



Pastoral Development Office

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July 1st 2018

Dear Father, Deacon, PPC Chairperson, PCC Chairperson

Re: *Bible Study Programme - Journey through the Gospel of Luke*

One of the outcomes of the process that established the *Vision and Priorities Statement* for the diocese at the end of 2016 was the felt need for a Bible Study programme that would help people come to a deeper understanding of their faith in Christ Jesus while exploring the word of God. Since then we have been working, in collaboration with RENEW International, on producing a bible study resource that would be suitable for our diocese.

Luke: My Spirit Rejoices! is the first of three books in a *Scripture Series* that explores Luke's gospel. This series offers an opportunity for an in-depth study of the gospel while allowing time for reflection and faith sharing. In time the *Scripture Series* will be expanded to include the other gospels.

Luke: My Spirit Rejoices! gives people who are familiar with the scriptures, along with those who are just beginning the journey, an opportunity to come to know Christ and his Church in a deeper way. Each session begins with prayer and is followed with the reading of a Gospel passage. Then comes a time for silent reflection on what was heard, followed by a time of reflective study of the passage. The process also allows for the participant to explore the Old Testament roots of a particular Gospel story. This is followed by questions that invite participants to consider how their Christian Faith is being lived out in their individual lives. Before leaving, each person is invited to an action that will help him or her to embody something from the reflection into his or her daily life.

Many times people ask "Why does my son or daughter not come to Mass anymore?" Or, "Why has my child drifted to another religion?" Could it be that they are hungry and thirsty for a deeper relationship with Christ? So often when people speak personally of the significance of the Eucharist in their lives, or what the week is like if they don't go to Mass on Sunday, or what Jesus means to them and their lifestyles, something mystical happens. Faith becomes personal. It becomes real. It becomes inviting. We believe that *Luke: My Spirit Rejoices!* will help participants gain a deeper understanding of the scriptures and in so doing help them find meaning in their faith and in their life.

We plan to launch *Luke: My Spirit Rejoices!* on *Bible Sunday*, which is the last Sunday of August. To this end we will be offering training and formation workshops across the diocese over the next few weeks. We are asking for your assistance in identifying a group of people (3 to 6 people depending on the size of your parish) who would be willing to act as the team responsible for Bible Study in your Parish. (*In a separate attachment you will find Four Easy Steps for Successfully Inviting Volunteers.*)

The responsibilities of the *Parish Bible Study Team* will be as follows:

- Promote Bible Study in the Parish
- Identify people who will become Small Community Leaders
- Attend training and formation programmes offered in your area
- Reach out to individuals, groups and sodalities to invite them to participate in the bible study programme

- Organise a sign-up Sunday prior to Bible Sunday to give people an opportunity to join a Bible Study Group
- Arrange for sale of books at parish level
- Maintain contact with the Pastoral Development Office

Luke: My Spirit Rejoices! contains 12 sessions and costs R40.00 each and is available in English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans. If there is a problem with the cost of books, please contact the Pastoral Development Office and we will see how we can help.

Please encourage your parishioners to join in this bible study programme and to attend the launch workshops, which are listed on the attached schedule.

If you need any further assistance with this process, please contact the Pastoral Development Office and we will be happy to help.

Yours in Ministry

Fr Lubabalo Mguda
Fr Ludwe Jayiya
Fr Jerry Browne

Newsletter Insert:

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