



ST. MARY'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Small Group Field Guide

Grow Your Faith



Field Guide Modeled After The Church of the Nativity Field Guide
found at churchnativity.com



Getting Started Checklist

Role	Name and Phone Number
Small Group Leader	
Co-Leader	

Meeting Day	Meeting Time

Group Members



Why We're Here & What We're Doing at St. Mary's Church

MISSION of St. Mary's Church

St. Mary's Church seeks to make the Gospel relevant by honoring the past while building a strong FAITH for today and tomorrow; providing a sense of belonging and safety to its parochial FAMILY, reaching out to those who never found the Church, and those who have lost their connection to the Church; and sustaining an active level of SERVICE in the parish and in our community.

PILLARS of St. Mary's Church

- **Tradition:** Established in 1848, St. Mary's Parish has been preaching the Gospel and celebrating the Sacraments in the heart of Glens Falls. We celebrate our Catholic tradition and want to pass on its riches to our congregation and future generations.
- **Faith:** We seek to make the Gospel relevant in our own lives and in this current culture, honoring the past by building a strong faith for "the now" - so that the two-thousand year-old faith in Jesus Christ enlivens, enriches, guides, and challenges us every day of our lives.
- **Family:** We welcome everyone, and strive to create a place that is beautiful, safe, and secure. We celebrate the vitality of family life, and the joy of living our faith with our children and teens.
- **Service:** We are thought-provoking, challenging, and active in service within our parish, in the wider community, and in ecumenical and interfaith collaboration.



How Do I LEAD a Small Group?

Lead As You Follow!

Christ is the true leader of each Small Group.

He is the one around whom our circles are gathered.

As we follow Christ and grow in our relationship with Him, as spiritual leaders we will lead others into encounters with God. Small Groups are one of the means we use to help each other draw closer into a personal relationship with Christ, learning to rely upon Him, turn to Him and integrate Him into each moment of our daily lives.

As we grow in discipleship, we change – and our lives bear witness to that change. Leadership Matters! As we lead others, we will be helping them find their purpose and identity in Christ. We serve as role models for our group members and call others to transformation and into leadership. Leaders change the atmosphere and cast vision and that encourages the group to go deeper in discipleship and to move outward in service. Small Group leadership is a ministry, approached with a servant's heart. Becoming an effective leader is a journey – one that constantly challenges us to grow and evolve!

**"For where two or
three are gathered in
my name, there am I
among them."**

-Matthew 18:20-



Ways Successful Leaders Grow

The 5 L's of Leadership:

1. Listen - Leaders are great listeners
2. Learn - Have the desire to learn more about your faith and inspire the group
3. Love - Leaders love because it's all about relationships
4. Lead - Lead with intention
5. Laugh - Laugh and enjoy the process

At St. Mary's Church, leadership is an intentional process, guided by five simple actions:

1. Listen
2. Learn
3. Love
4. Lead
5. Laugh

Relying on these principles, we revolve with Christ as our center, and we grow as we cycle through these principles.

"And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

-2 Timothy 2:2-



Leaders: Deep Breath. Let's Go and Get Started!

Before Each Group Meeting:

- Pray
- Preview materials and the discussion questions
- Leader or Co-Leader communicates to confirm location and attendance

During Each Group Meeting:

- Fellowship for approximately 10 minutes
- Open in prayer
- Introduce and watch the material
- Lead a discussion referring to weekly questions as a guide - questions are guidelines only
- Announcements and upcoming events
- Close in prayer

First Meeting:

- Pray before group arrives
- Have materials ready: Bible, DVD, questions, etc.
- Pray as a group
- Have everyone introduce themselves - be creative
- Ask someone to collect everyone's contact information including birthdays
- Discuss a plan for upcoming meetings
- Distribute Small Group Covenant and discuss (download from website)
- Use the remaining time for DVD series and discussion questions
- Pray with group to conclude the meeting - be sure to add any intentions and prayers needed

Members: You Matter!

How to Attend a Small Group Meeting

1. **Attend.** Sometimes you need the group and other times the group needs you. In order to feel the difference, showing up is all you need to do. Transform your life and just show up weekly!
2. **Bring your Bible and a Journal.** Small Group is where the rubber hits the road. It's all about application of the Word of God. So bring your Bible and take notes so you remember what inspired or motivated you!
3. **Be Committed.** Grow as a Disciple with a Purpose and a Plan! Live in the Truth in Jesus Christ, and the whole of God's truth has been made manifest.

Attendance + God's Word = Commitment

"Therefore encourage
one another and build
one another up, just as
you are doing."

-1 Thessalonians 5:11-



3 Healthy Small Group Habits

1. Prayer

- Pray together weekly
- Pray for your members
- Pray for each other

2. Authenticity

- Be honest
- Be non-judgmental
- Be willing to examine your relationship with God
- Be humble

3. Commitment

- Support the Vision and Mission of St. Mary's Church
- Attend meetings regularly
- Share life's joys and challenges through our faith
- Conduct meetings with respect for our Catholic tradition while remaining open and welcoming to those of all faiths
- Accept the ongoing challenge to "invest and invite"
- Encourage each other to grow in our faith

***“This Church, with which we should be thinking,
is the HOME OF ALL,
not a small chapel that can hold only a small group of selected people.”
-Pope Francis-***