



A NEW YEAR OF EFM BEGINS AT ST. MARK'S IN THE FALL

Education for Ministry (EfM) at SMITV Starts Fifth Year

Every baptized person is called to a unique service of ministry, often referred to as “the ministry of all believers”. The EfM program offers us an opportunity to discover how we each can respond *in stewardship* in Christian service. An in-depth theological education designed for regular lay people is provided to support the faith of the participants and teaches them to express that faith in day-to-day events and activities.

The Education for Ministry (EfM) program is a four-year study and group reflection process for the formation of Christian ministry through the development of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and identity as Christians. Published texts and essays provide the primary knowledge content in the study of the Christian tradition. Participants frequently report finding the program transformative.

Participants commit for only one year of the program at a time. Breaks are taken during each year – during the summer and the Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday season. A group consists of six to twelve participants and a trained mentor who meet weekly. Of 52 weeks, EfM meets approximately 36 weeks (the length of a typical academic year). These meetings are usually from two and a half to three hours in length.

The first year studies the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). The second year offers a study of the New Testament. Year Three provides study of Christian (Church) history. Theology, ethics, and interfaith encounter constitute study in the fourth year.

Through study, prayer, and reflection, members of EfM groups move toward a new understanding of the fullness of God's creation and grace. Through discussion and guided reflection, the seminars provide an opportunity to deepen understanding of the reading materials, including Old Testament, New Testament, church history, and principles and ethics of the church utilizing scripture and texts by theological scholars. What emerges is the development of a stronger community of faith, a more intimate personal faith and the outlines of a personal theology.

EfM starts at St. Mark's in the fall. Registration details will be available soon. **Sharron Luft and Jeannie May** have been trained and commissioned to serve as Mentors of our group and will provide registration materials and discuss questions with anyone interested in the program.

The Diocese of Los Angeles underwrites \$110 of the \$460 program fee for the nine-month program (includes all books and materials). St. Mark's participants are asked to pay as much of the remaining \$350 as they are able, and may do so in increments of their own choosing. No one will be kept from the program due to finances, please simply inform the Mentors or our Business Manager (**Leslie Zuller**, leslie@smity.org) the amount you feel you can pay and the Rector's Discretionary Fund will underwrite the remaining amount.

For more information or to register, contact **Jeannie May** (jeannie@the100acrewood.com) or **Sharron Luft** (sharroninworkshop@gmail.com). Registration forms will available on Sunday, online, or in the parish office during the week (Weekday Greeters often available 10 am-2 pm weekdays).