Helpful Hints for an Effective Weekly Bible Study Group

- **Know that the Holy Spirit is guiding our group’s weekly reflection.** We are excited to break open the Word so that our lives will be enriched, and our celebration of the Eucharist will be even more engaging.

- **Showing up is half the battle!** There are so many reasons not to go to weekly Bible Study. Know that we all realize the truth in that statement. However, if you can just get there, watch what God’s grace can do! Understand also that being there regularly impacts the others in the group. The converse is true as well (imagine what Mass would be like if no one showed up!). You are an important part of the group (even if you think you aren’t), and not showing up once makes it easier to not show again.

- **Being there on time** to respect the time of others is a courtesy that we extend to others in the group. Try to be there a few minutes early so that everyone can begin at the stated start time in prayer.

- **Be open to being a leader.** Coming to Duke means being expected to lead. Introverts and extroverts alike can be leaders in our Bible Study format. No more preparation than anyone else in the group. You just need to know the format of the weekly gathering and be willing to keep an eye on your watch to make sure things are on track. You may at times need to bring everyone’s attention back to the topic at hand. You can handle that!

- **Reading the 2 page resource as well as the 3 readings in advance** (about a 10 minute process) can make so much of a difference. It really primes the pump for the meeting. If you can’t, still come to the Bible Study meeting, but don’t let it become a habit of being unprepared.

- **Confidentiality is so important.** Building trust with those in the group makes a difference for everyone. What is said in the group should stay in the group.

- **Make sure others have a chance to speak.** Ideally (not mandatory), each person in the group speaks once during the time for comments on the reflection questions. If you speak for longer than three minutes, or more than once, you may have taken someone else opportunity to reflect with the group. Similarly, your choosing not to share at all may leave others with the responsibility for carrying the group (not exactly fair either). Don’t dominate the conversation nor retract from it.

- **Bible Study is a time to reflect on what God is speaking to our hearts through the Sacred Scripture.** It is not a time for catching up on what is going on in people’s lives or fooling around. Often times that is what people do when they are nervous or unsure about what the Scripture might be saying. It is ok to be nervous or unsure, we all are at times. Just **don’t let that take the group off topic.**

- **Bible Study can be a healing experience, and yet it is not a therapeutic time.** It really isn’t **appropriate to take the group’s time with one person’s “issue(s)”.** Even when someone in the group may be going through a tough time, we believe that the sharing of Scripture can be more beneficial than allowing that person(s) to share the difficulty that they are experiencing. This is a fine line that may be tough to know exactly where it is to be drawn. If you have some questions, feel free to ask the DCC Staff person assigned to your group.

- **Using your laptop or phone during a Bible Study meeting can be a great way to not use paper to look at the weekly resource as well as the weekly readings online.** However, surfing the web, **Gchatting or being Facebook or texting is really inappropriate** and sends a message to the others in the group that you don’t care. Bottom line (hard to hear this, but…) it is rude!