7 We pray together

Each person prays as they feel able. Spontaneous prayers are concluded with a prayer that all know or a hymn.

**Moving On:**

We hope the seven points above offer you a framework to review any small group exploration of scripture that you currently have in place. We hope also that they may assist you in beginning such a group.

When planning to introduce a new scripture group in your community please consider the venue and the time it will begin and end. Make sure the group members are introduced to each other and that tea or coffee is available at the end … but only for a short while! If advertising the group in the bulletin please ensure start and end times are clear (perhaps a total of an hour) and that lifts are available for those without transport.

You may like to use the generic action planning format as a useful framework for planning this initiative but please note down your initial thoughts in the space below prior to sharing with fellow parishioners.

##### *(Please insert your own parish name here before copying for parish use)*

##### *Parishes of Hope*

*Celebrating, consolidating and securing the Mission of the Church; - an opportunity to deepen the faith of our Parish communities in changing times*

***“Gratitude for the past, enthusiasm for the present, hope for the future” (John Paul ll)***

##### *Exploring Scripture*

**EXPLORING SCRIPTURE**

***KEY QUOTES***

Whether in diocese or parish, various members of the Church can help in each other’s formation. Priests and religious should be included in this. The Synod also wants priests and ordinands to be trained to help with lay formation. Similarly, the laity themselves can and should help priests and religious on their spiritual journey.

Christifideles Laici 61

There can be no priority more urgent, no effort more worthwhile, than the slow, patient work of forming lay people for their unique and irreplaceable task … Formation has therefore to be flexible and adapted to the diverse needs of clergy and laity of all ages, since formation is of course life-long and never considered to be complete.

The Easter People 147

Lay people have the duty and the right to acquire the knowledge of Christian teaching which is appropriate to each one’s capacity and condition, so that they may be able to live according to this teaching, to proclaim it and if necessary to defend it, and may be capable of playing their part in the exercise of the apostolate.

Code of Canon Law 229

How do you react to these?

**EXPLORING SCRIPTURE**

The growth of Scripture based groups has been widely acknowledged as one of the growth points in the Church. You do not need a priest or expert to hear what God is saying through his Word. Here is one way Scripture can be used to help us as individuals and as a community. *(The Diocesan Director of Adult Education, Mary Dolan, will be happy to suggest additional books)*

1 We invite the Lord

One person in the group opens the session with a short prayer asking the Lord to be present. A few moments silence is kept.

2 We read the text

One person reads the text aloud slowly. All should have the passage before them so make sure everyone has found the right place in their Bibles before the reading starts. Do not choose passages which are too long.

3 We meditate on the passage

Each person reads the text quietly on their own and picks out one word or short phrase which has made an impression on them. Each reads this out slowly and prayerfully. Observe a silence of about 15 seconds between each contribution. There should be no discussion about what people have chosen.

4 We let God speak

Silence is kept for about 5 minutes (or as long as it is comfortable for the group). We let the Spirit speak to us.

5 We share the insights we have received

Each person shares why they chose the phrase or word they did. Other group members listen quietly to what God has said to each individual. There should

be no discussion or preaching.

6 We discuss our task

What does God seem to be calling to us to do in the light of our sharing?