

What are Deanery and Parish Talks?



The aim of these talks is to stimulate an interest in faith questions and themes and to further adult faith formation. Individual parishes or deaneries can take this initiative on board and organise individual talks or a series of talks on a number of topics according to their parish interest and pastoral priorities. Perhaps the best time to start such talks is Advent and Lent. However any time is good, if you have a good speaker, a challenging topic, and people who keen to learn more.

The sky is the limit for Christian topics to choose from. There are a number of good speakers who are willing to deliver individual talks or a series of talks. You can find a list of some topics and speakers in the ninth section of this booklet, however the list provided is for guidance only. You might consider topics with your parish groups and use your own choice of speakers.

For more information contact
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www.rcdow.org.uk/evangelisation

The talks were inspiring & educational - learning & informative. Faith sharing & reflecting... packed with theology, interesting and well presented
taken from an evaluation form completed by a 34 year old



Adult Faith Formation

How to organise talks?

1. **Choose the topics or themes.** If you have done a parish adult faith formation survey or run a focus group, it will be easy to choose a relevant area of interest. Decide with your parish team the best topics/themes to begin with and on the best time to organise a talk or a series.

2. **Money matters:** check how much can you afford to spend for the talks and who could help? Can you ask participants for some donations? Can the parish afford to pay a small stipend to the speaker and for some refreshments?

3. From the very beginning of the planning, try to **delegate responsibilities** to all team members.

4. **Check the parish calendar** about possible conflicting events.

5. **Check the availability of the hall** or the church.

6. Check with your team and with other people about their **availability to help you** on the day.

When you have decided upon the topics/themes for the talk(s) and dates, take the following steps

7. **Contact the speaker(s) to arrange date and time.** Discuss the topic, describe the audience. Agree about the reimbursement of expenses. Some speakers will ask just to reimburse their travel expenses. Some will expect some compensation for their time.

Make sure the speaker knows how to get to the location and the time to start. Usually speakers are flexible in terms of the topic, therefore do not hesitate to change or alter the topic according to your parish needs.



8. As soon as you know the topic, speaker, time and location, **advertising can begin.** With your team you should decide how and where you are going to advertise who and when will produce posters

- locations/places you are going to display the posters
- who will be responsible for the practical work: the display, postage of publicity, etc.
- who will write a text and put into your Parish Newsletter
- who will contact the diocese to advertise on the diocesan webpage
- if you have a parish website or/and e-mailing list, you could advertise there as well
- some people do not use the internet, and you not always can rely on the parish information board. How are you going to organise 'word of mouth' campaign?

7. **When the day approaches,**

Check once more with the speaker to finalise the details and with other people about their responsibilities (who will open the door, who will introduce the speaker, who will take care of tea, who will tidy up the hall after the event, who will give the note of thanks, etc).

8. When the big day comes, fully enjoy the event and encourage other people to do the same. Remember, nothing is perfect, therefore do not worry about minor details, but try to create an informal and warm atmosphere.

9. Allow some time after the talk for question and answer. If possible, ask participants for some feedback and suggestions for the future. In the appendix you will find some suggestions for the evaluation forms.

Bible Studies Series

by Rev. D. Peter Burrows, Ph.D.
Five modules of three lectures each. Parishes can choose one off, few or all modules.

MODULE ONE

1. "In the beginning, God..."
What is Truth for the Scriptures?
The Bible world-view and our own
An argument with science?
2. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?"
The real purpose and end of man
The mystery of the two trees – and what is death?
The creation and primacy of life
Marriage and family – the blessing of life
The holiness of sex
3. "If you do the Good, ..." God's definition of Good and how to know it (Wisdom)
Original Sin and the Great Commandments
Sinning, the Law and the devil
Guilt, objective and subjective
Mercy and the costly repentance of God

MODULE TWO

1. "Every inclination of man's heart was evil continuously"
The servants revolt and the righteous remnant
God's goal for His world
Starting small and the call of Abraham
The story of Joseph and his brothers – a parable of Adam
2. "I have called My people out of Egypt"
"Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?"
The call of Moses and prophecy
The Passover and the Wilderness
The first Pentecost to the Jordan
Baptism and the Jordan
3. "I will give you a land in which to dwell in perpetuity"
Immortality and the family
The parable of Ruth and other significant women
Growing pains of a people – the time of the judges
and the rise of nationalism

MODULE THREE

1. "Let them have a king."
Saul and David
Solomon and the House of David
The kings of the north
Exile and the descent into hell
2. "A priest forever"
Origins of the priesthood, Aaron and Melchizedek
The ark and the Temple
The Atonement
3. "I will give you one sign, the sign of Jonah"
The connection of the Old Testament and the New Jesus and the fulfilment of prophecy
The Church's work of evangelism and mission
Benefits for the individual

MODULE FOUR

- Why do I hurt if I am good?
- Biblical Covenant and Marriage Contract (I)
- Biblical Covenant and Marriage Contract (II)

MODULE FIVE

The Great festivals of Faith

1. The Passover
2. The Feast of Tabernacles or Tents
3. The Feast of Weeks or Pentecost



A friendly, relaxed atmosphere but above all prayerful and informative ...
Deeply insightful, relevant and assuring...
Excellent content... Answered a lot of questions, gave peace and hope...
Taken from completed evaluation forms

BIBLE TALKS AND STUDY GROUPS

Bible studies attract people from all walks of life and they all bring different expectations. There are many different ways to study the Bible. One of the ways is to listen to good talks on the Bible. The quality of the speaker is most important in this case. Some parishes go with "one-off" talk and some run a series talks on the Bible. The Agency for Evangelisation offers some advice, contacts and some financial support to organise Bible studies in the parish when other parishes may be invited to join.

The second, and perhaps most common approach is to have a Bible study group when one of the parishioners or individual group leader leads the group. Many different materials can be used. Some of them provide a good explanation of the text to be reflected on and prayed about. Any good Catholic bookshop will have a number of Bible study guides on offer. It is up to the group to decide how and what they would like to do.

In the appendices you will find a number of possible talks and series of talks on the Bible to choose from.

If the parish is interested in getting some help, please contact the Agency for Evangelisation.

