

H O S T I N G   A

# FAMILY SMALL GROUP IN A BOX

This resource offers a simple way to connect with other families and grow in faith together. Just like a meal kit subscription skips the menu planning and grocery shopping and delivers a meal in a box, this resource offers a pre-planned strategy to help you get started quickly and easily!

Small groups provide a safe place for a personal encounter with Jesus, the development of authentic friendships, and honest sharing. Small groups allow members to pray and share life together and encourage each other to uphold Gospel values. Conversations with peers tap into shared challenges and experiences in life. As members of small groups grow closer to Jesus and to each other, they tend to support and minister to one another through life's ups and downs. Families who participate in small groups testify to the many blessings that come from walking the journey of faith with their peers.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 - 4 Families who have an interest in sharing faith and growing in a life of discipleship
- 1 Place to meet or a digital platform that all families can utilize
- 1 Link to the Small Group Leader Guide
- 1 Pre-packaged series to use for small group content
- 1 Participant Handout to share with all participants
- 1 Follow-up discussion to assess outcomes and determine next steps

## DIRECTIONS TO START A SMALL GROUP

1. Pray about who to invite to your family small group.
2. Invite the people who God put on your heart to join you weekly (or every other week) for some time of faith sharing and socializing. Limit your group to 4 families.
3. Select the meeting place or digital platform your small group will use.
4. Choose the content that will be used for your small group. Order any materials that are needed.
5. Set a start date and a schedule that works for all the participants for the duration of the series. Complete [this form](#) with your small group information to log your group with the Office of Evangelization.
6. Distribute the Participant Handout to all the participants.
7. Start your session on the scheduled day and have fun!
8. Once the series is complete, get your group together to share thoughts about how the sessions went and decide on whether to continue with another study. Questions to consider could include: What was most meaningful to you from this series? What worked best in this environment? What could be improved? Do you want to continue participating in a small group? What are some other topics you would like to explore?

## SMALL GROUP SESSION OUTLINE

**Suggested meeting Frequency:** Once per week or twice per month.

**Suggested Meeting Duration:** 90 minutes (or 2 hours if you want to include a shared meal).

**Meeting Location:** Check out the *Where to Meet* section on Page 3 to determine where your small group should meet.

## SAMPLE TIMELINE OF A SESSION (90 MINUTES)

**10 minutes**—Gather, Socialize, Introductory Questions.

**5 minutes**—Opening Prayer (may be included in resource used for small group content).

**60 minutes**—Content from resource and discussion.

**10 minutes**—Closing Prayer with intentions.

**5 minutes**—Announcements, socialize, good-byes.

\* If your group would like to share a meal together, consider adding 30 minutes to your socializing time at the beginning of your session.

## WHERE TO MEET

Small groups can meet in-person anywhere that the group can sit comfortably and share conversation with no distractions. While some small groups may choose to meet in a public location such as a local coffee shop, a local park, or at a parish, for simplicity, families with children may choose to meet in each other's homes. The group may choose to meet at the same home or rotate to a different home each week. When selecting a location, consider available space for both adults and children, pet allergies, and driving distance. Childcare is a significant factor to consider when forming a family small group. See the *Considerations for Children* section for some points to consider.

Some small groups may choose to meet in an online environment due to distance, travel, childcare needs, social distancing, etc. Many platforms exist to connect people digitally. Pick the platform that works best for everyone. Here are some possible ones to consider:

- > **ZOOM** — Meet for 40 minutes for free or upgrade to a paid plan for unlimited time video conferencing on a mobile device or a desktop computer. Find out more by visiting [zoom.us](https://zoom.us)
- > **GOOGLE HANGOUTS** — Each Hangout allows for an unlimited amount of time via the web browser or Google Hangout app. Please note: all participants need to have a Google account. Visit [hangouts.google.com](https://hangouts.google.com) for more information.
- > **FACEBOOK MESSENGER** — Using the Messenger mobile app or a web browser, this free option from Facebook permits groups to video chat. More details can be found at [messenger.com](https://messenger.com)
- > **FACETIME** — Using an iPad, iPhone, or Mac desktop app, Apple users can connect for free with multiple participants on one call. Explore [apps.apple.com](https://apps.apple.com) to find out more.
- > **SKYPE** — Connect with others via the desktop app, mobile app, or the website using this free video chat option. Additional details can be found at [skype.com](https://skype.com)

## ADULT SMALL GROUP SESSION CONTENT (PICK ONE)

Helping parents to encounter Christ:

- > *Amazed and Afraid* (6 Sessions) — [Preview](#) | [Purchase](#)
- > *Believe* (6 Sessions) — [Preview](#) | [Purchase](#)
- > *Signs and Wonders* (6 Sessions) — [Preview](#) | [Purchase](#)
- > *Focus Bible Study* — [Free Printed Resources](#)

Parenting through the Lens of Faith:

- > *Parenting Through the Phases* (6 Sessions) — [Video Curriculum on YouTube](#)
- > *Foundations for Thriving in parenting* (4 Episodes) — [Formed.org](#)
- > *Pass It On* (15 Episodes on various topics) — [Formed.org](#)

Lectionary-based Discussions:

- > Going Deeper with [52 Sundays](#)
- > Our [Sunday Visitor Lifelong Catechesis Sunday Readings](#) and [Questions of the Week](#)

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN

For groups that meet in-person, parents may bring children to the host's home and arrange for a babysitter to provide a faith-based activity for the children while the adults meet. In this case, babysitter costs may be divided by all the parents who bring children. For groups that meet digitally, parents may choose to meet after the kids go to bed or before they wake up in the morning. Alternatively, parents may choose to provide their children with a faith-based activity during the adult discussion.

The following are suggested resources for children: [Formed.org](#), *Veggie Tales* videos, story books of the Saints, religious coloring pages found on Pinterest. For adolescents, contact your parish for online middle school or high school ministry offerings.

## INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

Consider opening your discussion with one the following questions to help you get to know one another better. Pick one question each week and have everyone answer.

- > *If you could go anywhere, where would you love to travel on vacation?*
- > *What was your dream job as a child?*
- > *If you could play any Olympic sport, what would it be and why?*
- > *What was the most memorable gift you ever gave someone?*
- > *What is one of your hidden talents?*
- > *What would be your ultimate meal?*

## WEEKLY CATECHETICAL MATERIAL FOR EASTER SEASON FAMILY SMALL GROUPS

Each week's content includes a reflection, some ideas for application in a family, and group discussion questions. Also included are links to additional information about the topic.

### Week 1: Vocation and Family

English: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/catechesi-vocazione/>

Spanish: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/es/catechesi-vocazione/>

### Week 2: Called to Holiness

English: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/catechesi-3/>

Spanish: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/es/catechesi-3/>

### Week 3: Nazareth: Making Love Normal

English: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/catechesi-4/>

Spanish: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/es/catechesi-4/>

Week 4: We Are All Children, We Are All Brothers

English: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/catechesi-5/>

Spanish: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/es/catechesi-5/>

Week 5: Fathers and Mothers

English: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/catechesi-6/>

Spanish: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/es/catechesi-6/>

Week 6: Grandparents and the Elderly

English: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/catechesi-7/>

Spanish: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/es/catechesi-7/>

Week 7: “Excuse Me, Thank You, Sorry”

English: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/en/catechesi-8/>

Spanish: <https://www.romefamily2022.com/es/catechesi-8/>