESTIMONIES

Send to Kim: holyfamily.kim@gmail.com

We'd love to hear from you!

Send us a personal testimony and let others now how your Small Group has impacted you! If you have any photos of you group - Please share them for our next Newsletter

Many people sit in our Church week after week, never knowing anyone, They may be new or have just never made a connection. Life is better when we do it together. See how it has changed for Linda and her small group since she has joined...

I've only been with this group for about two years. As you know I left BC and moved to Ontario in 2019 to be with my brother and his family but leaving all my friends behind. Father talked about 'small groups' in the Bulletin so I contacted Kim who put me in touch with you and your group. I longed to meet with other Catholics I could share my faith with...who would understand. Unfortunately a lot of people feel you should only talk about God on Sunday in church! I also didn't know much about Lectio Divina which we incorporate in our group meetings. I was very happy to be accepted and to share and learn each week. I feel I have grown immensely in my faith through this weekly sharing and support. I am also trying to do 'lectio Divina' now on my own to hopefully understand scripture better and God's will. Thanks again, Nancy! - God Bless, Linda

Kim you referred Linda to my group and she has blossomed as a member of our community of love. She is an asset in the parish 's evangelization mission.

Thanks and warm regards - Blessings, Nancy

The Power of Prayer –

Come join our Marriage and Family Life Prayer Ministry

Did you know that Holy Family has a perpetual prayer ministry? This means that each person signs up to pray using our beautiful booklet one day of the month for the intentions of Marriage and Family Life, so that these special prayers are being said every day of the month, every day of the year. And, this ministry exists across North America so that our ministry joins the efforts of others to strengthen our petitions for the protection of the basis of our life and society, marriage and family.

We welcome new members at any time to join our Marriage and Family Life Prayer group. Parishioners who wish to seek a private prayer moment with God to pray for their special intentions and read through our fabulous prayer book on Marriage and the Family on your own time are encouraged to join. This prayer time will strengthen your hope, faith and deepen your belief in the power of prayer. Or, it could also be used for a small group prayer time. As part of this prayer ministry you have the option to participate in a group prayer session for one hour once a month on the first Friday of each month in the evening at 8pm via zoom (currently due to covid restrictions). During our shared group prayer time we read a chapter from the book and pray for any special intentions. We pray for each other, for our families, friends, neighbours and other people in need of support, hope, love and care from God. By joining together once per month, we strengthen and support each other in our on-going individual efforts of prayer throughout the rest of the month. As we approach Lent, this might be a way to deepen your prayer life. You are invited to please consider joining our Marriage and Family Life Prayer Ministry for a prayer adventure you will enjoy.

You can contact Paola Polzl @ ppolzl@hotmail.com or Mary kay Boase mk.boase@rogers.com to learn more about the Marriage & Family Life prayer group. I leave you with a passage quoted from the prayer booklet titled " Ask, Search, Knock, An hour of Prayer for Marriage & Family Life" by Fr Johnny Doherty, CSsR

"Ask and you will receive: Search and you will find: Knock and the door will be opened to you." Luke 11:9

Thank you Mary Kay Boase

SERIES OF THE MONTH

ON FORMED!

John Paul II said,

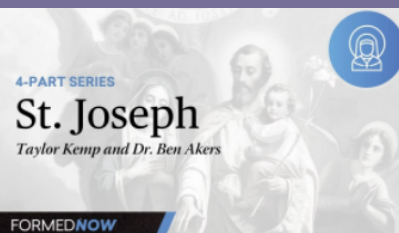
"Because St. Joseph is the protector of the Church, he is the guardian of the Eucharist and the Christian family. Therefore, we must turn to St. Joseph today to ward off attacks upon the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and upon the family. We must plead with St. Joseph to guard the Eucharistic Lord and the Christian family during this time of peril."

Since the month of March is dedicated to St. Joseph, why not do this quick 4 part series and get to know St. Joseph better.

In 'St. Joseph' a 4 part series Dr. Ben Akers and Taylor Kemp sits down to reflect on the earthly father chosen by the heavenly Father for his Son, Jesus Christ.

Find '**St Joseph Series**' on FORMED!

<https://watch.formed.org/saint-joseph-series>



Contact Kim for more Information, to share your thoughts or to ask for support! holyfamily.kim@gmail.com



Small Group VISION

Reminder to please work on and share your Small Group Vision Statement with Father László.

A small group is destined to die a slow, complacent, even cordial death without direction. Good food and casual conversation might be staples of normal small group life, but they cannot be the substance. Too many groups meet week after week, month after month without any clear mandate, and therefore without any clarity regarding whether or not they're fulfilling their purpose or really accomplishing anything. We should be asking what defines our fellowship. Why is it worth spending all this time together? How do we know that we're not wasting our Wednesday or Thursday evenings? Small Groups need a vision.

A vision is a statement of the functional purpose of your small group.

Why do you have a small group?

What specifically do you hope to accomplish?

How are you carrying out the church's mission?

How will you know if your small group is making progress and bearing fruit?

Here are three reasons to go ahead and invest your time, energy, and prayer into a vision statement for your small group.

1. Vision breeds commitment and investment.
2. Vision makes decision-making more objective.
3. Vision mobilizes your people inside and outside of your meetings.

Vision is the most important tool you have for recruiting team members. People who join the small-group ministry because they believe in the vision for the ministry are committed. They long to see the vision become a reality, so they're likely to stay on the team for years to come—even until the vision is realized. Vision must inform the group strategy if you want to see success. Without a vision, it's difficult to choose a strategy that will result in a good outcome. A deeply instilled vision is the unifying factor for the entire small-group ministry team. When everyone is on the same page, dreaming the same dream, there are fewer points of dissension, less concern for who gets the spotlight, and a shared passion that infiltrates the heart of every team member. You'll know you've embraced a vision from God for your ministry when it's a God-sized vision. God never calls his people to accomplish something that is within their own ability to accomplish.

Visit the Small Group page of the website and scroll down to the bottom of the page to find the Small Group Vision Statement Document for more detailed information on how to do this! holyfamilywhitby.ca/small-groups/

We strongly encourage you, if you have not already done so, to please use your next Small Group meeting to work on your Vision Statement and then send it the parish office to Father Laszlo's attention. Contact Kim if you need assistance at holyfamily.kim@gmail.com