

## Further start-up tips

### Encourage

- Although *Light of Torah* leaflets are easy to read, some parts of Torah are not. Encourage parishioners to be patient and persistent in their Torah reading and affirm their questions and struggles. ‘You are engaging with the text’; ‘Keep at it, your questions are all part of how God draws you into conversation.’ It takes time for a ‘new’ approach to become familiar and practised.
- Make available supporting material such as articles on “Archaeology of the Word” and “Havruta-style learning” (available at Light of Torah website).
- If there is a synagogue in your locality, share your interest in Torah with the Jewish community there. Let your Torah group be an interreligious conversation starter.



- An additional resource: beautifully produced Holy Land calendars displaying the readings and festivals of both Christian and Jewish liturgical cycles are available from *Etz-Hayim Tree of Life Publishing* [www.etz-hayim.com](http://www.etz-hayim.com)



Start-up Series: Leaflet #4



# Light of Torah

*“But those who study the Torah give forth light wherever they may be. It is like one standing in the dark with a lamp in his hand”*  
(Exodus Rabbah 36.3).

## How to introduce ‘Light of Torah’ to a parish

### To begin with...

Introducing the scripture resource *Light of Torah* to a parish is relatively simple. Most of the steps are obvious, using existing structures found in every parish: weekly bulletins, parish website, physical and virtual notice boards.

Having said that, even simple ministries take time, effort and someone to ‘make it happen.’ And even ‘obvious’ steps need to be done well for a ministry to flourish.

This leaflet offers some basic pointers to guide your start-up steps.

### What does *Light of Torah* ‘look like’ in a parish?

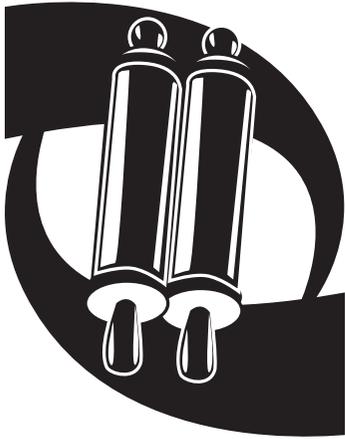
#### 1. Reading program

The leaflets are available on a weekly basis forming a one-year reading program. Interested parishioners help themselves to the leaflets, read them at home and follow the whole of the Torah over the course of a year. Weekly parish communications advertise the Torah portion of the week and remind parishioners to collect their copy, physically or electronically.

#### 2. Torah study groups

A second step is to form Torah groups: parishioners coming together to read and reflect on Torah, with their bible and the *Light of Torah* leaflet as basic tools.

Further info & resources: [www.lightoftorah.net](http://www.lightoftorah.net)



## Light of Torah in the parish

# Light of Torah

## 1. Reading program

Establish a suitable 'home' for *Light of Torah* leaflets; a place which is visible, accessible, consistent for your particular audience.

Consider the various communication channels used in the parish and how *Light of Torah* leaflets and their promotion might be included: e.g., bulletin and website, parish e-networks, pulpit announcements, face to face information sessions, brochure stands.

Note that parishioners can freely subscribe at [www.lightoftorah.net](http://www.lightoftorah.net) and receive the leaflets by email on a weekly basis. Light of Torah also has a presence on Facebook and Twitter.

The ideal time to introduce *Light of Torah* leaflets is September/October as the Jewish lectionary cycle prepares to start afresh with Genesis 1. [View current calendar at our website.] Another point of entry might be the commencement of a new book of Torah: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Then again, some groups set their own unique bible study schedule according to the needs of their particular group.

Whatever your start-date, advertise *Light of Torah* several weeks earlier. Remember: word of mouth, personal enthusiasm, and a tap on the shoulder are often the most effective strategy for involving parishioners in a new venture.

### Start-up steps

- Establish a small planning team (a minimum of two people committed to the project).
- Obtain necessary permissions: e.g., displaying leaflets in church, access to noticeboards, parish website.
- Establish routines, e.g., meeting bulletin publication deadlines.
- Pray. Ask the Lord to bless your efforts.

## Start-up steps

# Light of Torah

## 2. Torah study groups

- The reading program is the simplest way to introduce *Light of Torah* to a parish. A second step is to invite parishioners to come together to share the Torah portion each week (or fortnightly or monthly).
- Operationally this is much like organizing any parish bible study group: establish a suitable time, place, and arrange for one or two people to act as facilitators.
- While a group can meet any time and anywhere—e.g., on a Tuesday night in a parish meeting room—give serious consideration to Torah sessions in the home. Breaking open the Word at home is a beautiful dimension of a Christian lifestyle. [Refer to *Start-up Leaflet #3*.]

### Basic format of a Torah study session

- Pray, asking God's blessing on your group;
- Read cover page of the LOT leaflet;
- Read Torah portion (or selected verses);
- Invite initial reactions to the text;
- Read the rest of the LOT leaflet, pausing at each section to ponder and discuss insights arising from the Torah text;
- Close with a prayer.

For further details and leaders' tips, see *Start-up Leaflets #2*, "How to use the Light of Torah series" and *#3*, "How to lead a Torah group."



### Joy!

*Light of Torah seeks to awaken in parishioners a love and thirst for Torah. This is a ministry of delight and discovery as we uncover jewels in the text that we never noticed before.*

*Celebrate these joys.*

*Affirm discoveries.*

### Gold!

*The most valuable element in this parish strategy is a person who loves Torah, who has been touched by its riches, who has a yearning for those treasures to be known by others, and who has a commitment to turn heartfelt desires into real action. If you can find that person, Light of Torah is likely to flourish!*