

## Top Ten Tips for getting started with Emmaus

1. **Re-name it.** We call it Emmaus, you call it what you like. Make it your own.
2. **Change it.** Some products come with copyright permission; this comes with copy-wrong. If you think there is a better way of doing a session then trust your instincts. You are the expert on your group. And if group members take you in another direction, follow their lead. Emmaus is a space for exploring just as much as a course to follow.
3. **Don't do it all at once.** The 15 sessions of the Emmaus Nurture course are split into 3 sections. Each Growth course is about 4 sessions long. Invite people to begin a journey, then allow yourself to be led by the group. Think of the Nurture course as the set menu, and the Growth courses as a huge *a la carte* from which you can choose the dishes that will satisfy your appetite.
4. **Don't start straightaway.** If you are interested in doing Emmaus spend time with one or two other leaders looking at the material and working out how best you can make it work in your context.
5. **Don't worry if you've only got one or two people interested in doing the course.** If you make sure you have at least two people leading, and someone else learning how to be a leader, and someone hosting the evening and taking care of refreshments, and a couple of members of the congregation joining in the group to support and befriend those who are enquiring into faith, suddenly you have a group of about 10 people.
6. **Plan ahead.** Get the date of the Nurture Course in the diary before you have anyone signed up. This will focus the mind. Now at every baptism and wedding, and after every funeral, and with all the groups that meet in the church you can issue the invitation: "Would you like to find out more about the Christian faith?"
7. **Invite the Bishop (this one is probably only for Anglicans).** Now this really will concentrate the mind. Join with other churches in your area and plan a confirmation before you have any candidates. It is a declaration of faith: we do believe there are people in this community who would like to find out more about the Christian faith, we just need to make contact with them and invite them to begin the journey.
8. **Put on some contact events.** These are one-off happenings that can gather together people you have contact with and who have a common interest. Invite parents from the school to something on parenting; or baptism families to an Anniversary Children's Party; or the bereaved to a commemoration service. And gently offer the invitation: "would you like to find out more?"
9. **If at first you don't succeed .....** Most research tells us that Emmaus courses really start bearing fruit when you have run them 3 or 4 times. Running a course like this needs to get into the bloodstream of the church. But it needs to become as normal a part of church life as the Harvest Festival or the Christmas Fair.
10. **The Holy Spirit is the Evangelist.** Don't try and convert people, this is God's department. Our job is to create the environment where people can gather together in a safe and welcoming environment, ask their questions, explore the basics of Christian faith, and experience Christian community. Within this context faith grows. The Emmaus programme is a resource to help you in this wonderful and fulfilling ministry.

PS Soak all this in prayer and you will be delighted with the results.