

First Steps: A Christian Conflict Resolution Process

**“A journey of a thousand miles
begins with a single step.”—Chinese Proverb**

FIRST STEPS is a program

- originally designed for use in parishes
- endorsed by the Archdiocese of NY & the Diocese of Brooklyn
- presented by Pax Christi Metro New York

FIRST STEPS is rooted in Scripture and is designed primarily to help participants develop skills to resolve peacefully conflicts at home, with friends, at work, and in the larger community. Through a seven-hour process of presentations, role plays, discussion, prayer, and reflection, participants learn how to begin the process of conflict resolution. Participants are invited to view conflict as an opportunity for growth, and are introduced to community resources for resolving and mediating disputes.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Part I: Learning about Conflict: Prayer & Introduction; Defining Conflict; Recognizing How Conflict Develops; Exploring Options; and Lessons from Scripture.

Part II: Acquiring Skills: Surfacing Feelings & Needs; Communicating Feelings & Needs; and Biblical Reflection on Assertion & Listening

Part III: Putting Conflict Resolution Skills to Work: Using the Six-Step Process; Engaging in Peacemaking; Planning the Next Steps; and Closing and Prayer.

FIRST STEPS has been presented to parishes and religious congregations, Christian groups of other denominations and secular volunteer groups like the AmeriCorps Program, homeless shelters and transitional living facilities, colleges and universities. We are pleased to be able to offer the program to both English- and Spanish-speaking groups.

For Individuals: We offer the workshop in central locations several times a year (usually in Fall and Spring); these workshops are open to anyone who is interested. If you come to one of these “open” workshops, you will need to bring the \$25 registration fee, a bag lunch, and a willingness to learn how to resolve conflicts peacefully. Please call the PCMNY office for times and locations.

For Groups: It is also possible to arrange to have the workshop presented to your group at a mutually convenient time and location. First Steps can be presented in a full-day Saturday session, one evening a week for three weeks, and at other times by arrangement. If your group’s schedule prevents you from offering the full workshop, it is possible for us to present a shortened version. We prefer to offer the whole workshop, in one full-day session.

If you ask Pax Christi to present a workshop to your **group**:

We will provide

- well-trained facilitators to work with your group;
- complete packets of material for use in the program as well as resources for future use;
- our experience in conflict resolution and our history of peacemaking as part of Pax Christi, the international Catholic movement for peace since 1945.

You will provide

- a group eager to learn about conflict resolution;
- an on-site coordinator to arrange details of set-up, clean-up, and refreshments;
- a stipend of \$100 to \$300, depending on your group’s financial ability, to help cover the costs of administering the program;
- an opportunity for people to learn how to respond to the Christian call to sow seeds of peace.

What are people saying about First Steps?

“It was like a cleansing experience, akin to the experience of sacramental reconciliation, only more so because we shared openly our own inadequacies and received support from one another.”—Jackie Ciminna, R.N., Participant

“As a facilitator, the blessing of First Steps is the enthusiastic response and observation of the participants. This response is a true gift which enables me to reaffirm my commitment to living a nonviolent lifestyle rooted in the Gospel.”—Carole Fitzpatrick, Facilitator