August 4, 2025

Dear parents,

*Please pause and pray with me for a moment – reflect for a moment on the ways you have been fulfilling the* ***vow to the Lord that you made at your child's baptism*** *to raise him or her in the practice of the Catholic faith, to keep the flame of faith alive in his heart & her eyes fixed on Jesus.* **If your child is not yet baptized**, *do you desire heaven for him or her?* In today’s world, it is essentially impossible to accomplish the task that we, as parents & godparents, vowed to the Lord at our child’s baptism, or to help him or her experience heaven for eternity, without very intentionally seeking the Lord with our whole heart and experiencing the support & encouragement of a community of faith.

This task may seem intimidating, but be assured that, when the Lord asks something of us, He always provides the grace to accomplish it - we only need to say “yes.” Our parish wants to be a primary instrument of the Lord’s grace to help support, encourage & equip you for this task, in large part through our Family Faith Formation program.

Family Faith Formationallows for a “hybrid structure”- we will gather in community at the church a few times each month for learning, encounter, and prayer together. The rest of the month will involve families learning together at home, on their own schedule, with you, parents, as the first educators of your children in the faith.

The at-home portion of this program is *essential*, but do not worry if you do not feel equipped. The primary gathering each month will consist of a session specifically to equip you to pass the faith – in knowledge & lived relationship – on to your children. *You are not in this alone*! You will also be part of a small group of parents and families designed to support each other, learn & serve together, and enjoy time together.

**The vast majority of sessions will occur on Sunday mornings between Masses**. While there are many reasons for this scheduling, the primary is to make it more accessible for families to participate in both Faith Formation *and* Sunday Mass, which is *absolutely essential* to the Christian life and our salvation. *Even more important than your participation in Faith Formation sessions is your family’s participation in the Mass,* and we hope that this scheduling will make it easier for your family to make it to Mass each Sunday, before or after Faith Formation. Even if you / your family are not Catholic, you are always encouraged to come and witness the most beautiful and powerful prayer on earth (because it is actually our participation in heaven!) - we would love for you to come and encounter Christ in the Eucharist with us.

There is something for everyone during Family Faith Formation time! We offer *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd*for children ages 3-5, age-appropriate lessons for children in grades 1-6, including preparation for First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion, Confirmation preparation for teens in grades 7&8 (or older), and concurrent sessions for parents. There are also many high school YDisciple small groups that meet during this same time! There will also be various opportunities each month for families to experience fellowship, pray, and encounter the Lord all together.

Please note that ***all*** students who are **preparing for sacraments** (typically, 1st & 2nd graders and 7th & 8th graders) must both be enrolled in a faith formation program (whether in the parish or Catholic school) and participate in parish sacramental formation. However, sacramental preparation at the parish will look a bit different, depending on where your child attends school. Stay tuned for more information which will be sent directly to families with a child preparing for a sacrament this year or next year.

Please know that this is an opportunity for every family in our community, no matter which school your children attend (public, Catholic, or homeschool). Even if your children regularly receive religious education at school, our Family Faith Formation program is a unique opportunity for your family to grow together, as a family, in faith and discipleship and to form relationships with other families in our parish. Whether your family is practicing the Catholic faith, just beginning to return to the practice of the faith, or not Catholic, you are most welcome to participate.

A registration form is included in this mailing. Please either fill out this form (one per family) and return it to the Parish Office OR fill out an online form, which can be found on our parish website or at the link sent via email. Please register by **August 24th**. Also, mark your calendar for our first session on **Sunday, September 7th** beginning at **9:15am** in the Parish Hall. This session is for the entire family, with opportunities for **children age 3 through 8th grade** & **a guest presentation for** **parents** – and a **pancake breakfast** will be provided by the Knights of Columbus!

If you are unsure about signing up, please at least “come and see” what the Lord may have in store for your family! Please know of my continued prayers for you, your child(ren), and your whole family, and please remember that our entire parish staff is here for you and is eager to support your family in any way possible!

In the love of Christ,



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