



Pastoring Small Community Leaders

How-tos

The Parish Core Community's role is to ensure that small community leaders receive ongoing formation and support in their ministry to small communities.

1. How to foster good lines of communication with and among leaders:

- Maintain an up-to-date database of all leaders and members of small communities.
- Maintain regular personal contact with each small community leader by designated Core Community members.
- Provide small community leaders with phone lists of the Core Community members, parish staff members, and small community leaders.
- Offer a monthly newsletter that includes announcements about training, review of a particular resource, and a short feature about one of the small community leaders.

2. How to provide resources and opportunities for initial training and ongoing formation:

(For assistance in workshops, training, or parish consultation, contact Michael Fabian, at RENEW International, ParishLife Services: SCCServices@renewintl.org; phone: 908-769-5400, ext. 160; see also www.ParishLife.com)

- Update the parish library with books, videos and other resources on Scripture, prayer, spirituality, Church history, sacraments, the social teachings of the Church, the vision of mutual pastoral service, and communication skills. (See *Parish Core Communities: Renewing the Face of the Earth*, a four-part video series prepared by RENEW International as an aid for members of the Parish Core Community for Small Community Development to chart their course for the future: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/leadership.html>.)
- Offer workshops and retreats on topics that are relevant to the ministry of small communities and their leaders: Scripture, prayer and spirituality, the liturgical year, sacraments, mission, and outreach.
- Offer training in communication skills, managing conflict, and group stages.
- Include a monthly book or video review in your parish bulletin (or leaders' newsletter) highlighting one or more of the resources in your parish library.
- Offer seasonal days or evenings of reflection during Advent and Lent.
- Use the parish consultation services of RENEW International.

3. How to provide evaluation and assistance to small communities and their leaders:

- Use written reports from each community and its leaders.
- Conduct regular briefings to assess ongoing needs of the small communities, to help leaders prepare sessions, and to offer resources. (See Thomas A. Kleissler, Margo A. LeBert, and Mary C. McGuinness. *Small Christian Communities: A Vision of Hope for the 21st Century*, revised and updated. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997, pp. 181–87.)
- Meet informally with small communities to listen to experiences, hopes, and concerns.

4. How to recognize and appreciate the ministry of small community leaders:

- Offer certificates of appreciation on an annual basis in conjunction with a social gathering.
- Commission small community leaders during a parish liturgy on an annual basis.

- Enlist the aid of small community members in acknowledging important occasions in the life of the community's leader.
 - Send birthday cards to small community leaders from the parish.
5. Contact RENEW International to schedule a presenter to conduct a workshop on pastoring small community leaders, or decide to download the workshop "Pastoring Small Community Leaders" from www.ParishLife.com and conduct the workshop yourselves. (Contact Michael Fabian: SCCServices@renewintl.org; phone: 908-769-5400, ext. 160.)