Christ on the Mountain Catholic Church
FAITH *Alive*! *Faith Sharing Ministry*
General Information & Ground Rules

Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of our regular meetings together is to allow God to work through us together to become more deeply conformed as Missionary Disciples of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' first followers became His disciples as they immersed their lives with Him. They listened to His preaching and teaching. They watched Him comfort and heal. They went through the excruciating trauma of His Passion; the exhilaration of His resurrection. We seek to do the same thing as we spend time reflecting on His Gospels and building our relationships with Him and each other in prayer, reflection, our sharing together and our service to those in need.

Jesus' disciples became His missionaries with their transformation at Pentecost and the uncertainty of carrying on the building of His Kingdom upon receiving His Great Commission prior to His ascension back into heaven. It was an ongoing challenge to synthesize everything they had learned and apply it to the day-to-day situations of their time. So it is for us. They did all this together, and so do we with our group.

Meeting Days/Time, Location and Frequency

Groups decide when, where and how often they will meet. When the weather is inclement, using a video conferencing resource might also be an option. See the separate attachment concerning Video Conferencing Guidelines for more information.

Copies of the readings, supplemental questions, and any special handouts should be printed out beforehand.

Other Special Gatherings

We may decide together from time-to-time to gather for other special occasions or meetings that may involve social get togethers, worship services, special education or service activities, and so on.

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Start on time—and end on time

If you arrive 5 minutes before meetings are scheduled to begin, you are on time. After that, you are late! It is your selected leaders' responsibility to start your sessions when they are scheduled to begin and generally run until a pre-agreed closing time, when everyone runs out of thoughts or questions, or someone needs to leave.

It is helpful if people advise if they can't come to a meeting so the group isn't waiting on them to start. And everyone needs to speak up if they need to leave early or have special considerations to be addressed. None of us are mind readers!

General Format

Over time, each group will decide the general format for their meetings. To get your group up and going though, the following format is recommended.

Prior to each week's meeting, the Scriptures and Supplemental Questions for the upcoming Sunday mass and a link for a short 5-7 minute video from Formed.org (The Augustine Institute) will be emailed to everyone beforehand. Reflect on the materials and video beforehand, and then come to youor meeting prepared to share your thoughts and questions that arise from your reflections.

On occasion your group might want to "take a break" from the regular format to focus on some particular issue, book or other material. Decide this together beforehand and then work out the details.

Discussion involves everyone

To progress with the purpose of faith sharing, it is important that everyone have the opportunity to participate both as an active listener and as a speaker. It should be understood that when one person starts monopolizing the discussion (typically more than 2-3 minutes), other members of the group need to speak up if they also have something to say. Otherwise, the leader is responsible to step in and solicit thoughts/questions from others. At the same time, some folks are more comfortable listening than speaking, and that is certainly okay too.

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Confidentiality

It's not just for Las Vegas. What's said at group stays at group. No one wants to find out he or she has been the subject of gossip or well-meaning "prayer discussions." This is probably the most important ground rule of all. But there are limits.

Limits to confidentiality. Clergy, medical personnel, teachers and others are considered Mandated Reporters and are required by law to report potential or actual situations they become aware of such as, but not limited to abuse or neglect, molestation, vandalism and theft to civil authorities.

It's OK to Agree to Disagree

God speaks uniquely to each of us through our varied cultures, life experiences, education, careers, relationships and so much more, which is why we will often have different insights and perspectives from others. Questions to clarify what one of us perceives to be the Holy Spirit's guidance is helpful. Aggressive challenging, dismissive or other divisive comments and/or actions that make others "shut down" and feel uneasy about sharing are not okay. Opening up can be hard enough for some people as it is. They have a right to their reflections, as do we all, and that is what sharing is all about. We want our group to be a welcoming place for everyone.

It is also important to note that this time together is not intended to be a forum for discussing political, religious, or social issues except how we believe God may be calling us as His Missionary Disciples to respond to those issues through His Word, the teachings of His church and our lived experience deepening our relationship with Christ. It also must be recognized that focusing on what some religious, political, or other person/group "should or should not be doing" is a dodge to examine our own understanding and responses to the Holy Spirit guiding us to think, believe and act. Please reread this paragraph and take it to heart!

After a reasonable time of discussion, the leader or another group member could state that it's time to leave a point unresolved and move on to another discussion question or activity. No one should have his or her feelings hurt if others don't share all the same perspectives.

Other Ground Rules/Guidelines

It is assumed that everyone in the group has been vaccinated for COVID-19 and will stay home if they are not feeling well. The group will decide when/when not to wear masks or take other protective measures against spreading illnesses of any kind.

Everyone in the group needs to keep each other on track with our purpose by applying these rules (even if the leader needs to be called out sometimes!). May we gratefully honor and glorify God through the manner in which we do so together.