“All good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.”

James 1:17a
**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.

*Jesus Freak*
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**

*What does it mean to be gifted?*

*Do you view yourself as gifted?*

*Are there any responsibilities that come with a gift?*
I’d like to invite you to reread the quote above. How many Christian seriously believe that they can do greater works than Jesus? I’m willing to bet it’s very few, and the ones that do, we’re more likely to question their sanity than nod in agreement. So why would Jesus have said this? Fortunately, Jesus gives us the answer: The Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always” (John 14:16). Jesus was about to give his followers a gift, and that gift makes all the difference!

We’ve all heard about the Holy Spirit, but most of us would be well served to take more time reflecting what Scripture and Tradition teaches us about the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Here are a few key statements about the Holy Spirit:

- The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity (A.K.A., God the Spirit)
- The Holy Spirit dwells within us from the moment of our Baptism and strengthened through our Confirmation
- The Holy Spirit teaches, sanctifies, and governs
- The Holy Spirit empowers us as Christians to continue the work of Jesus Christ
- The Holy Spirit gifts us individually and uniquely (i.e., we are not interchangeable)

Yes, everything is a gift from God (life, health, family, friendships, talents, etc.), but this month we'll explore the greatest gift we’ve ever been given. Perhaps we should open that gift and see what we’ve received.

*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.*

*Galatians 5:22-23*
Jesus Promises The Spirit

John 14:12-27

“Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me, because I live and you will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him.” ...

Read prayerfully: Why does Jesus promise us the Holy Spirit? How does the Holy Spirit function in our lives?
Paul Talks About Gifts

Ephesians 4:7 But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift... 11 And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be infants, tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching arising from human trickery, from their cunning in the interests of deceitful scheming. 15 Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body’s growth and builds itself up in love.

Read prayerfully: What does Paul teach us about gifts? What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?
3. The laity derive the right and duty to the apostolate from their union with Christ the head; incorporated into Christ’s Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord Himself...

For the exercise of this apostolate, the Holy Spirit Who sanctifies the people of God through ministry and the sacraments gives the faithful special gifts also (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7), "allotting them to everyone according as He wills" (1 Cor. 12:11) in order that individuals, administering grace to others just as they have received it, may also be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10), to build up the whole body in charity (cf. Eph. 4:16). From the acceptance of these charisms, including those which are more elementary, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the building up of the Church, in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where He wills" (John 3:8).

Read prayerfully: What do the Council Fathers teach us (using Sts. Peter and Paul) about the purpose of spiritual gifts?
10. In his intimate life, God "is love," the essential love shared by the three divine Persons: personal love is the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Father and the Son. Therefore he "searches even the depths of God," as uncreated Love-Gift. It can be said that in the Holy Spirit the intimate life of the Triune God becomes totally gift, an exchange of mutual love between the divine Persons and that through the Holy Spirit God exists in the mode of gift. It is the Holy Spirit who is the personal expression of this self-giving, of this being-love. He is Person-Love. He is Person-Gift Here we have an inexhaustible treasure of the reality and an inexpressible deepening of the concept of person in God, which only divine Revelation makes known to us.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit, being consubstantial with the Father and the Son in divinity, is love and uncreated gift from which derives as from its source (*fons vivus*) all giving of gifts vis-a-vis creatures (created gift): the gift of existence to all things through creation; the gift of grace to human beings through the whole economy of salvation. As the Apostle Paul writes: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to US."

**Read prayerfully:** How does St. Pope John Paul II speak of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and gifts?
Key Insights

Jesus Promises The Spirit
- Jesus describes the Spirit as the Father and Son dwelling within us
- The Spirit is a gift...that keeps on giving
- The Spirit keeps working within us (conforming us to Christ)
- The key to the Spirit is love
- St. Augustine describes the Spirit as the love between the Father and the Son
- The Spirit is active in our life, allowing us to act as God’s agent

Paul Talks About Gifts
- Paul always talks about the gifts in conjunction with the Body of Christ
- We are not all the same, but we are all important
- These gifts have been given for us to give away (e.g., to teach others)
- We are to build up the Body of Christ (empowered by the Spirit)
- The goal: “we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ”

Vatican II, Decree On The Apostolate Of The Laity
- The term “apostolate” means the field to which an apostle is sent
- Laypeople in the Church are considered apostles (i.e., sent by Christ)
- We are sent by nature of our Baptism and Confirmation, by Christ himself
- We are not interchangeable. If we don’t “show up” something is missing.
- We have the right and the duty to use our gifts

Saint Pope John Paul II, On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World
- The Holy Spirit is described as God-as-Gift (Person-Love, Person Gift)
- The “personal expression of [God's] self-giving”
- Through the Holy Spirit we have an “inexhaustible treasure”
- “God's love has been poured into our hearts”
Further Readings

Expectaion

Joel 3:1 Then afterward I will pour out my spirit upon all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; 2 Even upon the servants and the handmaids, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. 3 And I will work wonders in the heavens and on the earth.

Fulfilled At Pentecost

Acts 2:14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, "You who are Jews, indeed all of you staying in Jerusalem. Let this be known to you, and listen to my words. 15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. 16 No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 17 'It will come to pass in the last days,' God says, 'that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh...'

More From Paul

Romans 12:1 I [Paul] urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. 2 Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. 3 For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned. 4 For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. 6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; 7 if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; 8 if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. 9 Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; 10 love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. 11 Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality.
There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; 5 there are different forms of service but the same Lord; 6 there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. 7To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. 8To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit; 10to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues. 11But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes. 12As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. 13For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. 14Now the body is not a single part, but many. 15If a foot should say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body... 16But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. 17If they were all one part, where would the body be? 18But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body. 19The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you," nor again the head to the feet, "I do not need you." ... 20If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy. 21Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it.

Living Water

John 4:5 So [Jesus] came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon. 7A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." 8His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. 9The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.) 10Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." 11(The woman) said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? 12Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?" 13Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; 14but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will
become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." 15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." 16 Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back." 17 The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband.' 18 For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true." 19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." 21 Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth." 25 The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Anointed; when he comes, he will tell us everything." 26 Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking with you." 27 At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you talking with her?" 28 The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, 29 "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Messiah?" 30 They went out of the town and came to him. 31 Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat." 32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." 33 So the disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought him something to eat?" 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work. 35 Do you not say, 'In four months the harvest will be here'? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. 36 The reaper is already receiving his payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. 37 For here the saying is verified that 'One sows and another reaps.' 38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work." 39 Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me everything I have done." 40 When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. 41 Many more began to believe in him because of his word, 42 and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."
Recap & Prepare for Week 2
- Reread the scripture for this week (look through the extras).
  - Underline phrases that speak to your heart
  - 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, especially when you’re facing temptation.
- Reflection questions:

  *Can I believe in (trust in) the gift of the Holy Spirit?*

  *If I have been gifted through the Holy Spirit, what does this mean for me?*

  *How do I want to respond?*
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 15)
  - Prayer will be about 15 minutes
  - Review the prayer format: *Lectio Divina* (page 16)
  - Discussion will follow based on the prayer and the questions (page 14).

- Prayer (10/15 minutes)
  - Transition Passage: “I will pour out my spirit upon all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; Even upon the servants and the handmaids, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. And I will work wonders in the heavens and on the earth.” (Joel 3:1-3)
  - *Lectio Divina*: John 14:12-27 (page 6)

- Discussion (30/45 minutes)
  - Begin with insights from the prayer experience
  - Discussing the reflection questions (page 14)

- 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
Where/when in my life do I feel I am most aligned with the Spirit?

What problems in the world do I find myself most led by the Spirit to address?

What gifts might God have given me to share His love with others?

Action: Consider attending the Called and Gifted workshop. If you’ve already attended a workshop, find your notes and revisit them.
Preventing
- 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 ways to pray it throughout the day
- 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 15)
  - Prayer will be about 15 minutes
  - Review the prayer format: Lectio Divina (page 16)
  - Discussion will follow based on the prayer the Act exercise (page 18)
- Prayer (10/15 minutes)
  - Transition Passage: “Whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:14)
  - Lectio Divina: Ephesians 4:7-16 (page 7)
- 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
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

Monday, June 2, 7:30-9 PM, Aquinas Room

Young Adults’ Session*, Wed., June 4, 7:30-9 PM, Parish Hall

Thursday, June 5, 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

Small Christian Community Meeting Dates

Sunday: On Break
YAG (Sunday): June 15 & 29

Monday: June 9 & 23
Thursday: June 12 & 26