



Ministry of Mothers Sharing: What to Expect

Ministry of Mothers Sharing is a community-based *Ministry* for women of all ages. It is for women with wisdom to share; women searching for answers and meaning in their lives, their vocation of motherhood; women who find family life fulfilling, challenging, rewarding, and/or frustrating. All women—single, married, without children or with children (infancy to adulthood) by birth, adoption, or relationship—have found a safe place to share the common bond of being a woman living in today’s world.

Key concepts about the *Ministry*:

Community: A group is formed and meets once a week for 8 sessions. Sessions are designed to provide opportunities for building friendships, community, and:

Adult Learning: As adults, women have a wealth of experience and knowledge to share with others. Therefore, the group will often break into groups of two or three to facilitate the sharing of ideas. Your thoughts and opinions are valued and will not be judged. While sharing, you are always free to “pass”.

Peer Facilitative Model: ‘Peer facilitators’ journey with participants. Their role is to facilitate the conversation and manage the process. They are not here as teachers, counselors, or spiritual directors.

Welcome Gathering: To facilitate group bonding and provide participants with an understanding of the *Ministry* prior to the first session, a ‘Welcome Gathering’ is encouraged. This provides an opportunity for participants to meet and received their journals and *Called & Gifted* materials prior to the first session. A sample agenda for this 90 minute gathering can be found of the *Leadership Essentials and Downloads* page of www.ministryofmotherssharing.org.

Experiential Learning: Reflective questions have been designed to give new experiences of spiritual growth and insights into relationships through journaling. *Ministry of Mothers Sharing: A Personal Journal* is provided to help participants prepare for each session through journal writing. While having thoughts written down makes them easier to share, participants are never required to do so.

Prayer: A variety of prayer forms and rituals, including both traditional and contemporary prayers, will broaden the experience of prayer. A person in your community will be chosen to be the ‘prayer sponsor’ for each participant. She will be praying throughout the eight sessions and will be invited to attend Session 8: *Celebration of New Beginnings*.

A Respectful Environment: Each woman is valued for the wisdom she brings to the group. We recognize are all individuals with diverse thoughts and feelings based on our knowledge and life experiences. A respectful and non-judgmental environment is created during every gathering:

Punctuality: *Ministry* gatherings begin and end on time out of respect for everyone’s time commitments.

Confidentiality: In order to build a system of trust, confidentiality is expected. What we learn about each other in the sessions must remain within the group. A Staff Liaison is available to participants and facilitators as needed for consultation during the sessions. This person is also bound by confidentiality.

Feedback: Each person’s feedback of this experience is important to us. Feedback forms will be distributed at the end of the 8 Week Session. Participants’ opinions will help indicate a direction for them and for the development of the *Ministry*.

Holistic Spirituality: The experience includes exercises to nurture the sacred within. Many experience an inner awakening, a renewed energy, a new understanding of their roles within the context of spirituality. They express a desire to continue to meet after the eighth session to read and discuss other issues. Each person will be given the opportunity to choose other experiences for growth for herself and her family in the parish community. Many women feel that the involvement with the *Ministry* has given them the confidence and the desire to become involved in the greater parish community.

