



# **Introduction to Small Groups for Adults**

## **Saint Anne Catholic Church & School**

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# Rooted in Early Church



## Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs)

# What are BECs?

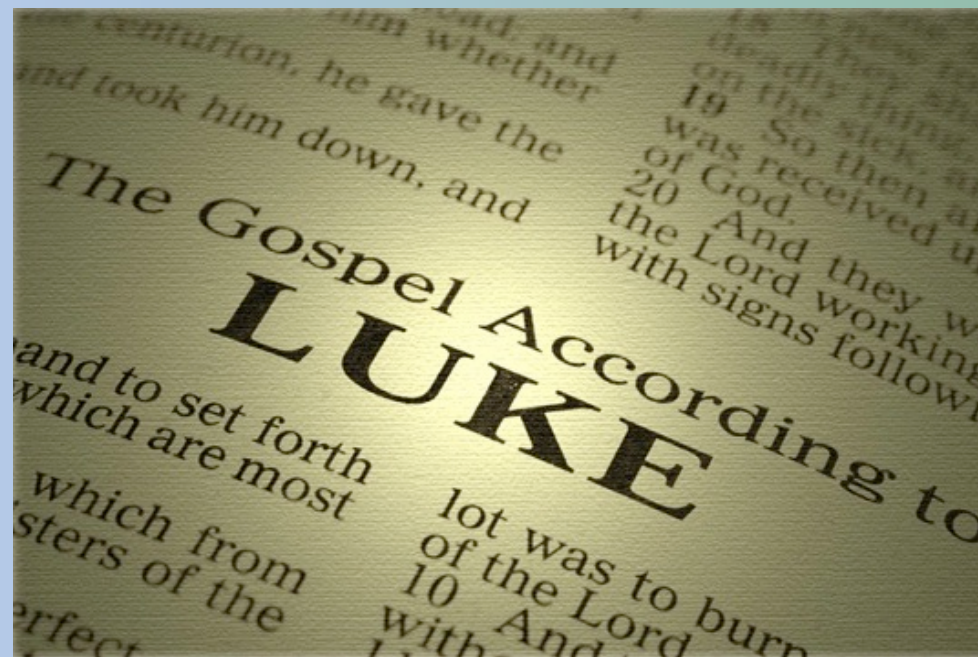
- Caring communities in which faith is lived out in daily life
- The practices of agape love, sharing and solidarity that are encouraged via human intimacy and in which the humanity of faith is experienced
- The foundation of the Easter experience in which a community learns of the continued presence of the resurrected Christ
- Communities founded on the presence of Jesus Christ in their midst

# **The Emmaus Journey: A Paradigm of Faith & Community**



# The Emmaus Journey

Luke 24:13-35



# The Emmaus Journey

- Two disciples are walking, disappointed and despondent.
- They were on the road leaving the community of disciples to return to their natural community of their village.
- They had not yet experienced the presence of the risen Christ.
- Their disappointment turns to hope, when they broke bread.
- Instead of withdrawing, they return to the community of hope and faith that breaks the chains of isolation

# Finding their Community

- Undeterred by the late hour, the two returned to the community they left that morning, finding the 11 disciples returning to Jerusalem.
- They found their true community ... one that acknowledged Jesus' resurrection. "The Lord has indeed risen."





# The Emmaus Journey (cont'd.)

- Highlights the collective contemplation of the Word of God as pivotal
- Explains scripture passages related to Jesus, emphasizing the central role played by Jesus Christ
- Shows the significance of Jesus' life as an example to the believer and his community





# **Community:**

## **An Open Embrace of Faith & Witnessing**

- Believers can first learn the meaning of community by reading and contemplating God's word together.
- An ecclesial community is never self-contained and always welcomes the stranger, fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance.

# **BECs: Witness through Life & Solidarity**

- Believers have experienced Christ's presence and wish to share it with others
- Believers allow themselves to be guided by Christ's life in their understanding of scripture
- Believers allow their eyes to be opened through the Eucharistic gesture -- to be vulnerable in solidarity and sharing

# BEC participants ...

- Are capable of negotiating taxing times of hopelessness, discouragement, and unhappiness by witnessing the power of the resurrected Christ
- Remain faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, the brotherhood, the breaking of bread, and the prayers



# Characteristics of BECs

- Have the Word of God at its core
- Reiterate the gestures of Jesus, including the breaking of bread
- Are a place of harmony, solidarity and sharing
- Are an instrument of God in the world
- Are places of inclusion
- Teach how to overcome difficulties, while providing support and encouragement
- Offer full communion in the power of the Holy Spirit

# Conclusion



By embodying these tenets, BECs become profound witnesses of faith in action, richly contributing to building God's Kingdom.