

Church Growth - Small Groups

Bishop Malcolm Harding

In many places in Scripture, God reminds us that He intends for us to experience “life together”. Paul echoes such sentiments when he says “Each one of you is part of the body of Christ and you are chosen to live together in peace.” (Col. 3: 15)

Just as Jesus ministered within the context of a small group of disciples, so I believe every Christian needs to be involved in some sort of small group ministry within the parish family.

Virtually every movement of spiritual renewal has been accompanied by a return to “small group ministry” within a parish setting, consisting of prayer, Bible study, and learning about our faith together. Such groups are “people based” not “program based”, with the pastoral care of group members, and spiritual nurturing, being paramount.

In the New Testament, the very phrase “one another” appears at least 55 times – phrases such as “care for one another”, “pray for one another”, “love one another” etc.

The small group parish fellowship is meant to be transparent and honest in a caring atmosphere of absolute confidentiality.

As small group process unfolds, fellowship becomes much more than “chit chat”, but genuine heart to heart deeper sharing in a prayerful supportive environment.

- A brief look at Acts 2: 42.
- Personal example of parish group support during a grieving process.

The leadership of small parish groups is vital.

One excellent resource on the booklist provided is: [How to Lead a Great Cell Group Meeting so People Want to Come Back](#), by Joel Cominskey.