

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Grace and peace of Christ be with you. The catechesis of your children is of the utmost on my heart. After evaluating the current religious education program and formation, the staff and I have been praying about how we can best serve the children and parents of this church. We are eager to offer the *Family Formation* program beginning in the fall. This program has a new vision with new vitality.

It does, however, call for a paradigm shift and hence the purpose of my writing to you. At the root of this change is a fuller understanding of the Church's call for parents to be the primary educators of their children in Faith and the parish's role to support families in this mission. National trends in catechesis are guiding parishes toward this understanding. Parishes that have implemented *Family Formation* are reporting a stronger Faith knowledge and practice in their communities.

When your children were baptized, you promised to raise and nurture your children in the Faith. This is not an easy task, and we want to support and assist you. The following is taken from the General Directory of Catechesis, Articles 255 and 227:

"Parents are the primary educators in the faith ... It is for this reason that the Christian community must give very special attention to parents. By means of personal contact, meetings, courses and also adult catechesis directed towards parents, the Christian community must help them assume their responsibility—which is particularly delicate today—of educating their children in the faith."

Family Formation will replace the bi-weekly Sunday morning classes. This is a shift from a bi-weekly classroom model for children to a monthly session for children and parents at church. At the monthly sessions, children gather with a teacher by grade while parents receive catechesis based on the monthly theme and guidance on the home lessons. This program's unique format will draw your family together through the enthusiastic faith of your children. Its creativity and simple concepts make learning fun, as each lesson is written at an elementary level but with adult level instruction to guide and enhance your teaching. Parents do not have to be experts in the Faith, just willing to devote about an hour a week to quality family time in sharing the Faith.

Understanding the busy schedules of today's families, the weekly lessons at home can be adapted to your own family schedule. The lessons will provide the backbone for your children's spiritual formation in these formative years. This comprehensive program not only engages young children, it draws families together, and equips parents to do a first rate job in teaching the Catholic Faith to their children.

The *Family Formation* is faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church, is driven by Sacred Scripture, and references the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It covers all tenets of our Catholic Faith.

You may direct any questions regarding these sessions or regarding the program to Alison Snyder - Director of religious Education (prep_stfrancis@comcast.net).

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. John Frink