

Tips for Starting a Group Bible Study

One of the best ways to learn about scripture is to read it and discuss it with other people. Consider joining a Bible study program in your parish. If your parish doesn't have a program, start a group Bible study yourself. Here are some suggestions for getting started.

Be clear about your purpose.

People usually get together to apply the wisdom of scripture to their lives and to support each other. But there are other possible reasons. For example: to study the Sunday Mass readings; to get connected (or reconnected) with the Church; to do academic-level study.

Choose a scripture program that suits your purpose.

Many programs are available. The booklets in the [Six Weeks with the Bible](#) program are well-suited for groups that get together primarily to help each other apply scripture to their daily lives.

Agree on norms for discussion.

"We're all beginners here" is good start. Other attitudes: "we want to read scripture prayerfully," "we're not here to give each other advice about our problems," "what's said in group meetings is confidential." Be explicit about these norms.

Agree on the commitment to the group Bible study.

What priority does the group have in our schedules? Is everyone expected to do "homework" ahead of time?

Settle housekeeping matters.

Where and when will we meet? Who provides refreshments (if any)? How long will the meetings be? (It's a good idea to agree to end the meeting on time.)

Agree on leadership.

Someone needs to facilitate meetings. This responsibility could rotate among group members or one person could do it all the time.

Put God at the center.

Scripture is the word of God. Approach your readings and discussions prayerfully. Listen for God's word for you.