

Becoming an Invitational Parish

Last Tuesday the Alpha course began. This heralded a new chapter in the Catholic Parish of Hastings as we strive to “live as Christ.” Not all parishioners can participate in the first round of Alpha but all parishioners can be part of ongoing parish renewal.

How is that? By doing his or her part to turn the Catholic Parish of Hastings into a truly invitational parish.

What is being “invitational”? It means having an openness to others that looks for opportunities to include them in the life of the parish both on Sunday and throughout the week.

How can I do that?

Being invitational can happen in many ways but here are some examples:

- Pray.
- Smile.
- Sing.
- Invite a family member, friend, work colleague, fellow parishioner or complete stranger to attend Alpha with you.
- Stay behind for a cup of coffee after Mass and talk to someone you have never spoken to before.
- Get involved in serving the after Mass hospitality.
- Assist with welcoming people as they come to Mass and handing out the Sunday bulletin.
- Smile at someone even though they have unwittingly taken your usual seat.
- Ask someone who may be new to the parish or is a visitor if they need any assistance.
- If you belong to a small group or parish apostolate invite new people to join.
- Be gracious to a family who may have exuberant or restless children.
- Always be welcoming of anyone who is returning to the practise of the faith and encourage them to continue in their journey as a fellow disciple.
- Encourage fellow parishioners to be invitational.
- Ask others what we need to do to be more invitational.

What is the point?

To share the joy of the Gospel and to be an active and vibrant disciple of the Lord as we rejoice in our Catholic faith and traditions. **To live as Christ.**