



## Facilitating Small Faith Groups

Facilitation, a skill and art of opening hearts and minds to the transformative power of the Holy Spirit

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## What is a Small Faith Group?

A small faith group is a community of people who nurture friendships as they support each other in growing knowledge and love of God and His creation through prayers, discussions, faith-sharing and Works of Mercy.



## What happens in a Small Faith Group?

- We meet people where they are and accompany them in their life and faith journeys.
- We discuss Faith truths from everyone's points of view to understand concrete guidance for everyday life.
- We reflect on our lives through the lens of specific passages from Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition (CCC) to discover where God calls us to conversion.
- We share our plan of action for changing into greater likeness of Christ Jesus.
- We support each other and keep each other accountable.

- **Prepare and pray** with the content in advance. Pray for your group.
- **Evaluate content** in order to adjust questions for the needs of your group and the situation in the society and the world.
- **Know your faith story** - if the group is stuck you should model vulnerability.
- **Keep the group connected.**
  - Group text or email for sharing prayer, or any other needs.
  - Check on members who missed the group meeting.
- **Connect with your Flock leader** and be available for periodic facilitator gatherings.

- Coordinate what works for your small group:
  1. **Virtually** gather adults at one time and the children at a different time
  2. **In-person** gather whole families and separate adults and children for at-level learning
  3. **In-person** gather adults at one time and children at another
  
- Involve the whole group in deciding how to gather!

## Structuring a Small Group

- Roles: Host, Facilitator, Participants
- Optimal size 5-8 families
- Coordinate group's meeting time and place
- Have a definite beginning and ending time
- Have the Guide
- Set a welcoming environment- prayerful, comfortable, safe
- **If meeting in person:** masks & social distancing
- **If including food** at your gathering use prepackaged food, takeout, or serve yourselves with masks on and use proper hygiene practice!
- **If around children** all adults must have ARCHGH Safe Environment training. (contact [ghanys@cgsc.cchurch](mailto:ghanys@cgsc.cchurch))

- **Set the tone-** it's not a lecture, but a conversation.
- **Invite questions-** every question is worthy of discussion.
- **Ask open-ended questions** and reword if necessary.
- **Allow silence.**
- **Affirm** every effort to share.
- **Acknowledge differences;** Direct sharing as dialogues, not arguments.
- **Keep meetings on point.**
- **Avoid teaching** and lead away from advising or gossiping.
- **Guide people into conversations with each other.**
- Be real and flexible.

- **Opening Prayer**
- **Introduction**- ask everyone to share a bit about themselves.
- **Go through Participant Guidelines** and agree with the group about any additional guidelines group would like.
- **Break open the Word** for the Sunday
- **Closing Prayer**



## Participant Guidelines

- Practice **RACE** (2 Timothy 4:7): **R**espect, **A**ccountability, **C**onfidentiality, **E**ngagement
- There are no wrong answers in faith sharing.
- Every question is a good question.
- Propose don't impose; Agree to disagree.
- Take your time; silence is okay, too.
- Share in first person, not third. No Gossiping!
- Attentively listen and affirm each other.
- Respond, don't react.
- Avoid counseling, instead, share your witness.
- Give everyone a chance to share.
- Give full attention to the person who is sharing.
- Allow prayer to take you where the Holy Spirit leads.
- Have fun!

## Flow of a Small Group that gathers whole families

- Allow 5-10 minutes for group to gather and relax into being with each other.
- Start with group prayer and sharing of the food (if you choose to have food).
- Divide into two groups: children and adults.
- One couple leads children in learning on their level using the Guide. Couples rotate in this function.
- Adults use adult part of the Guide.
- After about an hour gather the whole group for closing prayer and fellowship.

- **Weekly Guide is the material for all ages!**
- All Small Faith Groups are to use the Guide.
- Choose what works for your group.
- Share your learning insights from using the Guide with your family, the Domestic Church.
- Share your insights from learning with the CGS community through the Mass.

- For help with small group  
<https://cgsccdogh.org/contact-us>
- To share successful activities:  
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