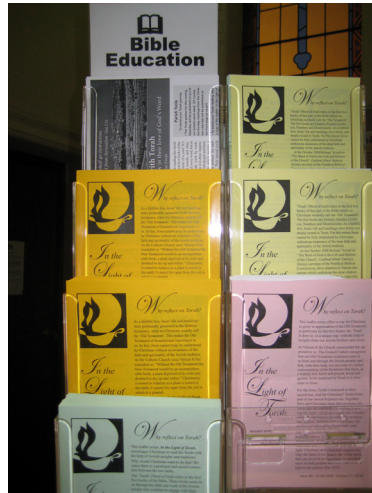


Further start-up tips

Display

- A single brochure holder, containing the *Light of Torah* issue of the week, is sufficient; however to make a bigger splash, invest in a brochure stand holding six or more leaflets. This way you can include a month's worth of issues plus explanatory leaflets. Add a clear heading to the stand: e.g., 'Bible Education' or 'Torah Study.'
- Keep the stand well stocked. If people go to take a leaflet only to find there are none left they may not return next time. If you *are* caught short, replenish immediately and make the most of the situation by sending out the message: "*Light of Torah* leaflets are going like hotcakes!" :-)
- Copy the leaflets in monthly batches so that you are not photocopying every week.
- An additional resource: beautifully produced Holy Land calendars displaying both Christian and Jewish liturgical cycles are available from www.etz-hayim.com



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.'
- 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.

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: a brochure rack, a notice board and a weekly bulletin.

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 is offered as a kind of 'check list' to guide your start-up steps.

What does *Light of Torah* 'look like' in a parish?

1. Reading program

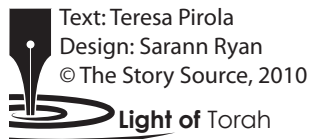
The leaflets are available on a weekly basis forming a one-year reading program. Interested parishioners help themselves to the leaflets, read them at home and follow the whole of the Torah over the course of a year.

Weekly bulletin inserts and other materials advertize the Torah portion of the week and remind parishioners to collect their copy.

2. Torah study groups

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

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Text: Teresa Pirola
Design: Sarann Ryan
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Light of Torah is a grassroots movement that encourages Catholic parish audiences to be attentive to the gift of Torah and to the gift of Judaism that gave us Jesus, the Living Torah. Reproduction of its materials permitted for non-commercial church use. More information: lightoftorah.net

Further info & resources: 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; e.g. a section of the resource rack in the church foyer.
- Copy the leaflets and fill brochure stand/s, checking them regularly to ensure they remain adequately stocked.
- Forward the weekly bulletin inserts to the bulletin editor in plenty of time for publication.
- Fix posters to notice boards.

You can introduce *Light of Torah* leaflets at any time of the year, however the ideal time is September/October as the Jewish lectionary cycle prepares to start afresh with Genesis 1. Another good point of entry might be the commencement of a new book of Torah: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Whenever you start, advertize *Light of Torah* several weeks earlier using any or all of the following methods:

- Posters and bulletin notices
- Pulpit speaker
- Information session after Mass
- Word of mouth. Shared personal enthusiasm is usually the most effective strategy of all.

Posters, bulletin notices and explanatory pages can be downloaded at www.lightoftorah.net.

Start-up steps

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

Gold!

The greatest resource 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 and loved by others, and who has a commitment to turn heartfelt desires into real action.

Start-up steps

Light of Torah

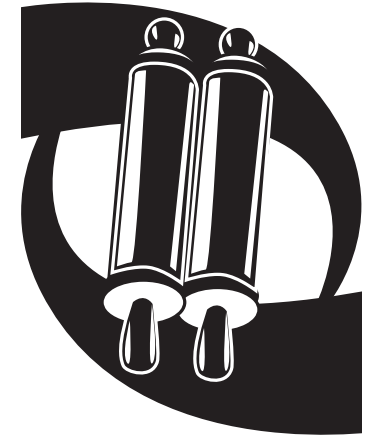
2. Torah study groups

- 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 leaders/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, around a mealtable. Breaking open the Word in the home is a powerful lifestyle choice. [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 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.”



Start-up assistance

- Parish workshops may be available (for Sydney parishes), run by members of the *Light of Torah* team. A workshop introduces parishioners to Torah and leads them through a sample issue of *Light of Torah*.

Joy!

The goal of Light of Torah is not to turn parishioners into scripture scholars, but to awaken in them 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.