

Conversation

There is a desire for them to have a more formal format, but they are fed by their interaction.

This is an example of where a ministry team has also become a small faith sharing group.

A few years back this group seemed to be floundering. But with new leadership who wants to keep them active - the group has grown.

You need to do lots of advertising! Can't advertise enough times or in enough ways.

Always provide childcare. Ask them to pay for the book if they can. After the first time this was offered, people started looking for this. Different people come each time.

Meet with an Adult Faith Formation Advisory Team to help choose programming and select the books.

It was a blessing to find something that interested so many of our existing small groups and they were willing to pause their normal routine and use this series for 14 weeks around the same time. Everyone really enjoyed it as they grew in knowledge and appreciation of how the Spirit works in our lives. This has been our most successful small group study; I highly recommend it.

When this group started meeting it was more formation oriented. It has grown more vibrant since we started focusing on faith-sharing and fellowship. This format has allowed us to vary the meetings each month (guest speakers, two--day retreats) while maintaining the mission of celebrating and enriching Catholic couples. We started out doing dinner as a potluck but realized quickly that this was keeping some folks from attending so the parish provides a simple meal, and attendees bring dessert or a bottle of wine to share.

Consistency of meetings is key to success of program. This year New Year's Eve fell on Tuesday and the group wanted to meet anyway. Communicating directly with families after they have their children baptized is key to inviting folks into this ministry.

Providing a quiet, private, prayerful environment is key. Folks need to be able to feel free to express their grief free of interruption and in a pastoral way.

Be creative in how you market and plan. Personal invitation is best way to get folks to join.

Invest in the men in your parish and find authentic males to serve as role models/leaders.

Flexibility, though all are important, still need someone to "lead/direct"

There are so many small groups that are geared to women, it has been beneficial to offer this formation option to our male parishioners.

As the children of the members of the group have gotten older, it is harder to have family outings off-site. Recruiting efforts need to be continual to encourage families with younger children to participate.

Patti picked the first book and attendees vote on next book from suggested books.

WINGS is an excellent fit for women wanting to expand their knowledge about the Catholic faith and what is going on in the greater community... There are also strong friendships and a support system that comes out of WINGS.