Dear Pastors and Parish Leadership,

For the past several months, we’ve all no doubt struggled to discover how we can grow in faith and strengthen our community in this time of distance. With that in mind, Bishop Zinkula and Vision 20/20 invite you and your parish to journey with Christ through the Emmaus Initiative. The Emmaus Initiative is an effort by Vision 20/20 to connect the faithful in a meaningful way by forming small groups.

Perhaps you already have a small group program in your parish. If so, we ask you to make a concerted effort to attract wider participation to that effort. If you don’t have anything in place, we have a program ready for you to implement.

The “Discipleship Quad” program from Franciscan University at Steubenville is designed for people to walk closely together as a small group and thereby learn more about themselves, their faith, and their friends. Materials, which allow parishioners to form their own groups, are being made available to our parishes and schools. The materials are free and available in both English and Spanish.

The Discipleship Quad program is designed for groups of four who meet weekly for one year to grow and learn together. While this is the ideal way to use the materials, we understand that some people may not be able to make such a commitment. In that case, groups can be flexible in terms of the number of members and the frequency and duration of sessions. The true content is the relationships that develop rather than the details of the program. We are most focused on getting the faithful to make meaningful personal connections with Christ and each other.

In this time of pandemic, it may not be possible for groups to meet in person. Included in the materials are instructions on how to initiate electronic meetings using several different platforms.

We ask that you make an effort to get the word out now and throughout the upcoming year. Groups can form and begin this process at any time. Marketing materials are available on the Emmaus website. They include video clips, social media images, bulletin text, Mass announcements and more. One great thing about this program is that once parishioners know about it, they can take the reigns and run with it on their own. It doesn’t require coordination from the parish in that regard. We would love it if pastors and their parish leadership would participate in their own groups too!

Please visit www.davenportdiocese.org/emmaus to review the program and find the marketing materials you can use to get the word out to your parish. A document is attached that will answer many of your questions. May God bless us as we take this journey together!

In Christ,

Vision 20/20 Steering Committee