

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION NEWS

A FEW ITEMS...

It's hard to believe that the Holiday Season is already upon us. Everyone seems to be settling into a routine with Family Faith Formation and Reconciliation Preparation has started. Our hope is that this new style is more family friendly and allows you to have more quality time sharing your Faith with your family in a style and approach that works for you. Because we have a much more decentralized approach, we will be sending out a few newsletters like this to help keep everyone in the loop. We will share information regarding Sacramental Prep, lesson timing and other resources on possible family activities and events you may want to include in your family schedule.

A few business type items I want to mention. First is structure and accountability. We all know that from a young age we have timeframes and goals presented to us to help us stay on track. As with jobs, school and events in structure keeps us moving in the right direction. We have formulated some guidelines and accountability items that have been approved by the Diocese. These are not retroactive to the beginning of the year but rather the goal we hope to achieve by the first of the year. If your efforts up to this point do not fall into these guidelines it will not be counted against you but now is the time to try to form this habit as we will be using these guidelines as we go forward. Of course, we will always do our best to work around those situations that arise such as illnesses, hardships, etc. They are as follows...

Family Faith Formation Guidelines

- Spend some time each week with the lesson in Christ Our Life. This can be done either at one of the Churches or at home at the time of your choosing.
- For those that are working on their own or with other families offsite we ask that you submit the weekly review at the Christ Our Life website. These reviews will count as attendance. Students will have two weeks to submit the online review before it is counted as being late. ***Please do not cram lessons and reviews.*** The goal is to develop a habit and pattern of Faith sharing on a regular basis, not cram 3-4 weeks of lessons into one sitting to complete the lessons. Following are the instructions for submitting online reviews..
 - Go to maryalloysius.com
 - Click on the link to Christ Our Life
 - Click on your child's grade
 - Click on Interactive Chapter Review Link for the chapter to be completed
 - After completing the review and answering the questions submit the review to our email address at smwsafff@gmail.com.
- For those in Sacramental Prep we ask that you still take time do the lesson and submit the chapter review.
- Those wanting to participate in the next Sacramental Preparation setting must not have more than 4 missing lesson reviews and no less than 65% attendance and/or online reviews for the previous year.
- Missing more than 65% attendance or online reviews will result in an incomplete for the year.

ADVENT ADVENTURES

Sunday, December 2nd marks the beginning of Advent. While this is the first Sunday of Advent it is also the first day of the new year in the Church. It's also a very good time to focus on celebrating the season together as there are many traditions and activities that lend themselves to do things together as a family to set the season apart from other times in the Church year. Sometimes it can be fun to move outside of your comfort zone and do things you would not normally do such as contact the Salvation Army and volunteer as a family to ring the bell and collect donations outside a store or maybe bake some cookies and deliver them to nursing home residents or maybe even contact Goodwill in Traverse City to see about helping to serve a meal at Safe Harbor. There are many things you can do and if you interested in any of those I listed and have questions I can help get you contact information.

I've enclosed some handouts containing prayers and special Advent projects to give you some ideas and our purple Advent books for adults and children's books can also help add to your Advent preparation for the Christmas Season. Take some time during this busy season to remember the Reason.

Faith Formation vs Catechism Class... Faith Formation is about helping individuals develop and deepen their relationship with Christ personally, within the family, in the Church by encountering Christ in the worshipping community, the Word and the Sacraments, and bringing that relationship to the world at large. It's never about knowing all the answers, meeting all the criteria or checking things off a spiritual to do list. It's about living and growing as a disciple. Catechism helps us learn a language to help us try to understand and speak about the Mystery we encounter in ourselves, our families, the Sacraments and the world.

Suggested Lesson Plan

In an effort to keep us all in the same neighborhood as far as the lesson plans we're covering following is a consensus of sort as to what lessons most are working on.

Week of...

November 25th lesson 6, December 2 lesson 7, December 9 lesson 8, December 16 lesson 9, December 23 lesson 10, December 30 lesson 10 and of course don't forget to checkout the lessons in the back of the books covering Advent and Christmas. These are suggestions and you may need to deviate from this based on your family situation. **During the week of Christmas and New Years there will be no formal meeting at Church and online reviews will not be marked late if none are submitted... but you're always free to come in to meet or continue to do the lessons at home.**

After the Holidays is traditionally a time where we all seem to fall into a lull and some of the good habits we intended to start during the fall drift off our radar. Do your best to continue your weekly Faith Formation with your family.

Many have expressed that they miss the community. There is a family day being planned where will all get together for a meal, some social time and family activities.