



APRIL 2022



# SMALL GROUPS

## HOLY FAMILY NEWSLETTER

### **PALM SUNDAY**

April 10th - Sat 5:00pm,  
Sun 8:00am, 9:30,  
11:00 and 12:00  
*Live-streamed at 11:00*

### **HOLY THURSDAY**

Thursday April 14th -  
7:00 pm  
Followed by EUCHARISTIC  
ADORATION Until Midnight

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

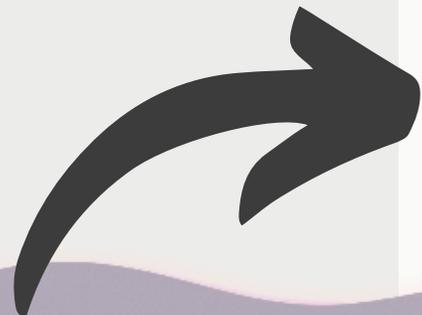
Friday April 15th -  
11:00am & 3:00pm  
STATION OF THE CROSS  
Friday April 15th  
7:00PM

### **EASTER VIGIL**

Saturday April 16th -  
8:00 pm

### **EASTER SUNDAY**

Sunday April 17th -  
8:00am, 9:30am,  
11:00am & 12:30pm  
*Live-streamed at 11:00am*



**EXPERIENCE**

# LENTEN RETREAT

**BE SURE TO JOIN US NEXT WEEK FOR THE 99 EXPERIENCE!**

The 99 Experience Lenten Retreat, a springboard for deepening our faith as we grow in identity, purpose, and community.

*Get answers to the brokenness we experience in our lives.  
Figure out how to acknowledge and desire God's love and  
Learn how to live a life in community lead by the Holy Spirit*

Unlike past Lenten Retreats, this year's retreat will be VIDEO-BASED featuring talented and engaging Catholic speakers (see below). Each session will consist of 2 or 3 videos with time for personal reflection and will take place immediately following the Mass. We will offer Two Options - Same presentations, Two Ways to Experience it! Featuring...

### **IT'S A PARISH WIDE LENTEN RETREAT - EVERYONE IS INVITED...**

No matter where you are in your life. Whether you are lost, searching, or just looking to grow in your faith, there is something in 'The 99 Experience' for everyone. The goal of this program is for Catholics to experience a deeper personal connection with Christ and to motivate them to begin sharing their story and their joy with those around them.

### **WHO WILL YOU INVITE? - GOD DESIRES TO USE YOU...**

***God desires to use YOU to Be the One - to Go and Find the Next One.***

Prayerfully consider who you know that would benefit from attending 'The 99 Experience' and invite them to attend alongside you! We have 'The 99 Experience' invitation cards available at the back of the church to help you extend that invitation.

### **BE BOLD - extend a personal invitation to someone**

## HOW WILL YOU EXPERIENCE THE 99?

**1-Day Retreat Saturday April 9th** - Find a Sitter for the Kids and spend part of the day on your Faith! FREE lunch! Register at [holyfamilywhiby.ca/the99/](http://holyfamilywhiby.ca/the99/)

**3-Evening Retreat Monday April 4 to Wednesday April 6** - Personal Reflection (Mon 7pm), (Tues 6:30pm) and (Wed 7pm). Followed by Confession and Adoration Tuesday.



# THE 99 - IT ALL HAPPENS NEXT WEEK!

*Week of April 4th*

# Leading Discussions That Transform Lives

*How would you rate the discussions in your small group? Lively and energetic, or uncomfortable and stilted?*

Group discussions can be the most intimidating part of any meeting, so how do you guide the process?

Here are some ways to have stimulating discussions.

## 1. Use discussion starters.

Personal stories, lifestyle anecdotes, current issues, fun icebreakers (*What is one of your favourite gifts you've ever given to someone else? Why was it so memorable?*) and simple reflection exercises can loosen up a group or focus the conversation on the heart of the discussion. The easiest way to get everyone talking is tapping into personal experiences. We're all experts in our own past, opinions, and points of view, so ask group members about themselves:

## 2. Navigate the "Truth-Life" tension.

Group discussions tend to move along the "truth-life" continuum. Content-focused discussion groups lean more heavily toward the "truth" end of the spectrum, striving for meaning of the text, one's understanding of God, or unpacking the issue or theme on the table. On the "life" end of the continuum, the conversation focuses on me, my situation, my prayer needs, and my personal spiritual condition. The challenge of the small-group leader is to avoid too much of a good thing. Too much life focus can take our eyes off God's perspective. Too much truth focus can leave people with a range of principles to ponder but little understanding of how these truths get infused into their 24/7 life full of relationships, work, and spiritual progress. Try and read your group, at times they will need the "Life" conversations but the "Truth" part can be brought in to help them through what they are going through.

## 3. Leverage the power of questions.

Questions create a powerful learning environment. They encourage people to tell their stories and establish a safe, relaxing conversational tone. Here are some common kinds of questions that can help:

**Closed Questions** - Closed questions are questions of fact and are right or wrong. "Where was Jesus when he raised Lazarus from the dead?" Answer: "Bethany." End of discussion. Closed questions are necessary to establish some basic truths and verify that everyone is on the same page.

**Open Questions** - By contrast, open questions invite conversation, opinions, and dialogue. "Who do the crowds say I am?" This invited a variety of responses from those around Jesus. In general, open questions make everyone feel like an expert because we're asking about their opinion or point of view.

**Guiding Questions** - Transformational discussions move to a deeper level when we use guiding questions that invite people to look at their hearts and weigh how they will pursue life change by putting truth into action, changing a behaviour, or dealing with a destructive pattern.

**Probing Questions** - These questions not only seek further insight and understanding, but often challenge people's assumptions or beliefs. Probing is not passing judgment or creating unnecessary tension just for tension's sake. It's motivated by the desire to help group members look deeply at themselves or their situation when they seem to be avoiding reality or excusing actions they already know are required. Probing seeks greater understanding so we can love people, but also so we can "spur one another on to love and good deeds."

**Clarifying Questions** - These questions help members understand what has been said and sometimes reveal contradictions in people's statements or thinking. Often they begin with, "Help me understand," but they also look like these examples: You said you like this guy. But a minute ago you said he sometimes "really scares" you.

## 4 Avoid common discussion killers

Finally, there are comments and behaviours that can shut down a productive discussion in a heartbeat. As the leader, you'll need to put a stop to them. Here are four biggies to look out for.

**Judging** - Snap judgments and misplaced assumptions about people or reality are inappropriate: You've got to be kidding, Mike! I would never do that with my kid.

**Preaching** - The "preachers" in your group are quick to tell everyone how they should be acting. They jump right in and start fixing things.

**Summarizing** - "Well, it seems like we all agree so let's move on," remarks a summarizer. These folks often complete people's sentences or ideas, and eagerly—often impatiently—stifle deeper discussion by offering simple or superficial comments as the final conclusion.

**Spiritualizing** - To a challenging issue or complex personal problem the spiritualizer may say, "Let's just remember the blood of Jesus and know that all things will work together for good. We need to simply trust and obey!" It might be appropriate to acknowledge that, indeed, God is at work and we certainly can trust him, but we also need to listen to the details and explore ways we can support this group member through prayer, practical help, and other resources.



# HOLY WEEK

*Holy Week is most definitely a very sacred time of the year, for it is now that we will commemorate and remember the last week of Jesus' life on this earth. The greatest focus of the week is the Passion (suffering) and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the events that led up to it.*

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, which marks Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Especially important for Catholics is the Easter Triduum. This is the three days just before Easter. On Holy Thursday, we reenact the Lord's Last Supper, which He shared with His apostles on the night He was betrayed and arrested. On Good Friday, the day of the crucifixion and death of our Lord, we have the veneration of the Cross. Holy Saturday is a vigil. We keep watch for the expectant rising of Our Saviour. During these days, we suffer with Christ so that we might rise with Him at His glorious Resurrection.

Holy Week is a time to clear our schedules of unnecessary activities. Our minds and hearts should be fixed on Jesus and what He did for us. Let us bear the Cross so that may be worthy of wearing the crown He wore.

With your Small Group, discuss ways you can make Holy Week more meaningful for you and the members of your group. Remember when we discuss and make commitments as a group you are more likely to keep that commitment.

## *How will you commit to make Holy Week more meaningful?*

- 1. THINK PRAYER.** If you have to work or go to school during Holy Week, think about how you can incorporate prayer breaks into each day.
- 2. MAKE AN ADDITIONAL SACRIFICE** by fasting and abstaining from meat on Holy Thursday and Holy Saturday in addition to Good Friday.
- 3. DON'T WATCH TELEVISION** from sundown on Holy Thursday until Easter morning.
- 4. GO** to confession.
- 5. SET ASIDE** 10 minutes every day to read Passion accounts in the Gospels.
- 6. FORGIVE** someone on Good Friday.
- 7. PRAY** the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.
- 8. OFFER UP** any pain or difficulties you experience during Holy Week - unite your sufferings with the pain of Christ.
- 9. PRAY** the Stations of the Cross.
- 10. ATTEND** all of the Triduum Liturgies.
- 11. INVITE** family members, friends and neighbours — especially people who have strayed from the church — to come to church with you. *Invite them to attend The 99 Lenten Retreat with you.*



# Small Group VISION

## **Reminder to please work on and share your Small Group Vision Statement with Father László.**

A small group is destined to die a slow, complacent, even cordial death without direction. Good food and casual conversation might be staples of normal small group life, but they cannot be the substance. Too many groups meet week after week, month after month without any clear mandate, and therefore without any clarity regarding whether or not they're fulfilling their purpose or really accomplishing anything. We should be asking what defines our fellowship. Why is it worth spending all this time together? How do we know that we're not wasting our Wednesday or Thursday evenings? Small Groups need a vision.

**A vision is a statement of the functional purpose of your small group.**

*Why do you have a small group?*

*What specifically do you hope to accomplish?*

*How are you carrying out the church's mission?*

*How will you know if your small group is making progress and bearing fruit?*

**Here are three reasons to go ahead and invest your time, energy, and prayer into a vision statement for your small group.**

1. Vision breeds commitment and investment.
2. Vision makes decision-making more objective.
3. Vision mobilizes your people inside and outside of your meetings.

Vision is the most important tool you have for recruiting team members. People who join the small-group ministry because they believe in the vision for the ministry are committed. They long to see the vision become a reality, so they're likely to stay on the team for years to come—even until the vision is realized. Vision must inform the group strategy if you want to see success. Without a vision, it's difficult to choose a strategy that will result in a good outcome. A deeply instilled vision is the unifying factor for the entire small-group ministry team. When everyone is on the same page, dreaming the same dream, there are fewer points of dissension, less concern for who gets the spotlight, and a shared passion that infiltrates the heart of every team member. You'll know you've embraced a vision from God for your ministry when it's a God-sized vision. God never calls his people to accomplish something that is within their own ability to accomplish.

**Visit the Small Group page of the website and scroll down to the bottom of the page to find the Small Group Vision Statement Document for more detailed information on how to do this! [holyfamilywhitby.ca/small-groups/](http://holyfamilywhitby.ca/small-groups/)**

**We strongly encourage you, if you have not already done so, to please use your next Small Group meeting to work on your Vision Statement and then send it the parish office to Father Laszlo's attention. Contact Kim if you need assistance at [holyfamily.kim@gmail.com](mailto:holyfamily.kim@gmail.com)**