

How to Host a Lenten Small Group

Journey together through Lent with prayer, Scripture, and community.

1. Pray First

Before you start planning, take time to pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your group, your leadership, and those who will be part of the journey. Offer it all to Christ.

2. Choose a Format & Focus

Decide how your group will meet and what you'll study. Options include:

Format: In-person at home/parish, virtual via Zoom, or hybrid.

Frequency: Weekly (common for Lent), biweekly, or another rhythm.

Focus:

- A Scripture study (like the Sunday Mass readings)
- A Lenten devotional or book
- A video series (like No Greater Love by Ascension or Forgiven by FORMED)
- A parish-provided resource or reflection guide

3. Invite Participants

Small groups are typically 6–10 people. Invite friends, family, neighbors, or fellow parishioners. You don't have to know everything—just be willing to gather and grow together.

- Use personal invites, parish announcements, or social media.
- Be clear about time, location, and commitment (e.g., 6 weeks of Lent).

4. Prepare Your Space

Whether in your home, parish room, or online, create a welcoming environment:

- Light a candle or display a cross to set a sacred tone.
- Offer light refreshments or drinks (if in person).
- Have Bibles, handouts, or materials ready to go.

5. Facilitate, Don't Lecture

You don't need to teach—just guide the conversation. A good small group:

- Begins with a prayer
- Engages with the material (reading, video, discussion)
- Allows everyone to share (no pressure to talk)
- Ends with prayer intentions and closing prayer
- Ask open-ended questions like:
- What stood out to you in the reading?

- How can you apply this to your life this week?
- What is God saying to you through this?

6. Stay Consistent and Encouraging

- Start and end on time.
- Follow up during the week with a reminder or encouragement.
- Be flexible and understanding—Lent is a journey, not a checklist.

7. Wrap Up Before Holy Week

As Lent draws to a close, consider ending with a special gathering:

- A meal or simple soup supper
- Attending a parish penance service or Stations of the Cross together
- Reflecting on how God moved in each person's life

8. Celebrate Easter Joy

Keep the connection going! You might:

- Reunite during the Easter season for a follow-up gathering
- Continue as a regular small group
- Serve together in a parish ministry