The Gospel is not merely about our personal relationship with God. Nor should our loving response to God be seen simply as an accumulation of small personal gestures to individuals in need, a kind of “charity à la carte”, or a series of acts aimed solely at easing our conscience. The Gospel is about the kingdom of God; it is about loving God who reigns in our world. To the extent that he reigns within us, the life of society will be a setting for universal fraternity, justice, peace and dignity. Both Christian preaching and life, then, are meant to have an impact on society. We are seeking God’s kingdom... Jesus’ mission is to inaugurate the kingdom of his Father; he commands his disciples to proclaim the good news that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Pope Francis I: *The Joy of the Gospel*, 180
Overview
What do you mean by Intentional Disciple?
Few Christians would argue the premise that we are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ. What “being a disciple” means and what that looks like in our lives, is a great deal more confusing. At St. Dominic’s, we invite you to engage the concept of discipleship head-on. Maybe you’re already a disciple. If so, hopefully you will discover how to be more intentional about your discipleship. Maybe you’re not yet a disciple. If so, hopefully you will enter into a deeper understanding of what it means to be a disciple and become more hungry to respond to Jesus’ call.

What is asked of me?
First, pick up a booklet at St. Dominic’s each month and follow along. If you can, attend one of the Explore (everyone is welcome) sessions offered each month. If you want to go deeper, sign up for a Small Christian Community. Small community will meet twice a month to discuss. We hope to be able to offer committed small communities and drop-in small communities as we get a better understanding of people’s interested. Please see the back cover for specific dates.

When did the Intentional Disciples initiative start?
St. Dominic’s kicked off the Intentional Disciples initiative in September 2013. We are gradually rolling it out to the whole parish. We hope to be able to connect people whenever they learn about the initiative or are ready to get involved.

What if I’m not sure how much of this I’m ready to do?
Pick up a booklet, and try it out. Pray about it.

I’m interested, but I just don’t have the time.
We understand that this will not fit everyone’s interest or schedule. We would like to ask you to pray for this initiative in the parish.

Jesus, let us hear your call anew.
Bless us with the courage to respond.
Clear away all barriers. Make us your disciples.
Format

Each month we'll pick several scripture passages around an aspect or theme of discipleship. We'll spend the month exploring that theme, going deeper and challenging ourselves. In September and October, we rolled this out to the parish. We have formed several small communities, but it is not to late to join one if you are interested (see the back cover). We plan to make this a yearlong initiative. Here’s the planned format for each month:

**Week 1 - Explore**
Break open the scripture and explore discipleship. Our goal here is not just to understand how discipleship functioned when Jesus walked the Earth, we want to understand what discipleship means in our lives, today.

You can explore the scripture on your own through this book, or you can attend one of the presentations offered (see the upcoming schedule on the back cover).

**Week 2 - Share**
Consider joining a small community to discuss the meaning of discipleship to you. There is something powerful about gathering with others to explore our relationship with Jesus.

If you can’t join a small community, you can take time each day to pray the scripture and reflect on your own journey.

**Week 3 - Act**
This week we'll challenged ourselves to take some practical step exploring discipleship in our daily lives. We'll do this on our own, so if you're part of a small community, there will not be a meeting this week.

**Week 4 - Share**
Gather again in your small community or reflect on your own.
To kick off this initiative, we asked:

*Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? (Yes, No, I Don’t Know)*
*Was this question easy or hard to answer?*
*Is this an important question?*
*What would you need to be able to answer this question?*

This month:

**Starter**

*How would I summarize the meaning of the words “Kingdom of God”?*

*How relevant is the Kingdom of God to my life as a disciple?*
Week 1 - Explore

Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17

I’m sure you’ve heard the biblical phrase, “The Kingdom of God” or “The Kingdom of Heaven.” These two phrases mean the same thing (although Matthew seems to prefer “heaven”). For simplicity sake, I’ll move forward just using “Kingdom.” You’ll find Kingdom in the first words out of Jesus mouth in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. In fact, you'll find Kingdom on Jesus lips over one hundred times throughout the Gospels. Simply put, the concept of Kingdom is central to Jesus’ message and mission. But, what is the Kingdom?

This month we'll dive deeply into some of the many things that Jesus taught us about the Kingdom. Most of Jesus’ teachings about Kingdom are found in parables. We will definitely encounter an aspect of mystery surrounding the Kingdom. In the Bible, the word mystery “refers to aspects of God’s plan of salvation for humanity, which has already begun but will be completed only with the end of time” (USCCB Document). Let’s go seek the Kingdom together.

For behold, the kingdom of God is among you.

Luke 17:21b
He proposed another parable to them. "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well. The slaves of the householder came to him and said, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?' He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' His slaves said to him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' He replied, 'No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, "First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn."'

He proposed another parable to them. "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the 'birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.'

He spoke to them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened...

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. "Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."
Read prayerfully: What do you learn about the Kingdom?
Generous

Matthew 20:1  "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 Going out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' 5 So they went off. And he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. 6 Going out about five o'clock, he found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' 7 They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard.' 8 When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' 9 When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. 10 So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. 11 And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, 12 saying, 'These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day's burden and the heat.' 13 He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? 14 Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? 15 Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?' 16 Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Read prayerfully: What do you learn about the Kingdom?

Forgiven and Forgiving
That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. 24 When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. 25 Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. 26 At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' 27 Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. 28 When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, 'Pay back what you owe.' 29 Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' 30 But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. 31 Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. 32 His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. 33 Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?' 34 Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. 35 So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.'

**Read prayerfully: What do you learn about the Kingdom?**

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**At Hand For You**

*Luke 9:59* To another [Jesus] said, "Follow me." But he replied, "Lord, let me go first and bury my father." 60 But he answered him, "Let the dead bury their
dead. But you, go and proclaim the **kingdom of God**."  

61 And another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say farewell to my family at home."

62 To him Jesus said, "No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the **kingdom of God**."

10:1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit.  

2 He said to them, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.  

3 Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves.  

4 Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way.  

5 Into whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this household.'  

6 If a peaceful person lives there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you.  

7 Stay in the same house and eat and drink what is offered to you, for the laborer deserves his payment. Do not move about from one house to another.  

8 Whatever town you enter and they welcome you, eat what is set before you,  

9 cure the sick in it and say to them, 'The **kingdom of God** is at hand for you.'  

10 Whatever town you enter and they do not receive you, go out into the streets and say,  

11 The dust of your town that clings to our feet, even that we shake off against you.' Yet know this: the **kingdom of God** is at hand.

**Read prayerfully: What do you learn about the Kingdom?**

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**Born of Water and Spirit**

**John 3:1** Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.  

2 He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him."  

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Amen,
amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a person once grown old be born again? Surely he cannot reenter his mother's womb and be born again, can he?" 5 Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6 What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit. 7 Do not be amazed that I told you, 'You must be born from above.' 8 The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." 9 Nicodemus answered and said to him, "How can this happen?" 10 Jesus answered and said to him, "You are the teacher of Israel and you do not understand this? 11 Amen, amen, I say to you, we speak of what we know and we testify to what we have seen, but you people do not accept our testimony. 12 If I tell you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13 No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."

Read prayerfully: What do you learn about the Kingdom?

Key Insights

General

- The theme of the Kingdom is very Jewish
- The Kingdom, especially in the Old Testament, clearly points to the end times (e.g., longing, hope)
• Jesus' authority to inaugurate, proclaim, and embody the Kingdom is a messianic sign
• For Jesus, the Kingdom in not just a future reality (expectant); it is dawning now and had immediate implications (demands)
• Kingdom implies union with Jesus and allowing this new reality to reign in our lives and in our world

Multiple Parables

• Man sowing seed
  ○ Growing over time
  ○ Reality of good and bad, can't always tell the difference
  ○ God’s job to sort it out
• Mustard seed
  ○ Initially small
  ○ Will grow large
  ○ Become a dwelling place/home
• Yeast
  ○ A small amount initially
  ○ Leavens the whole
• Treasure
  ○ Hidden, but discoverable
  ○ Worth investing everything in
  ○ Joyful
  ○ Changes your reality and future
• Man seeking Pearl
  ○ Searching for the best
  ○ Worth investing everything in
• Net
  ○ Collects everything until full
  ○ Separate the good and the bad at the end
• Scribe
  ○ Instructed, expert in the word
  ○ Able to bring forth new and old

Generous

• Unfolding over time
• Producing fruit
• Requiring laborers
• Always needing more
• Rewarding people, generously, freely
• Everyone gets full reward (i.e., can’t get 50% of the Kingdom)
• Human flawed response: envy and demanding fairness
• Do we see ourselves early or late?

Forgiven and Forgiving
• Settling accounts, some with huge debts
• Mercy, removing the debt
• Requirement to share the mercy and forgiveness
• Demanding

At Hand For You
• Follow Me
  ○ Priorities
  ○ Requirement to proclaim the Kingdom
  ○ Giving up important things
  ○ Not looking back
• Sending Disciples
  ○ Ahead of him
  ○ Laborers and harvest
  ○ Relying on hospitality
  ○ Share peace
  ○ Cure the sick, proclaim the imminence of the Kingdom

Born of Water and Spirit
• Need to be born from above
• Born of water and the Spirit
• Freedom of the Spirit
• Eternal life through belief in Jesus
• Baptism invites us into a new reality
Matthew 6:25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear...Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.

Matthew 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. 19Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 20I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

Matthew 11:11 Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Matthew 16:13 When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. 18And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. 19I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." 20Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Messiah.

Matthew 18:1 At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2He called a child over, placed it in their midst, 3and said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. 4Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5And whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me.
Matthew 19:16 Now someone approached him and said, "Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?" 17 He answered him, "Why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." 18 He asked him, "Which ones?" And Jesus replied, "You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; 19 honor your father and your mother; and 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" 20 The young man said to him, "All of these I have observed. What do I still lack?" 21 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." 22 When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions. 23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." 25 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and said, "Who then can be saved?" 26 Jesus looked at them and said, "For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible." 27 Then Peter said to him in reply, "We have given up everything and followed you. What will there be for us?" 28 Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you that you who have followed me, in the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, will yourselves sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

Matthew 21:28 "What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' 29 He said in reply, 'I will not,' but afterwards he changed his mind and went. 30 The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, 'Yes, sir,' but did not go. 31 Which of the two did his father's will?' They answered, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. 32 When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him.

Matthew 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes'? 43 Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will produce its fruit.

Matthew 22:2 "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son. 3 He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast, but they refused to come. 4 A second time he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those invited: 'Behold, I have prepared my banquet, my calves and fattened cattle are killed, and everything is ready; come to the feast.'" 5 Some ignored the invitation and went away, one to his farm, another to his business. 6 The rest laid hold of his servants, mistreated them, and killed them. 7 The king was enraged and sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8 Then he said to his
servants, 'The feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. 9Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.' 10The servants went out into the streets and gathered all they found, bad and good alike, and the hall was filled with guests. 11 But when the king came in to meet the guests he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. 12He said to him, 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?' But he was reduced to silence. 13Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.' 14Many are invited, but few are chosen."

Matthew 23:13 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You lock the kingdom of heaven before human beings. You do not enter yourselves, nor do you allow entrance to those trying to enter.

Matthew 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, 4 but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. 5 Since the bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6 At midnight, there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' 7 Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 But the wise ones replied, 'No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.' 10 While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. 11 Afterwards the other virgins came and said, 'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!' 12 But he said in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

Mark 9:47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna, 48 where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.' 49 "Everyone will be salted with fire. 50 Salt is good, but if salt becomes insipid, with what will you restore its flavor? Keep salt in yourselves and you will have peace with one another."

Luke 13:29 And people will come from the east and the west and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God.

Luke 18:29 He said to them, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God 30 who will not receive back an overabundant return in this present age and eternal life in the age to come."
Recap & Prepare for Week 2

- Reread the scripture for this week (look through the extras).
  - Underline phrases that capture some aspect of the Kingdom for disciples
  - Pick a phrase, one each morning
  - Write it on a slip of paper
  - Find seven times during the day to think about it and pray it

- Reflection questions:

  What does Jesus call me to see and understand about the Kingdom?

  Do I allow God to reign in my life? If so, how?

  How does my life proclaim and manifest the Kingdom?
**Individual Option**

- Find 20-30 minutes where you won’t be interrupted.
- (10-15 minutes) Follow the prayer format (*Lectio Divina*) in the group exercise below.
- (10-20 minutes) Spend time reflecting on the questions outlined above.

**Advice For Participating In Small Christian Communities**

- The facilitator’s role is to guide the flow of the meeting. They are not in the group to be experts. Help the facilitators by following their lead.
- During the discussion period, there will be multiple questions or topic for conversation. It is best to take them one at a time (i.e., let everyone share about one before moving to the next).
- Don’t attempt to give the “right answer.” Just share your experience, insights, and perspective.
- Please stay on topic (the questions asked).
- Pay attention to time. Keep your answers on the shorter side. You can always add more later.
- Make sure everyone gets a chance to speak (i.e., give others a chance to speak before sharing a second time).
- It’s ok to not share if you don’t feel comfortable, but challenge yourself to share occasionally.
- Give your attention to the person speaking. Please don’t start side conversations.
- Avoid asking follow-up questions. Let people share what they want to share. It is always good to affirm others.
- Avoid answering other people’s questions (i.e., taking on the role of expert).
How To Pray The Scripture Using *Lectio Divina*

- **Goal:**
  - Engage one of the scriptures at a deeper level
  - Allow the Spirit to teach our hearts
  - Provide fruit to lead into the discussion and sharing

- **Steps (Should take 10-15 minutes):**
  - *Lectio* (Reading, 2-5 minutes)
    - A participant reads the scripture passage
    - 30-60 seconds of silence
    - A participant reads the scripture passage
    - As the scripture is being read, the participants are invited to find a word, phrase, image, or idea that resonates with them. We’ll call this the *focus*.
  - *Meditatio* (Meditate, 5-10 minutes)
    - Stay with the focus from above.
    - There are different ways to do this: Why does it resonate? What does it mean in my life today? Repeat it as a mantra. Imagine it. How is this connected to discipleship?
  - *Oratio* (Pray, 1-2 minutes)
    - Whatever comes up in meditation, form into a silent prayer offered to God.
  - *Contemplatio* (Contemplate, 1-2 minutes)
    - After speaking a prayer to God, sit and listen or rest in God’s love.
  - This leads into discussion and sharing.
    - Start with insights from the prayer.
    - Transition to sharing about discipleship.

- **Tips**
  - There is no “right way,” do what works for you
  - Embrace the silence
  - Let God find you
Small Christian Community Process - First Meeting
(Suggested timing based on a 60/90 minute meeting)

- Welcome & Check In (5/10 minutes)
- Review Format (5/5 minutes)
  - Review the participant’s advice (page 18)
  - Prayer will be about 15 minutes
  - Review the prayer format: Lectio Divina (page 19)
  - Discussion will follow based on the prayer and the questions (page 17).
- Prayer (10/15 minutes)
  - Transition Passage: “Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God who will not receive back an overabundant return in this present age and eternal life in the age to come.” (Luke 18:29-30)
  - Lectio Divina: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-46 (page 6)
- Discussion (30/45 minutes)
  - Begin with insights from the prayer experience
  - Discussing the reflection questions (page 17)
- Action/Request (5/10 minutes)
  - The practical exercise is listed on the next page
  - Participants can share thoughts and plans
  - Review date of the next group session
  - Participants can request prayers from the group
The kingdom, already present and growing in our midst, engages us at every level of our being and reminds us of the principle of discernment which Pope Paul VI applied to true development: it must be directed to “all men and the whole man.” We know that “evangelization would not be complete if it did not take account of the unceasing interplay of the Gospel and of man's concrete life, both personal and social.” This is the principle of universality intrinsic to the Gospel, for the Father desires the salvation of every man and woman, and his saving plan consists in “gathering up all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph 1:10). Our mandate is to “go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mk 16:15), for “the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God” (Rom 8:19). Here, “the creation” refers to every aspect of human life; consequently, “the mission of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ has a universal destination. Its mandate of charity encompasses all dimensions of existence, all individuals, all areas of community life, and all peoples. Nothing human can be alien to it.” True Christian hope, which seeks the eschatological kingdom, always generates history.

**How does my life proclaim the Good News? (words and actions)**

**Action: Make one concrete change in your life to proclaim the Good News more fully.**
Week 4 - Share

Preparing
- Continue to use the scripture phrases you highlighted when you prepared for Week 2:
  - Pick a phrase, one each morning
  - Write it on a slip of paper
  - Find seven times during the day to think about it and pray it
- Week 3 exercise:
  - Plan to share something about your Week 3 exercise
  - If you were not able to do it, plan to share your barriers.

Individual Option
- Find 20-30 minutes where you won’t be interrupted.
- (10-15 minutes) Follow the prayer format *(Lectio Divina)* in the group exercise below.
- (10-20 minutes) Journal about the experience of the exercise from Week 3.

Small Christian Community Process - Second Meeting
*(Suggested timing based on a 60/90 minute meeting)*

- Welcome & Check In (5/10 minutes)
- Review Format (5/5 minutes)
  - Review the participant's advice (page 18)
  - Prayer will be about 15 minutes
  - Review the prayer format: *Lectio Divina* (page 19)
  - Discussion will follow based on the prayer the Act exercise (page 21)
- Prayer (10/15 minutes)
  - Transition Passage: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)
- Discussion (30/45 minutes)
  - Begin with insights from the prayer experience
  - Discussing insights from the Act exercise
- Action/Request (5/10 minutes)
  - Review date of the next Explore session
  - Participants can request prayers from the group
Extra: Wake up each morning and pray the line from the Our Father: “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”
THREE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED WITH INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES

1. Pick up a booklet, and explore on your own. - or -
2. Attend an “Explore” session to learn about this month’s scripture. Everyone is welcome. - or -
3. Check out a Small Christian Community to join with others to go deeper.

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UPCOMING “EXPLORE” SESSIONS

Sunday, February 2, 10:30-11:30 AM, School Basement
Monday, February 3, 7:30-9 PM, Aquinas Room
Young Adults’ Session*, Wed., Feb. 5, 7:30-9 PM, Parish Hall
Thursday, February 6, 12:00-1:30 PM, Aquinas Room

* The Young Adults group is a community of single and married Catholic adults in our 20s and 30s; to find out more, visit: http://stdominics.org/youngadults

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CONNECT WITH A SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Contact Scott Moyer at scott@stdominics.org

We would like to start a Wednesday evening women’s group.
If you’re interested, please contact Scott.

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY DECEMBER MEETING DATES

Sunday: February 9 & 23
YAG (Sunday): February 9 & 23

Monday: February 10 & 24
Thursday: February 13 & 27