

Leader's guide to S.A.L.T. moments

June 2012

The analysis of our first Natural Church Development survey revealed that, although the parish is fairly well balanced, the weakest characteristic was Passionate Spirituality". In the latest edition of The Eagle, Fr. Stephen wrote this about Passionate Spirituality:

"In a nutshell, the Passionate Spirituality characteristic attempts to measure the centrality of God and awareness of God's activity in our lives. Does our low score mean that we don't think God is central to our lives? I don't know. What do you think the answer is? Whatever our replies, this survey indicates that, if we want to grow as a parish, we need to open up and be less shy about our faith in Jesus and how that faith fits into our lives."

Part of the NCD team's action plan to help foster development of this characteristic is to encourage more small group discussions –and not just in the church building! These S.A.L.T. (Sharing And Learning Together) groups may take various forms, but at their heart are intended to encourage conversations about God. **As an extension of the S.A.L.T. group concept the NCD team would like to encourage all small groups at the parish to spend a small amount of time at the start or end of each gathering to have a S.A.L.T. moment –two or three minutes focused on God.**

If your small group is not in this habit already, here are some ideas for S.A.L.T. moments to get you started:

- Say a short pray, acknowledging God's role in the group.
- Read a daily scripture reflection such as Forward Day-by-Day or Our Daily Bread.
- Share an experience where God has touched your life
- Recite a short passage of scripture that is meaningful to you and explain why.
- Praise God for something good that has happened, or make a petition for help with a difficulty.

Feel free to come up with your own ideas for S.A.L.T. moments. There are suggestions you may want to consider on the other side of this page. The whole idea is to share our faith and be mindful of God's role in our lives.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact or any one of the member of the NCD team (Fr. Stephen, Gerald Blackstock, Sue Foote, Ruth Sears or Shane Watson).

Prayer Resources:

Loving heavenly Father, we ask you to bless us as we gather in your name and join together in your service. We pray for guidance in the matters at hand and ask that you would clearly show us how to conduct our work with a spirit of joy and enthusiasm. Give us the desire to find ways to excel in our work. Help us to work together and encourage each other to excellence. We ask that we would challenge each other to reach higher and farther to be the best we can be. We ask this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Guide us in our deliberations, O God, and touch our lives with your loving kindness. Grant that our decisions may be in the same spirit that was in Christ Jesus and be served through us in our world today. Amen."

May the Lord bless and keep us. May he make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us. May he turn his face towards us and give us peace. We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen

Loving God, as we gather today, we take the time to remember your presence in our lives and thank you for all of the gifts which you have given us. Sometimes we get caught up in the business of life and we forget to appreciate your love and generosity. In valuing your gifts may we always strive to improve our lives and to build a community of peace and joy. Amen.

Other suggestions: Use the Collect of the Day, the Lord's Prayer, the Doxology, or make up your own prayer. It may seem awkward at first, but just talk to God and ask for guidance.

Devotional Resources:

Forward Day by Day: <http://www.forwardmovement.org/Today-s-Meditation/>. Hard copies of the Forward Day by Day booklet are available at the back of the church.

Daily Word: www.dailyword.com (Look for Today's Word and click on the "Read More" button)

Devotionals Blog: <http://churchdevs.blogspot.ca> (usually includes a reflection question)

Other suggestions: Read the Bible reading for the day printed in weekly readings section of the bulletin, or one of the readings from Sunday worship. Or, pick a reading you like! Devise your own reflection question or simply ask people what struck them as the scripture was read.