

# Circles

**Purpose:** Circles are a small group of parishioners whose main goal is to support each other and work together to build their faith.

Often in the Catholic Church we forget the value of working together and the importance of the support of the community in our walk of faith. Circles are smaller groups within the parish who can build a stronger sense of community and help people to engage their faith on another level. We need a strong, supportive community if we are to live our faith well.

The pastor has direct authority over all circles. If issues within a circle or issues within leadership within a circle cannot be managed on the level of the circle, then the pastor is called to resolve the issues.

**Goal:** Each circle is encouraged to meet at least quarterly to check in and help each other along their journey of faith. Circles are encouraged to choose faith-based activities that they can do as a circle including watching a faith-based movie, praying together, reading a faith-based books, and other faith-based activities. Circles are also encouraged to choose a service element to their circle including a service project, special service to Holy Cross Church, or take on a type of service for the Townsend community. These service activities are independent of the normal services needed for the parish, are directed to allow for creativity within the parish, and should a project the members of the circle can do together.

**Membership:** Membership of a circle is determined by several factors. Members of each circle are encouraged to invite and welcome new members of our parish to their circle. New members will not be decided by the office or determined by lottery or geography. Those who are in the same family are encouraged to be a part of the same circle. The maximum number of families allowed for a circle is 20 with exceptions granted by the pastor.

When a circle maxes out on the number in the circle, then the circle will meet with the pastor to determine the process through which a new circle is created and the division of families.

Some people of the parish will not want to be part of circle. Membership in a circle is encouraged by all parishioners but not a required. Some members of a circle may want to change circle. The process for moving from one circle to another is permitted with consultation with the pastor.

**Contact Person:** Each circle will elect or choose a contact person. The role of the contact person is to facilitate communication between the pastor and the circle, communicate with the circle, and to schedule and encourage group meetings. The contact person is not the leader of the circle nor shall the contact person determine the activities or service of the circle. Contact persons must be approved by the pastor who can also remove a contact person who overstep the boundaries of the role or fails to fulfill this role.



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