



Pastoring Small Community Leaders

What the Small Community Leaders Need to Know

1. Small communities can be a real source of strength, especially as they learn how to rely on Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who guides the small communities in the parish. Small community leaders can help others experience God's shepherding voice in Scripture and God's presence in prayer. They can also provide care that follows a scriptural model of pastoring.
2. Small community leaders are a real bridge between the larger parish and the individual members of the community. The Core Community recognizes the valuable service they provide, and in return offers affirmation, support, and formation. Leaders can also be a real support to one another, since they often use the same materials and face the same day-to-day issues. Networking can be a key to successful ministry, especially when coupled with a deliberate attempt to share faith and to support one another in prayer.
3. The Core Community is committed to offering pastoral support to small communities and leaders through ongoing formation in Scripture, teachings of the Catholic faith, prayer, spirituality, liturgy, and the mission of the Church. Ongoing training for small community leaders is also possible in group dynamics, communication skills, and ways to lead people in prayer and service. (For further assistance on these topics from RENEW International, see www.ParishLife.com or contact Michael Fabian: SCCServices@renewintl.org; 908-769-5400, ext. 160.)
4. The Core Community seeks ongoing consultation with small community leaders in the joint venture of planning, formation, and training that will help leaders serve more effectively. Leaders need to keep the Core Community abreast of the needs and challenges they encounter.
5. Leaders can expect to receive the following assistance:
 - Initial and ongoing formation in faith and in skills needed for ministry to small groups.
 - A process for communicating with leaders and members of small communities.
 - Assistance in selecting and obtaining small community materials. Materials will be available in advance so that leaders will have time for preparation. (Again, for further assistance from RENEW International, contact Michael Fabian: SCCServices@renewintl.org; 908-769-5400, ext. 160.)
 - Opportunities for small communities to come together—days or evenings of prayer and reflection, potluck suppers, seasonal parties, shared outreach projects.
 - A process for ongoing evaluation so that the Core Community is aware of the changing needs of small communities. (See the *Small Community Summary form* below.)

Small Community Summary

This form can be used to keep notes on the present circumstances in your small group or as a written account to be given to your Parish Core Community representative. Please respect the confidentiality of your group by omitting the names of specific individuals with challenging needs. Do not feel obliged to answer all the questions. They are designed to help you begin sorting out the needs of your small community.

Group leader's name _____

Meeting time and place _____

The strengths of our group at this time are _____

The challenges that face us right now are _____

We need assistance in _____

Something that we can offer the parish is _____

Suggestions about the future of small communities _____
