

DIOCESAN CORE COMMUNITY (DCC)

The **Diocesan Core Community** in the St. Petersburg Diocese exists to support parish-based Small Christian Communities by:

- shepherding Parish Core Community (PCC) Coordinators,
- facilitating networking among parishes,
- connecting parishes with resources,
- promoting the ongoing formation of parish leadership, and
- providing training.

DIOCESAN CORE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

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RESOURCES FOR SCCS

Contact **Diane Kledzik**, dmk@dosp.org, for resource suggestions for ministerial and seasonal small groups and ongoing Small Christian Communities or check the ELFF webpage on www.dosp.org.

“Other Church institutions, basic communities and small communities, movements, and forms of association are a source of enrichment for the Church, raised up by the Spirit for evangelizing different areas and sectors....they bring a new evangelizing fervor and a new capacity for dialogue with the world whereby the Church is renewed.” Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, #29

OUTREACH IS NOT AN OPTION!

The most valuable materials the SCC can use are those that lead people to action. Usually these materials will follow the time honored process of the social inquiry method: **Observe, Judge, Act.**

This process would address the following: *What is happening in my own life and the world in which I live? What does Jesus or my Christian tradition tell me about how I am to respond? What will I do differently to respond with Christian values to the various situations in my life? How can my action be specific?*

The purpose of outreach is to help persons grow in their ability to respond to the call to love one another and to live out the Christian life in a concrete manner.

The **Parish Core Community (PCC)** is a group of approximately 6-12 parishioners, led by a Coordinator, who come together with the pastor and/or pastoral staff member

- to form community themselves
- to foster opportunities for developing the parish as a community of small communities
- to ensure sound development and pastoral care of these communities

Contact your **Parish Core Community** about **becoming a member of a Small Christian Community** in your parish and/or to serve as a **Small Community Leader (SCL)** or **host home.**

DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG

DEPARTMENT OF EVANGELIZATION AND LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION

Small Christian Communities



“These communities are a sign of vitality within the Church, an instrument of formation and evangelization, and a solid starting point for a new society based on a civilization of love...”

Redemptoris Missio #51, John Paul II, 1990

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WHAT IS A SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY (SCC)?

A permanent structure of the parish, made up of 8-12 people who:

- Pray, listen and theologically reflect upon Scripture together
- Share ways the Word of God relates to one's life experience – connect everyday life with faith
- Encourage and support one another
- Take on responsibility for living as Church in the world
- Are sent in mission to serve others

It's an experience of the larger Church at the smaller level.

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES ARE NOT SOLELY ABOUT:

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| Bible study | though Scripture is an important part |
| Support | but they can be therapeutic |
| Prayer | although prayer is the foundation |
| Socializing | though relationships and caring are essential |
| Catechesis | but being formed in the faith is an essential element |
| Justice | although they work to transform society |

Revised 9/14

WHAT IS FAITH SHARING?

Faith Sharing is a process in which we relate the story of the people of God with our own story. We draw a connection between how God has acted - as seen in Scripture, creeds, liturgy and history and how God is acting to draw us closer to God in our own lives. Our personal history; our relationship with the Church; our gifts and vocation; and the context of our lives, with their relationships, responsibilities and opportunities, are reflected upon in faith sharing.

One of the unique aspects of faith sharing is that there are no “right” answers. When we share faith we are sharing from our own experience. Members share how the Scripture and Church teaching connect with their everyday life experience.

HOW WILL THIS BENEFIT MY LIFE?

- Your relationship with God and others will deepen.
- You will be invited to grow as a disciple and become a disciple maker.
- Commitment to family, work, friends and community will be strengthened.
- You will receive support in living as a follower of Jesus Christ and in working to transform society.

“Small communities are powerful vehicles for adult faith formation, providing opportunities for learning, prayer, mutual support and the shared experience of Christian living and service to church and society.”

Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us,
NCCB/USCCB, 1999

HOW WILL THE PARISH BENEFIT?

Parish life studies show that SCCs yield long-term benefits. Parishioners are:

1. more interested in ongoing catechesis; they pursue Scripture study and take seriously the call to discipleship,
2. more likely to assume parish responsibilities and enter the pool of potential parish leadership, and
3. more involved in the work of evangelization and realize the need to give of their time, talent and treasure.

WHO SHOULD JOIN?

Anyone who wants to grow as a person of faith and apply Gospel values to everyday living – adults, young adults, youth and families – is invited and encouraged to join.

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TRAINING

For Small Christian Communities to be a viable structure of the parish, leadership is key. The Department of Evangelization and Lifelong Faith Formation offers training for parish core communities, parish staffs, pastoral councils and small community leaders in parishes with existing SCCs and for parishes wanting to begin SCCs, that may have no structure in place. Contact Diane to present a session created just for your needs!

“Small church communities not only foster the faith of individuals; they are living cells that build up the Body of Christ.”

Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium
NCCB/USCCB, 1995