

STARTING SMALL

By Linda Weaver

My friends: In my first letter, I gave you one way to begin evangelizing: Share your faith with those you love. Have you done that yet?

Here's a second way: Most parishes have faith-sharing groups. In the not-too-distant past, when I used to sit in the last pew, I heard about such groups. I didn't join because I didn't know what they did. I was sure the participants had all attended Catholic school, pre-K through college, and could recite Scripture. I was also certain they said weird prayers I didn't know which would single me out as just an average Sunday bench-warmer. I was afraid I would be embarrassed by my ignorance of my faith.

I decided, though, to sign up. If I didn't like it, I could quit. Surprisingly, I did like it! The others were just like me, trying to figure out how to have a relationship with God. They didn't already know everything. They were searching too.

Much of the discussion centered on how God acted in our lives. Some talked more: a few talked very little, but listened intently. Typically, we studied the Sunday readings and applied them to our work, home and in social settings. We learned about our faith. We also learned from each other how to recognize God's voice.

Perhaps most important, we learned that God speaks to each of us differently.

This was a great first step for an evangelizer-in-training. The next year I volunteered to lead two groups. Yes! Me! The last-row bench-warmer!

Without realizing it, and without having even read the Bible at that point, I was an evangelizer. I was sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with others. I was bringing God to his people and bringing His people to God. I had just moved off the bench and into the community of faith.

Join a faith sharing group as part of your training to be an evangelizer. Learn how to explain what you believe and why you believe it, and learn from the facilitator how to engage others in a non-threatening discussion about faith.

So go on! Get started. Share your faith. Thanks for reading today. Faithfully yours, Linda

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