

Guidelines for a new Reflection Circle Group

The purpose of the small group(s) is to foster relationship within the greater Oblate community and to support one another in our Benedictine spirituality. Though functioning independently, groups will stay connected through the Oblate Council.

1. The 'start-up' or temporary facilitator, identified by Council, receives names of interested participants and contacts them.
2. The temporary facilitator gets a consensus for a first meeting place and time. Participants will be asked to come prepared with ideas of what they would like to experience in the group so group can decide on the activities.
3. At first meeting discuss:

- How often and where group will meet
- Discuss the number of participants that seem optimal for this group, and whether visitors (Oblate or non-Oblate) are welcome.
- What activities will be done in the Reflection Circle?

Refreshments; socialization-check-in; Centering Prayer, Prayer, Group lectio, Study of the Rule of Benedict or books on the Rule and application of its teachings, Shared reading and discussion of books, articles, scripture; Music, social action projects.

- Discuss the role of Facilitator:

Will the group rotate the function periodically? Will the designated facilitator remind participants of next meeting date and location and lead particular elements? A group member will need to provide QAM Oblate council with a list of participants, how often the group meets and the activities at least once in the year (September-May) (Oblate Council will review how the small groups are doing on an annual basis and report to the Oblate community.)

- Discuss a group covenant:

Group covenants articulate how group members will relate to one another based on the shared values of the group. ie. 1) commitment to the group as a priority and attendance 2) Confidentiality at the meeting, phone calls, and emails so that the group is a safe place to grow. 3) Accessibility-do we want to be available to each other between meetings? Share contact information? 4) Openness-We will seek to be open and honest with each other 5) Respect – agree to communicate in ways that are respectful and do not give advice 6) Consider your meeting”sacred space” avoid crosstalking and rebutting comments. Consider a) opening and closing with prayer b) using a process for sharing ie. alphabetical, go around circle and giving everyone a chance to respond.