

**1. How can you make a good decision?**

As Christians, we know that God has a specific plan for each of our lives—a plan that leads to true freedom in this life and our ultimate happiness with Him in heaven. Sin, temptations, past hurts, and all the noise of the world can make it difficult to hear God’s voice and learn where He wants to lead us.

Whether you’re considering a job change, discerning consecrated or religious life, or wondering if you should date and get married, Samuel Group will give you the tools you need to grow in your relationship with God and make decisions with Him.

**2. What is Samuel Group?**

Samuel Group is a community of like-minded young adults who strive for holiness and seek a deeper relationship with God. Over seven months, members learn how to deepen their prayer lives, discover the rules of discernment by St. Ignatius of Loyola, and receive guidance from a spiritual director.

Samuel Group is more than a “discernment group.” It’s a program designed to help young adults know themselves and learn how to live in the freedom of a relationship with Jesus Christ and trust in His plan for their lives. Understanding one’s vocation first comes from understanding how God is calling each person to live each day in the present moment, free from past wounds and the lies of the world.

**3. Who is Samuel Group for?**

Samuel Group is designed for single or dating young adults between the ages of 21 to 35 years old. The community is comprised of college students and young professionals who are committed to a regular spiritual life and open to God and His prompting.

After the application process and brief interview, participants agree to attend all seven monthly group sessions and commit to a routine of daily prayer, plus meet once per month with a spiritual director. Participants who do not already have a spiritual director will be connected with one.

**4. How do I know if Samuel Group is a good fit for me?**

Samuel Group facilitates a short, intentional season of allowing God the space to work in your life. When we give our time to God, He will do amazing things—but participants have to be ready to take on the challenge and level of commitment that Samuel Group requires.

***You might be a good fit for Samuel Group if you are:***

- In college, discerning what steps to take in your life after graduation
- In early career, discerning marriage or call to consecrated life
- At any stage of life, wanting to grow closer to God, but not settled in a vocation

***You might not be a good fit for Samuel Group if you are:***

- Planning to change jobs in the next year (halfway through Samuel Group)
- Planning to get engaged or make another big life-altering decision before April

- Planning to start graduate school before April

#### **5. What are the major commitments of Samuel Group?**

- Attend all seven group sessions. Sessions are only once per month, but we cover so much material that it is harder for participants to catch up if they miss sessions.
- 30 minutes of daily prayer
- Meet with a spiritual director at least once per month between sessions
- Reduce “noise” in your life (such as social media, movies, TV, etc.)

#### **6. Is there a “dating fast”?**

Previous sessions of Samuel Group required a dating fast for young adults who were single and not in a relationship. The reason for this rule was to encourage intimacy with God, especially during the months of intense interior work (focusing on past wounds, family wounds, etc.), when being in a relationship could create unnecessary stress and pressure in a participant’s life. While a dating fast is not required for Samuel Group participants, it is still highly encouraged.

#### **7. How do I find a spiritual director?**

Every Samuel Group participant will be assigned a spiritual director if he or she does not already have one. If you have never had a spiritual director (or never done spiritual direction before) that’s okay! Many past participants had never done spiritual direction prior to their participation in Samuel Group. All Samuel Group spiritual directors are trained priests, religious, and faithful laypeople who journey with you and help you to sift through the interior movements that you will experience as you learn the principles of Ignatian Spirituality. Samuel Group participants are required to meet with their spiritual director at least once per month. This personal, one-on-one guidance is key for making lasting change and drawing closer to God.

#### **8. What happens during Samuel Group sessions?**

Meetings include prayer, meditation, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, small group sharing, spiritual talks, and opportunities for confession.

Each monthly session focuses on a specific topic, such as mental prayer, forgiveness, and how God is working in our story, as well as how to confront the lies we believe about ourselves that keep us from recognizing our true identity, as sons and daughters of God. Once participants learn how to engage with their story and how to recognize where God is working in their lives, the last few months of Samuel Group focus on the Ignatian rules of discernment and learning about the vocation to marriage and the vocation to celibacy for the Kingdom. At the end of Samuel Group, participants reflect on what they have learned and how they can offer their unique gifts and talents to serve Christ and His church.