



# ARISE Parish Team Meeting Four: Inviting Parishioners to Small Communities

## **Purpose**

- to provide an opportunity through prayer and faith sharing for the *ARISE* parish team members to grow together as a community
- to plan and implement invitational activities for motivating parishioners to sign up for *ARISE Together in Christ* small communities
- to review dates and team responsibilities for Prayer Commitment and Sign-Up Sunday/Weekend

## **Materials needed**

- copy of the *ARISE* Prayer (Handout 29)
- Bible or *Lectionary* for the Sunday gospel reading, and for the gospel reading during the closing prayer
- copy of *PRAYER TIME*
- *ARISE* Seasons One and Three CDs and CD player
- Handout 7a, "Organizing Sign-Up Sunday/Weekend"
- Handout 7b, "Sample Sign-Up Cards"
- Handout 8a, "Prayer-Commitment Sunday/Weekend"
- Handout 8b, "Prayer-Commitment Response Card"
- Handout 9a, "Home Visits to Invite Small-Community Participation"
- Handout 9b, "Sample Letter from the Pastor"
- Handout 9c, "Pastoral Referral Card"
- Handouts 10a and 10b, which explain phone and email invitation strategies
- Handout 11, "Preparing Small-Community Leaders"
- Handout 17, "A Sample Commitment for Small Communities"

## Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

*Leader* Let us spend a few moments in quiet,  
becoming more aware of God's presence ...  
... God's presence in each one of us,  
but especially in this community,  
gathered in Jesus' name.

**Song** *Play or sing an appropriate song such as*  
"All Are Welcome," Marty Haugen (GIA) (*ARISE CD 1, Track 7*)  
or "We Are Many Parts," Marty Haugen (*ARISE CD 3, Track 6*)

*Leader* Let us pray together

**All** **Loving Jesus, you personally invited those around you,  
from the ordinary circumstances of their lives,  
to participate in your mission and ministry.  
As we prepare to follow your example,  
we pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit  
to encourage us to reach out as you did,  
to invite our friends and neighbors to come  
and experience the richness of the Gospel alive in their lives.  
In Jesus' name we pray.**

## Faith Sharing (15 minutes)

Faith sharing, or telling our faith stories, is being aware of or recalling times, life events, words, or moments of grace when God touched our lives, challenged us, or spoke to us.

- **Scripture**  
Proclaim the Gospel for the coming Sunday.
- **Reflection**  
You could
  - use the reflection and one of the faith-sharing questions from *PRAYER TIME* for the appropriate Sunday.Or you could
  - allow time for reflection and ask:  
"What word, phrase, or image from the scripture reading touched my heart or spoke to my life?"

## Ways of Inviting (45 minutes)

There are many ways to communicate the opportunity to be part of *ARISE Together in Christ*.

- **publicity efforts**  
announcements from the pulpit, banners, posters, flyers, bulletin announcements or inserts, and articles in local or (arch)diocesan newspapers are all helpful. Use current popular social networking applications.
- **meeting with the leadership of the various parish ministries** and sharing with them the ways the *ARISE Together in Christ* process will be very beneficial to the parish and to the way these leaders can exercise their ministry.

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- **personally inviting parishioners** to become part of the small faith-sharing groups in the parish. The best way to invite them is to pair your publicity efforts with a personal invitation. Experience shows that a face-to-face invitation is far more likely to be accepted than if the person simply reads about it in a bulletin or letter. Young adults especially should be considered for this invitational aspect of *ARISE*.

### ***Sign-Up and Prayer Commitment***

Two parish-wide invitational activities are already planned as part of the launch of *ARISE* in the parish:

- Sign-Up Sunday/Weekend (approximately four weeks prior to the beginning of each season) followed by
- Prayer-Commitment Sunday/Weekend

We recommend that both of these be implemented at the Sunday liturgies.

While these dates are set at the (arch)diocesan level, alternate dates may be chosen for pastoral reasons. Further information for both of these events, together with templates of the resources you will need to implement them, are provided in this handbook:

- Handout 7a, “Organizing Sign-Up Sunday/Weekend”
- Handout 7b, sample of Sign-up Cards
- Handout 8a, “Prayer-Commitment Sunday/Weekend”
- Handout 8b, sample of a Prayer-Commitment Response Card

### ***Home Visits and the Telephone Campaign***

To ensure that most parishioners are involved, we recommend three major efforts: home visits, a telephone campaign, and emails.

- Read Handout 9a, “Home Visits to Invite Small Community Participation,” then share thoughts, concerns, or questions.
- Read Handouts 10a and 10b, “Telephone Campaign” and “Email: An Invitation Strategy,” and then share thoughts, concerns, or questions.

### ***Break (10 minutes)***

### ***Planning Invitational Efforts (30 minutes)***

#### **Choose**

- a point person to be responsible for the home visiting
- a point person to be responsible for the telephone campaign
- a point person to be responsible for emailing

#### **Present the steps of invitation**

- Decide which areas of the parish or which groups of people will be visited.
- Schedule dates for the visits.
- Decide whom else you will ask to help with visiting, telephoning, and emailing campaigns.
- Select a time and place for training of each of these groups.
- Plan to follow up after the home visits and the phone and email campaigns.

### **Next Steps** (2 minutes)

- Schedule the date for the next parish team planning meeting.
- Implement invitational tasks (see Handout 5, “Invitation Task List”).
- Before the next meeting, read the following chapter in *Sowing Seeds: Essentials for Small Community Leaders*, “Project Planning,” pages 30- 31, and Handout 11, “Preparing Small-Community Leaders,” in the Appendix of this handbook.

At the next meeting, be prepared to share names of people you believe have the appropriate qualities for this ministry as small-community leaders.

### **Closing Prayer** (10 minutes)

*Leader* Let us take a few moments  
to remember that we are in God’s loving presence.

*Pause for a few moments of quiet.*

*Reader* Matthew 28:16-20

*Leader* Like the first disciples of Jesus, we are sent on a mission.  
Tonight we shared the many ways  
we will be inviting our sisters and brothers  
to participate in ***ARISE Together in Christ***.  
Let us ask God for his blessing on our efforts  
as we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us.

*All* **Our Father, ...**

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