

HOW TO HAVE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS WITH OUR UNHOUSED NEIGHBORS



TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- Small talk often leads to “big talk”. Start above the surface, go at their pace, and be yourself.
- Only ask questions that you would feel comfortable answering.
- Having a conversation can be exhausting and the person you’re talking with may not have the energy in that moment. If you sense this, respect it, and consider trying again another time.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Keep it simple. Introduce yourself and share your name.

“Hi, it’s nice to meet you. I’m (name). How’s your day going today? Are you hanging in there?”

CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Where are you from?

How long have you been here?

“Where do you stay?” “Do you stay around here?”

“What is something you like to do?”

“What do you do well?”

“How did you get started?”

HOW TO RESPOND TO STORIES YOUR NEIGHBOR SHARES WITH YOU:

If the story someone shared with you is positive, joyful, or fun:

- Words of celebration and praise
- If you can relate to the story you could say, “Something similar happened to me once, do you mind if I share?”

If the story someone shared with you is negative, heartbreaking, or difficult:

- I’m so sorry to hear what you’re telling me.
- That must have been so hard.
- “That’s horrible, I’m sad you were treated that way. You deserve to be treated with kindness.

BEST PRACTICES:

- Pray! For yourself and the leading of the Holy Spirit as you talk with others. And, when appropriate, with those you converse with.
- Be present - Listen and Learn. Be slow to speak, give opinions, or preach.
- Approach with curiosity