

DISCIPLESHIP

Quad

HOW TO START A QUAD

BY BOB RICE

DISCIPLESHIP

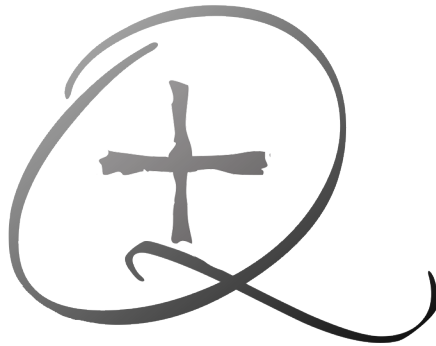
Quad

HOW TO START A QUAD

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“Missionary disciples accompany missionary disciples.”
—Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, no. 173

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INTRODUCTION: THE POWER OF YES

Much to our disappointment (not to mention our disillusionment), we as human beings have very little power in the grand scheme of things. None of us had any control over how we came into this world and few have any control over how we leave. We might get six or seven decades in this life, most of which will be spent sleeping and in the bathroom.

The greatest power we have, arguably the *only* power we have, is our ability to say “yes” or “no”. Everything else in creation *reacts*. The flower reacts to the sunlight; the animal reacts to its hunger. But nothing else can make a choice. Except for us.

This is part of what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God. God gave humanity the ability to choose. To say “yes” or say “no”. Unfortunately, as chronicled in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, mankind’s preferred response was a resounding “no”, even to the point where God could only find one willing person in the whole of humanity (Noah) that would do what he asked.

Whereas the Old Testament begins with a litany of “no”, the New Testament starts with stories of “yes”. The Gospel of Matthew begins with the silent “yes” of Joseph. Mark starts with the “yes” of John the Baptist. The Gospel of Luke explains in great detail the “yes” of Mary. And the Gospel of John begins with the “yes” of God Himself, the Word willing to become flesh to save sinful humanity.

I am so grateful for your “yes” to being a disciple of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church. That is by far the most powerful decision we can make. Saying “no” leaves us very few options (there are only Ten Commandments to break, after all), but saying “yes” opens up a kaleidoscope of opportunities as to how we can live out the call of Jesus in our lives.

One of those opportunities is starting The Discipleship Quad Process with three other people. A year from now, there will be three people who will be tremendously blessed, perhaps in a dramatic life-changing way, because of your willingness to do the work, go out of your comfort-zone, and live out the command of

Jesus to, “Go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:18).

I really hope you find three other people who will become close friends after this experience. I hope the conversations are open and easy-going, with everyone having a high level of trust and vulnerability. I pray that you will foster a deep connection with people who agree with you and think as you do. It happens!

But sometimes... it doesn't. You could get someone who believes strongly in a different political party. Who has traits that you find annoying, or an attitude you find insulting. Who isn't as enthusiastic about the faith as you are. Who doesn't do the readings or isn't consistent in showing up. That happens, too.

Those things, like the vast majority of your life, are out of your control. Thankfully, they are in God's control. You are saying “yes” to God and can leave the rest to him. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5). I don't know what God is going to do with your “yes” to this process, but I know one thing. It will be good. It will be *very* good. And though there will be trials, frustrations, and struggles along the way, the God who says “yes” to us will transform our meager offerings and efforts and multiply them a thousand-fold for the Kingdom.

It all starts with a “yes”. It can *only* start with a “yes”. Thank you for your “yes” to The Discipleship Quad Process, or at least your willingness to learn more about it. Let's take a closer look at what it is and how to do it.

THE DISCIPLESHIP QUAD PROCESS

Here is how we define it:

The Discipleship Quad Process is four people of the same gender who meet weekly for about a year to reflect on Scripture and Church teaching so as to encourage each other to be a more faithful disciple of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church through tangible actions and, when finished, continue the discipleship chain by starting the process again with three new people.

That's a mouthful, isn't it? Let's break that down.

FOUR PEOPLE OF THE SAME GENDER: Just in case you thought this was named after leg muscles, the “Quad” refers to having four people in the group. This is based on a discovery made by Greg Odgen, a Protestant pastor in California, almost four decades ago while completing his Doctor of Ministry degree.

Although he originally believed the way to make disciples was the one-on-one model demonstrated by Paul and Timothy in the New Testament, his advisor suggested that he consider a variety of other models. He did so, testing the micro group of three to four people, one-on-one discipleship, and small groups of six to ten. He discovered that the environment created with three to four people provided for a powerful “hothouse” of growth that was not present in the one-on-one model or a traditionally-sized small group. He documented all of this in his book, *Transforming Discipleship*.

Our experience of testing The Discipleship Quad Process over a few years proved this to be true. If you have only two people, you get a teacher/student dynamic. Groups of five or more allow some of the members of the group to hold back, and there rarely is enough time for everyone's voice to be heard. However, with four people, there is a great balance. There is more equal participation. There is more of a peer relationship among the group.

Having people of the same gender is also important because men and women often think and process things in different ways.

People of the same gender can share from a more common frame of reference, and often can do so with more vulnerability than they might if someone from the opposite gender was present.

WHO MEET WEEKLY FOR ABOUT A YEAR: Faith sharing groups are not a new concept for many Catholics, and there are numerous resources that encourage them. But few meet every week. Like an exercise program for the soul, the benefits of meeting that frequently work almost exponentially in a person's spiritual life. Perhaps the group might take a break for vacation here and there, but it is really important that the Quad keep meeting weekly as much as possible.

The Quad also has a specific end date. I know people who have been in the same faith sharing group for over two decades, and it has been an incredible blessing in their lives. But this is different. The group ends after a year, with the intention that its members would start other groups (more on that later).

When we first started The Discipleship Quad Process, many were concerned that a year was too long. However, after the first groups completed the entire curriculum, the overwhelming feedback was that being in a Quad for a year was the right amount of time to really get to know others in the Quad and recognize personal spiritual growth. The length of the process is one of its greatest strengths!

TO REFLECT ON SCRIPTURE AND CHURCH TEACHING: This is where the Guidebook comes in. Broken into four parts, the Discipleship Quad Guidebook is a 44-week reflection on the Bible and the teachings of the Catholic Church. It is driven primarily by Scripture. Each week provides a substantial reading from the Bible with smaller readings spread throughout the week. Written reflections compliment the Scriptures and include quotes from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Church documents, saints, and other inspirational writers. All of it is written from a first-person perspective that attempts to model the kind of conversation we want the group to have.

The weekly readings are broken into three sections, each with two

questions. The first question is general, the second is specific. Those questions become the heart of the conversation at the Quad Gathering each week.

Using the Guidebook allows the Quad to have a peer-to-peer relationship with each other, as opposed to having one person be the “expert” and the others be the “students”. You do not need to have theological expertise to start a Quad or facilitate one. You just need to want to follow Jesus!

SO AS TO ENCOURAGE EACH OTHER TO BE A MORE FAITHFUL DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH THROUGH TANGIBLE ACTIONS: In an ideal world, being a disciple of Jesus Christ and being Catholic would mean the exact same thing. At least, that is the way it *should* be. But unfortunately there are many who identify with being Catholic who don’t actively participate in their parish or believe major tenets of the faith. Saying you are a “disciple of Jesus Christ” is another way of saying you take your Catholic faith seriously. It isn’t another thing you do, it is at the heart of who you are.

Scripture frequently exhorts disciples to support each other in their faith journey. “Iron is sharpened by iron; one person sharpens another” (Proverbs 27:17). “Where one alone may be overcome, two together can resist. A three-ply cord is not easily broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Even Jesus said he is more present, “where two or three are gathered in my name” (Matthew 18:20). Pope Francis says the fellowship of believers is not optional, but something at the heart of what it means to follow Christ: “Missionary disciples accompany missionary disciples” (Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*, no. 173). The Discipleship Quad Process helps facilitate that accompaniment.

The weekly topics that the Quad reflects upon are intentionally focused on The Seven Characteristics of a Disciple: Identity, Prayer, Sacraments, Obedience, Community, Service, and Sharing. There are tangible fruits to discipleship, and this process seeks to prayerfully cultivate those fruits through awareness, accompaniment, and accountability. Genuine faith inspires works. This is not an attempt to earn our own salvation, but to evaluate how the Lord is at work in our lives and challenge ourselves and

each other to get out of our comfort zones and go where Jesus calls us to go, so we can be the men and women he calls us to be.

AND, WHEN FINISHED, CONTINUE THE DISCIPLESHIP CHAIN BY STARTING THE PROCESS AGAIN WITH THREE NEW PEOPLE:

This is one of the most unique and important parts of the Discipleship Quad Process. It is arguably the reason why it exists in the first place. As mentioned earlier, there are numerous bible-studies and small group resources that Catholics can take advantage of. But our research didn't find anything in the Catholic world that was effective in empowering those involved to go out and help other people on the path to discipleship.

So we widened our research to include Protestant ministries, and that is when we discovered Pastor Greg Odgen. He found that about 60% of the four person micro groups would go out and start their own group the following year.

That might not seem like a high number, but over time the impact becomes significant. Just to make the math easier (for me), let's say only half the Quad were willing to do a new one with three new people the following year. So after a year, one Quad becomes two. Those two Quads become four Quads in year three. In year four there are sixteen Quads, and in year five there are thirty-two Quads. That would be 128 people who are being blessed by The Discipleship Quad Process that started from the first four person group, not to mention the others who drew closer to Jesus through the process but didn't decide to start their own Quad.

After a decade of Quads, there would be about *two thousand people* involved in The Discipleship Quad Process. Can you imagine having two thousand people in your parish who are in a weekly faith sharing group focused on Scripture, Church teaching, and specific challenges to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ?

That is just starting with one Quad. What if you start with five? Or what if more than two of the group are willing to start a new Quad? The numbers jump into the thousands, and even tens of thousands. This process can transform a parish. It can transform a diocese. It can transform the Church.

It happens four people at a time. Disciples who accompany other disciples and then go out and make other disciples.

If that sounds unrealistic, it is what Jesus did. He started with an inner circle of himself, Peter, James, and John (the first Quad!). Then the Twelve. Two-thousand years later there are *2.3 billion* Christians in the world.

MORE INFORMATION

Perhaps you have been through a Quad or you heard about the process and want to start one from scratch. Either way, it would be good if you looked over the introductory materials from the Guidebook, Part 1. There you will find an overview of The Seven Characteristics of a Disciple, the flow of the Quad Gatherings, and the Discipleship Quad Commitment (which is also on the next page).

DISCIPLESHIP COMMITMENT

For the Quad to be a life-changing experience for yourself and others, it is important that everyone is committed to the Quad to the best of their ability. At your first meeting, you and the other members will discuss and sign the following agreement:

In order to grow toward maturity in Christ and be empowered to be a disciple and disciple-maker, I commit myself to the following:

1. Complete all assignments/readings on a weekly basis, prior to my Discipleship Quad, in order to fully contribute.
2. Meet weekly with my fellow Discipleship Quad members for approximately one and one-half hours to share life and dialogue over the content of the assignments.
3. Offer myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated transformation during this discipleship period.
4. Contribute to a climate of honesty, trust, and personal vulnerability in a spirit of mutual up-building.
5. Give serious consideration to continuing the discipling chain by committing myself to invest in three other people and participate in another Discipleship Quad following the completion of this one.

LAUNCHING A DISCIPLESHIP QUAD

Because discipleship is primarily a work of the Holy Spirit, it is important that from the very outset all aspects of building a Quad are immersed in prayer. If you feel called to coordinate a Quad, please follow these steps to discern and invite potential members.

PRAY!

I love how Greg Odgen described this: “Each group should be birthed in prayer” (*Transforming Discipleship*, p. 9). Begin with prayer, asking God to place on your heart the names of people that he wants you to invite to join the Quad. Keep in mind that in order for people to commit to meeting weekly and sharing about their spiritual lives, they need to have the desire to grow in Christ. Make a list of every name that comes to you, without discriminating. Don’t overthink or analyze whether or not you really will invite each person to join the group; just write down their names. Once you have your list written down, ask God to give you clarity on which three people you should invite. As you read over the list of names, pay attention to the people’s names that stand out or stay on your mind; this is a sign that they may be the people you should invite. Trust that God will guide you to three specific names from the list you have made.

Don’t underestimate the power of prayer. *This is the most important step!*

INVITE

Once convicted that you are called to invite a particular person to join your Quad, set up a time to talk with him or her. During this meeting you should:

- Explain what a Discipleship Quad is: a four person faith sharing group that meets weekly for about a year to become better disciples of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church. It is a life-changing opportunity that can transform ourselves and our parish!
- Share about why you are doing the Discipleship Quad; why

have you felt a desire to put this together? What excites you the most about it?

- Tell the person that you would like to invite him or her to join your Discipleship Quad. If you think this person will understand the power of prayer, share with him or her that you prayed and felt like God was asking you to extend an invitation.
- Once the person shows interest, share the link to download the Guidebook, Part 1 from **steubenvilleconferences.com** and ask them to give particular attention to the introduction. Give the person some time to read through the material.
- Assure the person that there is no pressure to say yes. (The Quad only works when each person freely commits and has a desire to grow as a disciple.) If someone says no, do not worry; God will provide another person. Just making the invitation can be an opportunity for that person to reflect on their relationship with God, which is always a good thing!
- Ask for the person's email address and follow up your conversation with an email so he or she can see all that you talked about in writing.

TEMPLATE FOR DISCIPLESHIP QUAD INVITATION FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Here is a basic template for a follow up email with someone you have invited to be a part of the Quad. Personalize it as much as you can so it doesn't seem like a form letter.

[Name of Person],

I am so grateful for our conversation about the Discipleship Quad. Even if you decide not to join this Quad, it was a joy to share about this discipleship journey with you.

Being a disciple of Jesus Christ is another way of saying that we take our Catholic faith seriously. We need other disciples to help us grow in holiness and share our faith. I'm confident that through this process, you will not only grow closer to God but God will use you to help others.

The plan is that we would:

1. Meet once a week for approximately a year at a mutually agreed upon time and place.
2. Study the lessons provided in the Discipleship Quad Guidebook. This is available for free at **steubenvilleconferences.com**.
3. Prayerfully commit to the Quad and the possibility of starting a new Quad at the completion of this one.

Related to #3 above, how amazing is it that we would start with us four and then would multiply into 16 people after a year... and then after that we would multiply into 64 people... and so on!

On page 20 of the Guidebook, Part 1 is the Discipleship Quad Commitment, which outlines the commitments we'll make to each other.

Please pray about this, but do not feel obligated. This will not work if you join out of guilt or obligation. Please only commit if you feel like God is really calling you and if there is a desire on your heart to fully participate in the Quad. At the same time, please do not let fear hold you back from committing. God will give you a deep peace that penetrates through the fear if he is calling you to join this Quad.

Thank you for being willing to take the time to pray through this material and consider this Quad. I am excited to be on this journey with you.

Let me know if you have any questions. My phone number is *[Your Phone Number]*.

Know of my prayers for you,
[Your Name]

FOLLOW-UP

Three to five days after sending the email, follow up with the person you invited to ask how he or she is feeling about joining

the Quad. Discuss any concerns or hesitations that he or she may have. Remind this person that he or she is free to say no, and that it is okay if this is not the right time to join a Quad.

BE NOT AFRAID

The Bible includes some form of the words, “Be not afraid,” 365 times. God clearly does not want us to live in fear. Trust in his guidance. If you invite a person and he or she declines the invitation, that is not a failure. Simply ask the next person on your list.

If God places someone on your heart but it does not make sense to you for some reason or you are not sure that he or she will commit, extend the invitation anyway.

Trust in God’s guidance and your prayerful approach.

THEY SAID YES!

Congratulations! Once someone says yes, do the following:

- Ask for the days and times of the week during which he or she can meet.
- Ask him or her for any recommended meeting places. Ask if they would be willing to host a gathering at their house.
- Share that the first two Quad gatherings will include time for all Quad members to share their journeys with the other members (an outline to help with preparation for this is in the Discipleship Quad Guidebook, Part 1).
- Make sure that he or she has carefully and prayerfully reviewed the Discipleship Quad Commitment.

DETERMINING TIME AND LOCATION OF QUAD GATHERINGS

Once you have commitments from the other three members, you will need to determine a day, time, and location for the Quad to meet. You should coordinate the process, keeping the following things in mind:

- The location should be central to all Quad members and easy to access. You may also choose to rotate the gathering place if Quad members would like to take turns hosting.
- The location should be as free of distractions as possible. A quiet nook at a coffee shop or restaurant, a meeting room at a local church or business, or a living room are all good options, provided people feel comfortable and can enter into personal sharing and prayer. Some situations may require some flexibility. For example, moms with young kids meeting during the day may have to have their children present or playing in the room while they meet. This is possible and can work with some creativity.
- Choose a day/time and stick to it every week. This helps keep the Quad gathering in a regular place in the members' schedules. Sometimes it may be absolutely necessary to change the day/time during any given week, but it is best if this does not become a regular occurrence. Because of people's busy lives, you may have to meet early in the morning or during the evening. At the beginning of the Quad's formation, ask members when they can meet each week, on a regular basis, and suggest a time based on when they are all free.
- The most important component to maintaining the commitment to a weekly gathering is to keep it simple. For example, regarding refreshments or drinks at the gathering, do not complicate the situation. You can, but should not feel obligated to, bring refreshments to the Quad gatherings. Members may also take turns. But if adding refreshments to the gathering adds unneeded pressure, please skip this component.

ONGOING DISCIPLESHIP QUAD GATHERINGS

Remember that your primary role is to bring everyone together and humbly lead by example. There are a few simple things that you will need to do each week to help to keep things on track:

- Prayerfully complete the lesson in advance of the gathering for your own edification and growth as a disciple.
- Remind members of the next gathering in the way that is most effective (e.g., text messages, emails, phone calls).

- Pray for each member of the Quad. As the members get to know each other, start to take note of how you think they will answer the questions each week and pray for them as they are preparing.
- After about six weeks, the facilitating of the Quad will rotate. The Guidebook includes a reminder and information about this rotation process. The goal of this rotation is to allow each person in the Quad to experience facilitating the gatherings and discussions. This prepares all members to start their own Quads in the future.
- As the person starting the Quad, you will facilitate the Discipleship Quad gathering time each week until there is a rotation of leadership. This includes leading the opening prayer, initiating the reflecting on the past week, and helping the Quad members discuss their reflections within the appropriate time frame. Ensure that you leave time for the resolve section.
- One of the biggest responsibilities of the facilitator is to keep the discussion within the time limits set in the Guidebook. This includes starting and ending the gathering on time as much as possible. The next section will go deeper into how to facilitate a Quad Gathering.
- The content will unquestionably bring up some questions about the Catholic faith and God. It is not your job to know the answers to all the questions that arise. Be honest when you don't know the answers. Take it as an opportunity to journey with the other Quad members to find the answers through Scripture, Church teaching, and trusted advisors.

HOW TO FACILITATE A QUAD GATHERING

Facilitating a Quad gathering is simple! You don't need advanced theological knowledge or have the pressure to "teach" a lesson. All of the material is in the Guidebook. We intentionally use the word "facilitate" instead of "lead" because we wrote the Guidebook to provide the content of the session. Your main role is to keep the conversation on track and on time.

Everyone will take turns facilitating gatherings, but since you are the one who brought the Quad together, you will go first. The first two meetings are an opportunity to share your personal testimonies, with two people sharing at each. It is Week 3 when the content from the Guidebook begins.

The beginning of *Discipleship Quad Guidebook, Part 1* gives an overview of the Quad Gathering and how it works. If you haven't been in a Quad before, you should read that first (especially p. 15, "How to Q"). The following explains the process in more detail.

Turn to, "Week 3, Page 1" in the *Discipleship Quad Guidebook, Part 1*, or download the "Sample Lesson" from steubenvilleconferences.com. We're going to pretend you are the facilitator at the end of that week, about to head into Week 4. Each gathering is broken into three sections: Recall, Reflect, and Resolve.

RECALL

The first 20-30 minutes are an opportunity to recall what the topic of the week was and how the Lord worked over the past week. You can do this in three steps.

Every Quad Gathering begins and ends with the Front Page. Step 1 is reading the "newspaper" at the bottom. The facilitator states the topic, prayerfully reads the Scripture, and everyone prays the prayer together. Like this:

FACILITATOR: This week, we reflected on how we are "Wanted By God. God does not call us because we are

STEP 3

THIS WEEK I WILL *Do the readings*

WEEK 3

PRAYERS FOR THE *Quid*

*Phil's mom is sick
Jerry is looking for a new job
Dan is worried about his son, Jim*

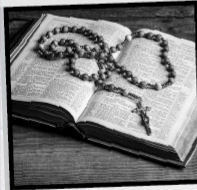
STEP 2

The Daily Disciple

WANTED BY GOD

God does not call us because we are *worthy*, but because we are *wanted*.

STEP 1



Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.
— Isaiah 43:1

CHARACTERISTIC OF A DISCIPLE: IDENTITY

Heavenly Father, help us to see us as you see us. Not by what we do, but who we are—your beloved children. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.



worthy, but because we are wanted.” Let’s take a moment to hear God’s word. “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine,” (Pause.) Now let us pray this week’s prayer together.

ALL: Heavenly Father, help us to see us as you see us. Not by what we do, but who we are—your beloved children. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

Step 2 is a chance to ask how everyone's week was, with a special emphasis on how they saw God in their week. It makes sense to bring up the things that everyone was praying for. You will spend most of your recall time with this step.

Finally, step 3 draws attention the "This Week I Will" that everyone filled out at the end of the previous Quad Gathering. How did everyone do with their challenge? (They might naturally share this in step 2, but just make sure it is addressed.)

TIP: As best you can, it is important to keep this part of the Gathering to no longer than 30 minutes. But always choose charity over timekeeping. If someone had a difficult week or a tragedy in their life, take whatever time that person needs (even if that means it is the whole time). The schedule is there to help the Quad, not the other way around.

REFLECT

This is the bulk of the meeting, forty to fifty minutes. Essentially, you are turning pages through the week's lesson. Have a brief conversation about anything that inspired them while reading "The Daily Bread." *You don't have to go through each verse, nor does everyone need to share at this part.* It is an open discussion about the Scriptures that spoke to their heart.

FACILITATOR: What did you think about the verses in The Daily Bread? Did any of them really speak to you?

Then you turn the page and go through the six questions, one at a time. You will notice a pattern for each pair of questions: the first is general, the second is more specific. Unlike the Daily Bread, you want to try to encourage everyone to answer these, even if they don't have much to say.

All of the questions try to deal with what they learned or how they felt about the material, so there really aren't any "wrong" answers, and everyone should be able to answer differently.

TIP: Make sure to leave at least ten minutes for the next session. So if the Recall went a little bit long, try to keep the Reflect moving at a good pace. So if your meeting starts at 9, you will want to wrap up the Reflect at 10:15, or 10:20 at the latest.

RESOLVE

This is where the group prayerfully considers a specific resolution they can do for the week. There is always something specific written for the facilitator to say in the “For Your Q Gathering” at the end of the week. The text in bold is the specific challenge.

FACILITATOR: We are not worthy to be called, nor do we have the strength to answer the call on our own. Jesus isn't only telling us where to go. He wants to accompany us on the way. St. Augustine wrote, ‘You were with me, but I was not with you. Created things kept me from you.’ Jesus is always with us. That is worth repeating: Jesus is always with us, but the things of this world can blind us to his presence or obscure our experience of him. What are some of the ‘created things’ that keep you from a deeper relationship with Jesus? **Pick one of those things. Ask the Lord for grace and wisdom. What is one specific thing you can do this week so that, with the Lord’s help, it will no longer be an obstacle in your relationship with him?**

Then discuss with the group. Again, there are no wrong ideas. Someone might say they don't find time to pray, but they do find time for social media. So he decides to not look at any social media until after he prays.

The idea is that they come up with something *actionable*. Too often in our spiritual lives our take away is “be a better person”, but don't have a specific way to do that. As I mentioned, there are no wrong ideas, but there are ideas that are so general they don't really have any effect. Encourage them to be specific.

TIP: Encourage *little* things. As St. Theresa of Calcutta once said, “Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love.” Better to do a small thing we can accomplish than a big idea that we don't live up to and feel discouraged about.

Now turn to the Front Page of the next week...

STEP 1

THIS WEEK
I WILL

Pray before Social Media

WEEK 4

PRAYERS FOR THE *Quad*

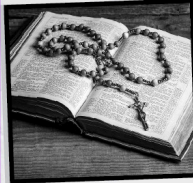
Phil's mom is sick
Jerry has a job interview
Dan is having a tough time sleeping

STEP 2

The Daily Disciple

A NEW CREATION

Being a follower of Jesus is not about *changing* your life,
but about living a new life.



So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come. All of this is from God.
– 2 Corinthians 5:17-18

STEP 3

CHARACTERISTIC OF A DISCIPLE: IDENTITY

Heavenly Father, creator of all things, you don't just "fix" us, you make us new. Through the power of the Spirit, help us turn away from our old ways and embrace the new life you invite us to live. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.



Just as the Recall had three steps, so does the Resolve. The Recall starts at the bottom and goes up. But the Resolve goes top to bottom. Step 1 is at the top where they write their resolution down. After that, go to step 2 and ask the Quad what they would like prayers for this week and write those down.

To conclude the meeting, go to step 3, the "newspaper" of the new week. The facilitator states the topic, prayerfully reads the Scripture, and everyone prays the prayer together. Like this:

FACILITATOR: This week, we reflect on how we are “A New Creation. Being a follower of Jesus is not about *changing* your life, but about living a new life.” Let us take a prayerful moment to listen to God’s Word. “So whoever is in Christ is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come. All of this is from God.” (Pause.) Now, let’s pray the prayer together.

ALL: Heavenly Father, creator of all things, you don’t just “fix” us, you make us new. Through the power of the Spirit, help us turn away from our old ways and embrace the new life you invite us to live. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

Make sure everyone knows where and when you are meeting, and you are done!

As mentioned earlier, the Quad is challenged to rotate facilitation at the end of Week 6. Some Quads change facilitators every month, others do it every week.

TIP: When you are facilitating, it is good to start your week by looking at the last page, “For Your Q Gathering” because occasionally there are variations to the meeting, especially at the Resolve step.

To conclude, there are four simple keys to being a successful facilitator:

KEEP AN EYE ON THE TIME: Others can be engrossed in the conversation, but the facilitator needs to be aware of how much time is left and try to keep the conversation on schedule. That doesn’t mean you need to cut someone off if they are sharing something personal, or if a conversation about the topic seems really fruitful. After all, that is the point of this group! So if the topic generates a lot of sharing and discussion, you extend the discussion for another week. Many Quads find they occasionally (or even

frequently, depending on the group) spend two weeks discussing one topic.

STAY ON TOPIC: Do your best to keep the conversation on topic and not let the group drift off into other topics (or tangents). If another topic comes up, it is okay to say, “That is important, but not what we are talking about today. Let’s get back to our discussion questions.” Staying on topic is also a great way to stay on time.

FACILITATE, DON’T TEACH: One of the great things about facilitating a Quad is that you don’t need to have any kind of theological expertise—that is taken care of in the readings. Your role is to facilitate the discussion of the topic, not reteach the subject. If there is a need to correct someone who may have said something that wasn’t accurate or incorrect, then the facilitator (or anyone in the group) can suggest that the Quad members look up the information and come back next week with more information on the topic.

ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO SHARE: Some people are comfortable sharing what they think or feel, others aren’t. Some have the gift of being articulate, while others struggle to find the right words. It is okay to have periods of silence when you meet—that might be the time someone else needs to share something important. You don’t have to fill that space with words. And if one person is not sharing as much, the facilitator can ask them specifically what their thoughts are on the question and give everyone an opportunity to share equally.

We have intentionally avoided the word “leader” because this isn’t about one person leading three others. All four people in the Quad are on a journey *together*. The Holy Spirit is the real leader of the group, and the written resources provide numerous opportunities to learn and reflect about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church. The facilitator is there to have an eye on the time, keep the conversation on topic, let the content do the teaching, and encourage equal participation in the group.

DISCIPLESHIP *Quad* **BEST PRACTICES**

PRAYER

Prayer is vital to the success of the Quad. Begin and end each gathering with prayer, pray for each other every day, and help one another grow in personal prayer through accountability and sharing.

COMMITMENT

Commitment is another key element of the Quad. Life happens, so anticipate scheduling conflicts and make a plan for when they arise. Try to keep changes to the gathering time/day each week minimal, as the goal is that all Quad members schedule around the committed time/day each week. If changes happen frequently, it can become challenging to find a time that consistently works for everyone.

THREE IS KEY

Consistent attendance of all Quad members is important. If someone has to miss the gathering, at least three out of four people should be present. If only two can meet, it is best to postpone the gathering and reconvene the following week.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Consider lessening the burden on the host (if you are meeting in someone's home) by asking people to bring their own coffee or asking a different person to provide it each week. Don't add unnecessary burdens to the weekly gatherings.

EVERYONE FACILITATES

The person who brings together the Quad facilitates the first six weeks of gatherings to set the example. All Quad members should

know up front that the leadership will start rotating after that so everyone has a chance to facilitate.

MANAGING ATTENDANCE

If someone is regularly missing gatherings, you should meet with the person one on one and ask questions to determine if this is the right time in his or her life to be a part of the Discipleship Quad or if there is something deeper happening. Remember to speak and listen with compassion and understanding. This is not a confrontation, but an opportunity to help this person discern.

PICK YOUR PACE

The lessons are a path for growth, but do not feel pressured to complete a lesson every week. Although they are designed to be completed within a year, if your Quad needs more time to unpack a certain topic or lesson, then take the time to do so. Remember that the material is not just for consumption, but integration. You can get back on track next week.

PROCESS NOT PROGRAM

The Discipleship Quad Process is a means of spiritual accompaniment, not a Bible study. Hopefully through your initial conversations and the sharing of the group's personal testimonies (weeks 1 and 2), you should be aware of where all members are on their journeys and how each of them responds to the material. It is important to customize the Quad gatherings to suit the needs of the members, in order to allow for personal intimacy and vulnerability.

SET THE TONE

Most people do not know how to share about their faith journeys. Others may be afraid of being authentic or vulnerable. You cannot force someone's heart to open, but you can set the tone by stepping out of your comfort zone and sharing your own personal life. We recommend you go first on the Week 1 Personal Sharing. That way, the others can see an example on how to share his or her own testimony.

CREATE COMMUNITY

Try to find touch-points with the other members of your Discipleship Quad throughout the week in between gathering times. Discipleship involves sharing life with others, so whenever it is possible try to do things together. You could get together with everyone's families once a month to share a meal, or communicate and share prayer intentions via a text group.

LIFESTYLE OF DISCIPLESHIP

The Discipleship Quad process is a way to commit to life as a disciple and a disciple-maker. It is more of a lifestyle of discipleship than it is a program that you participate in once before moving on to the next thing. By responding to Jesus' call in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), we should always strive to grow in discipleship; participating in a Discipleship Quad is a powerful and effective way to do just that.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHERE DO PEOPLE NEED TO BE ON THEIR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TO JOIN A DISCIPLESHIP QUAD?

Time is one of our most precious resources. How we spend our time will show people what we value. Therefore, in order for someone to commit to spending time meeting and sharing about their spiritual life every week, they need to have a desire to grow in Christ. With that being said, there are no set of tasks someone must complete or accomplish in order to be ready to join a Discipleship Quad. The only prerequisites are the willingness to commit and the desire to grow as a disciple of Christ as a Catholic.

CAN QUADS BE MIXED-GENDER IF WE FEEL CALLED TO INVITE BOTH GENDERS OR COUPLES?

Based on the research, including the model's 35+ years of success, mixed-gender Quads are not recommended. The Quads are single-gender in order to create an atmosphere of common intimacy and vulnerability in sharing.

CAN I INVITE A NON-CATHOLIC TO JOIN A QUAD?

Being Catholic is not a prerequisite to joining a Quad, but the content of the lessons is explicitly Catholic. As long as people understand that the content will be Catholic, have a desire to grow in their understanding of the Catholic faith, and are able to commit to the elements in the Discipleship Quad Commitment, they are welcome to be in a Quad. Depend on God's guidance when asking him who to invite.

WHY DO YOU SUGGEST THAT A DISCIPLESHIP QUAD BE MADE UP OF FOUR PEOPLE RATHER THAN ONE ON ONE?

The following benefits are listed in *Transforming Discipleship* by Greg Ogden:

- The one on one sets up a teacher-student dynamic. The pressure is upon the discipler to be the answer person or the

fountain of all wisdom and insight. This dynamic discourages many people from wanting to disciple others. When a third (or fourth) person is added, the dynamic shifts to a group process. The discipler can more naturally make his or her contribution in the dynamic of group interchange.

- The triad/quad ... views discipleship as a come-alongside relationship of mutual journey toward maturity in Christ.
- The sense of “groupness.” The sense of the Holy Spirit being present in our midst occurred much more often in the group versus the one on one. Accountability is stronger than one on one.
- The group approach multiplies the perspectives on Scripture and application to life issues ... By adding at least a third person there is another perspective brought to the learning process. The group members serve as teachers of one another.
- By adding a third or fourth person who is being equipped to disciple others, the multiplication process is geometrically increased.

Although the possibility of doing a triad (three people) is mentioned in the comments above, the quad (four people) model is recommended.

IF THE BENEFITS OF A FOUR-PERSON GROUP ARE SO GOOD, WHY NOT HAVE MORE PEOPLE IN A QUAD, LIKE IN A TYPICAL SMALL GROUP?

The following reasons are listed in *Transforming Discipleship* by Greg Ogden:

- Truth – learning occurs in direct proportion to the ability to interact with the truth, which becomes more difficult with an increased number of voices contributing. It also becomes increasingly difficult to tailor the rate of learning to the individual, the larger the size of the group.
- Transparent relationships – self-disclosure is integral to transformation, and openness becomes increasingly difficult in direct proportion to the size of the group. If we are not free to divulge our struggles, then the Spirit will not be able to use the

group members to effectively minister at the point of need.

- Mutual accountability – the larger the group, the easier it is to hide. Accountability requires the ability to check to see if assignments were completed or commitments to obedience were maintained. Greater numbers decrease access to a person's life.

DO I NEED TO TELL MY PRIEST OR ASK FOR PERMISSION FROM THE PARISH TO PARTICIPATE IN A DISCIPLESHIP QUAD?

Unlike many initiatives within the Catholic Church, the Discipleship Quad model was designed so that it can be done independent of the parish, thereby not necessitating the pastor or staff's time or approval. Although advising your pastor wouldn't be discouraged, the curriculum and process are not dependent on parish support.

CAN I STILL MEET WITH MY QUAD AFTER 12 MONTHS?

You should absolutely still make time to meet together as a group after completing the Guidebook. Remember, though, that one of the objectives of the Discipleship Quad model is that you will each start a new Quad at the end of the 12 months. The next step is mentoring each other as you form your new Quads.

WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE IN THE QUAD DETERMINES THAT HE OR SHE CANNOT CONTINUE FOR THE FULL 12 MONTHS?

If it is early in the process (during the first one or two months) you could add another person to fill the spot. Go back through the process of praying about who to invite. If it is more than two months into the time the Quad has been meeting together, just stay with a group of three people and do not add another person. The intimacy among Quad members has been formed too much at this point, so it would be difficult to bring in a new person into it.

HOW MUCH DO THE DISCIPLESHIP QUAD RESOURCES COST?

Absolutely nothing! All Discipleship Quad resources are available, free of charge, on steubenvilleconferences.com.