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What's New at St. Agnes?

For most of us at St. Agnes, the Catholic ID program is new, even though 75 parish members participated in Catholic ID groups between 2016 and the start of COVID. **This fall we will offer more opportunities for parishioners to experience a Catholic ID discipleship group, once a week for 10 weeks.**

So, let's review. ***Just what is Catholic ID and how is it different from other kinds of groups, like Bible Study, for example?***

Here's what it's not: a book, questions to be answered, Bible study, faith sharing, reading and reacting.

Here's what it is: apprenticeship in discipleship, breaking the "conspiracy of silence" and talking about Jesus, a personal experience of the Church in a small group, growing in the heart and habits of discipleship together, praying for each other by name and practicing the group discipleship habit.

What do people say they get out of joining a Catholic ID group?

Pam Matthews has completed the program and is one of the trained group leaders. "Sharing in a small group about my own faith journey," she said, "gave me the confidence to be more willing to share my faith more freely with others."

This is challenging for many Catholics. "We are human," Kathy Schroeder said. "We fall short of what we think God expects of us. But God loves us just as we are," she said.

Maryrose Wolf not only participated in a group, but also became a group leader. "Being part of the Catholic ID program has encouraged me in my journey to become the best disciple possible for our Lord," Wolf said. "The members of our group

prayed for each other intentionally every day! The power of these prayers was phenomenal.”

Karen Knurr said that her biggest takeaway from being in a Catholic ID group was learning how to pray. “Really. I’ve been doing it wrong all these years,” she said. “The program included a section on how to pray. It became a connect-the-dots exercise for me. Each meeting we continued to build our relationship with God through readings and discussion. And the prayer portion got a little easier every day. Now, prayer is a natural, wonderful, can’t-miss part of my day!”



The first Catholic ID group at St. Agnes in 2016.

So, just what do you do in these meetings?

Marilyn Schultz described her experience. “With a group of approximately 10 wonderful people, we met for 10 sessions and focused on developing six habits to accomplish those goals. We prayed, we learned how to pray better, and we shared many personal experiences that helped me become a better Catholic and a better person. My daily relationship with Jesus Christ has noticeably deepened, and I would encourage my fellow parishioners to join Catholic ID.”

With a workbook to help record your progress, you'll address one chapter each week in a prayerful walk toward discipleship. An opening prayer will set the stage for the group's focus, which changes each meeting. Scripture readings and opportunities to share are part of the experience as well as connections to the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Participants will also be asked to agree upon a group discipleship resolution—a shared commitment to practice a shared habit of discipleship during the week. Group members are asked to pray for one another, for our parish and our community. These prayers will connect the participants with other parishioners and pave the way for strengthening the St. Agnes parish community.

What are these habits of discipleship?

The six habits are prayer, Scripture, Mass, reconciliation, service, and parish family. Each habit is the focus of a specific week's meeting. Ten weeks can seem like a long time, but the time passes quickly. As you become more involved, you won't want to miss the weekly gathering.

"I've always considered myself a devout Catholic," Linda Barrington said, "but this experience awakened in me a renewed commitment to my faith and my parish. I think I've already grown by learning and practicing the six habits of Catholic intentional discipleship. This is a life-time commitment for me."

When will these meetings take place and how do I sign up?

This year's Catholic ID will be led by Kathy Schroeder and Shelly Fellin. The session will be held Monday nights, 6-7:30 p.m. from Sept. 26-Nov. 28 in the Christian Formation room. Sign-up will begin the weekend of Aug. 13/14.