

COMPANIONS *in Christ*

Leading a group to become more Christ-like differs in many ways from teaching a class or Bible study. In a class, you can gauge your success at the end of the class by whether or not participants demonstrate some grasp of the information. In a *Companions in Christ* group, your goal is to enable spiritual growth in each individual group member. You are working in partnership with the Holy Spirit. "Success" will be evident over months and even years in the changed lives of the individual group members.

Teaching a class emphasizes	<i>Companions in Christ</i> emphasizes
Facts	Faith experience
Knowledge	Wisdom
Talking	Listening
Teaching	Seeking
Advance preparation	Being present in heart and mind
Education	Transformation
Task	Process
Grasping information	Enabling spiritual growth

A *Companions in Christ* leader, needs to be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit and vigilant in discerning the difference between following the Spirit's lead and going off on a tangent. Such discernment requires careful, prayerful listening. Listening will be much more important than talking in the role of group leader.

In your *Companions in Christ* group, the primary focus is on the personal faith experience of each group member. Each person is seeking to understand and be open to the grace and revelation of God.

When group members have read and reflected on a scripture passage, the basis for group discussion is not "What did the author intend to say to readers of that time?" but "How does this passage connect to my life or illuminate my experience?"

The type of leadership needed differs from that of a traditional teacher or facilitator. As leader, you will read the material and complete the daily exercises along with other members and bring your responses to share with the group. You lead by offering your honest reflections and by trying to enable the group members to listen carefully to one another and to the Spirit in your midst. You are a participant-leader.