

ReachMore Witness Talk – Chris Quinn

My name is Chris Quinn. My family and I have been parishioners for a little over 2 years now. I want to take a few minutes to tell you about my experience this Lent with the Reach More Small Groups.

My group leader spoke about these Reach More Small Groups at Mass before Lent this year. He caught my attention when I heard him speak about his own experiences at Mass – that he would listen to the readings but not feel like he was getting the full benefit of them. This really resonated with me, as it is a situation that I can completely relate to. For me, struggling to get meaning at mass left me feeling like I was stuck in neutral with my relationship with God. After hearing about small groups, I immediately knew that I would sign up for this particular small group right after Mass. I was intrigued and wanted to take this chance to see if I could change my approach to Mass, Life, and my relationship with God.

Prior to this past Lent, I seemed to always take a quite literal view of the Mass readings. I had a difficult time understanding how the message in the homily connected to the readings and therefore to my own life. After spending the past 6 weeks engaging with my Small Group, I found myself developing a new outlook on the Bible and the Mass readings. To prepare, I spent small chunks of time during the week with one or two of the upcoming Sunday readings, focusing on a phrase or two or perhaps a sentence that seem to stick out to me. This weekly routine has helped me to build a habit of spending time with reading, reflection, and prayer. I am more in anticipation of hearing the homilist “connect the dots” in order to continue the conversation that I have been having all week with God. Sometimes the homily ends up being a continuation of our small group discussion, other times the homily will tease out a different perspective that enhances our group’s prayer and discussion.

My wife joined the same small group as me for Lent. This time spent together preparing and attending the meetings together added another dynamic facet to our marriage. With all the busyness that comes from the many blessings in our life, God time became limited to nightly prayers and Sunday Mass. Deep down, we wanted more, but had no idea how or even where to start. Making the small-time commitment to meet with others in our group once a week, gave us so much in return. We both feel better enabled to support each other as we grow in our individual relationships with God and try to model an intentional prayer life for our children.

Choosing to attend The Reach More Small Group this Lent was absolutely time well spent. Having the chance each week to discuss the readings, to learn how to pray over the readings, and to listen to each member consider certain words or phrases, helped me to realize that God is always trying to speak to each of us through his Living Word. He wants to build friendships with us. I also realized that this relationship with God is less about having a scholar’s understanding of a passage, and more about just showing up with an open heart and open ears. God will do the heavy-lifting; all I have to do is prepare to listen.