

As the fourth season of “ARISE – Together in Christ” gets ready to begin, Mary and I have been asked to share with you some of our feelings and experiences as FACILITATORS for seasons one – two – and three.

We feel the most significant outcome of the ARISE program has been the rewards found in sharing of time and faith with the other members of our group. To be perfectly honest with you, we weren’t sold on the idea of ARISE in the beginning but when Gerry McGrath from the ARISE TEAM explained how ARISE was structured we thought it was time for us to take a closer look at some of the documents that have guided our faith. at least for one season! When we began, we didn’t know everyone who had signed up for our 7:00 pm, Thursday night gatherings.

The program guided us in that first session – as well as the beginning of the following seasons – to share – *as much as each of us was comfortable*, a little bit about who we were and why we had decided to come together in ARISE. The closeness that resulted just by letting people know who we are and why we came together grew stronger week by week and season by season. Our group is sustained by its wonderful faith-filled members.

From our original eight participants, ourselves included, seven have remained. Last season we added a new member who brought a most appreciated dynamic to our discussions.

Our Lord chose to take one of our original eight to Himself after season one. She will always be part of our group.

The focus on scripture was something rather new for a few of us, having grown up in a time when Catholics in general, didn’t read the Bible. The presenting of passages from scripture followed by an encouragement to share thoughts gained from the text was a bit difficult at first but as time went on everyone offered some personal feelings gained from the readings of each session. All contributed in some way in helping us all gain a fuller understanding of the topic of each session.

The ARISE guidebook presented some challenging discussion questions. Many of us found that thinking seriously about the writing, and expressing our thoughts to the group was a taxing experience – particularly after a long day at work.

As the program evolved and our group came together as a Christian Family we became convinced that we had chosen a great way to spend 90 minutes a week.

With the coming of LENT, ARISE offers a great opportunity to do something special for yourself in preparation for EASTER. Come and join your fellow Milton and Quincy parishioners – and others, for the SIX upcoming sessions of the FOURTH SEASON of ARISE – *Together in Christ*. New participants are ALWAYS welcome and as the saying goes “try it, you’ll like it!”

The theme of season four is to create a new heart and a generous spirit in LENT. Mary Gallagher, Sister Susan, Father Casey, Gerry and Paula McGrath and the ARISE TEAM are there for you if you have any questions.

*John & Mary Fleming*