



# PLANS OF HOPE

HOUMA-THIBODAUX PARISH PLANNING

## RESOURCE B



### Specifically assessing adult formation ministries in the parish. Are they bearing fruit of discipleship growth?

**TO BE USED BY** Parish Implementation Teams, Adult Formation Teams or Parish Staff

**PURPOSE** Once all existing or new adult formation ministries have been identified, this resource is meant to help provide some considerations for assessing fruitfulness of the adult formation ministries in the parish.

**PLEASE NOTE** Adult formation ministries are those ministries in the parish which have been identified as assisting people to entering into, and remaining with, the discipleship process.

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#### GENERAL INFORMATION

- Name of ministry or small group:
  
- How often does the group meet?
  
- How long has the ministry existed?
  
- Have new leaders naturally come out of the group?

“THE FIVE”

- Assess whether aspects of “the five” are evident, natural, and consistent within this ministry.
- Consider the following questions.
- A “yes” most likely indicates fruitfulness.

**CONNECT** Does the ministry have a small group component?  
 YES Are people establishing intentionally and ongoing “connection” with others?  
 or Does meaningful relationship between others in the ministry naturally grow?  
 NO Does everyone feel as though we are on the “journey of faith” together?  
 Does the comfort and “depth” of personal sharing increase over time with those involved?

**ENCOUNTER** Does discussion center more on personal relationship w God vs. “facts” about God?  
 YES Is the group noticing and naturally sharing about God’s action in their lives?  
 or Have people shared about a moving and deep encounter with Jesus?  
 NO Have people shared about an experience of being personally loved by God?  
 Have people involved naturally grown in comfort with silence in or outside the ministry time?

**CONVERSION** Have people shared about their desire to put God at the center of their life?  
 YES Have people made necessary changes in their life to more closely follow Jesus?  
 or Have people grown in awareness of their response to God’s grace in their lives?  
 NO Have people grown in awareness of their resistance to God’s grace in their lives?  
 Within the group, are you confident that everyone has at least a few people that know their personal resolutions and hold them accountable?

**GROW** Does the group provide ongoing opportunities for everyone to grow in prayer?  
 YES Is there evidence of that growth in prayer?  
 or Does the group provide ongoing opportunities for everyone to grow in understanding of  
 NO Scripture, the Sacraments and knowledge of the faith ?  
 Is there evidence of growth in these areas?  
 Have you noticed discussion grow in depth and move beyond sharing “feelings” about God?  
 Have people shared often about how disciplines in their lives have helped them grow?  
 (daily prayer, reading scripture, weekly Mass)  
 Do people become more aware of what is needed to remain in and grow in my faith?

**MISSION** Has participation in this ministry helped people feel comfortable sharing with others about what  
 YES God has done in their life?  
 or Have those in the group evidently grown in confidence to respond to opportunities God offers to  
 NO reach out to others and share His love and truth?  
 Through this ministry, have those in the group become aware of particular spiritual gifts God has given them?  
 Have those in the group evidently become more aware of times when God has used them as a vessel of His love?  
 Has this ministry had an impact on helping people feel strengthened for their vocation (marriage, parenting, etc), occupation (my work) and call to bring His light to all areas of life?

“THE NINE”

- Consider what you observe in peoples lives over time through participation in this ministry.
- Some “entry level” formation ministries (such as a retreat or mission trip) may evidence a “start” or “impact” in a short amount of time.
- Consider the questions. The questions indicate what you might observe that indicates fruitfulness and growth in this area. Then, highlight or underline all those that you have observed as growth in peoples lives, because of involvement in this ministry.

- RELATIONSHIP** Have people established a personal encounter with Jesus?  
Has this relationship evidently offered them purpose and direction?
- CONVERSION** Has Jesus become the center of their lives?  
Are they aware of what they need to say “yes” to so as to stay in relationship with God?  
Are they aware of what they need to say “no” to that which pulls them away from God?  
Are they aware of why accountability is so important to remain in relationship with God?  
Has there been growth in the practice of: Confession, examination of conscience, etc?
- DISCERNMENT** Have those involved in the ministry learned how to discern “the little things”?  
Is discernment and a posture of “I want what God wants” modeled in the ministry?  
Do participants naturally begin to ask “God what do you want”?  
Have participants grown in their ability to “hear God’s voice”?
- SACRAMENTS** Have the Sacraments become a regular part of the lives of participants?  
Has additional reception of the sacraments been expressed? (For example: daily Mass, monthly Confession, Eucharistic Adoration, etc.)  
Have participants grown in their understanding of the sacraments?
- HOLINESS** Have those in the ministry grown in their ability and practice of prayer?  
Have they grown in virtue and a desire for holiness?
- GROUNDING** Is there growth noticed in regards to knowledge of the faith (Church teachings?)  
Is there growth noticed in the Word of God?  
Is it evident that relationships with God are rooted in something deeper than “feelings”?
- COMMUNITY** Have those participating in the ministry come to understand their need for accountability?  
Have they given permission to others to keep them accountable in their relationship with God?  
Have they come to want to journey with others in the spiritual life?
- OTHERS** Is it evident that the group has helped people move from a posture of faith that is centered on “me and Jesus” to now recognizing they are part of one “spiritual family”?  
Has there been growth in recognizing the needs of others and responding to those needs?  
Do members fundamentally see their gifts as “gifts” for others?
- OTHERS** Has this ministry helped those participating recognize “the story” of what God has done in their lives?  
Are those participating in this ministry able to share about their story with others?  
Has there been growth in recognizing opportunities God is opening to share their faith with others? And, have they grown in their response to that opportunity

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING ALIGNMENT OF MINISTRIES AND ENTRY INTO THIS ADULT FORMATION OPPORTUNITY

- How did most of the people in the ministry find out about it? (Circle responses)  
Personal invitation  
Announcement at Mass  
Bulletin  
Website  
Other
- Are there opportunities for inquiry about the ministry and follow up?
- Have we made it easy for people to join and begin participating in the ministry?
- Have we taken time to consider what obstacles might be there for people and taken steps to remove those obstacles?
- Do people understand how this ministry will help them take the next step in the their faith, in a way that is appropriate for where they are on the journey?
- What opportunities or ministry “feed” participation into this ministry or provide a natural entry into this ministry?
- How could we better align opportunities in a way that helps people see this ministry as an easy “next step”?
- Are there opportunities within this ministry for leadership growth of participants?
- Where do we hope people might move on from this ministry?
- What ministries might be a “next step”?
- What might be indications that they are ready to take a next step?