Greetings to Parents/Guardians of Grades 7 and 8

Welcome to Faith Formation at St. Thomas the Apostle Church!

Generations of Living Faith has been an awesome experience for our families. We believe that this model has been very successful in keeping our young families actively engaged in their faith and our parish community. Middle School can be rough- often referred to as the awkward years-therefore planning for a faith formation program to meet their needs can be tricky.

Our mission is to provide these students with opportunities to grow in our Catholic faith and deepen their relationship with Jesus and to provide some spiritual resources for our families.

After all faith is a relationship-NOT information.

With a team of mentors it makes it easier to explore the everyday questions that middle schoolers struggle with-for example- they may notice that a loving and all-powerful God allows good people to die. They wrestle with this and it is okay and normal. As mentors, we won’t always have the answers but we can affirm our faith by sharing stories and ultimately guide them back to Jesus.

It is our hope that through limited gatherings students can begin to develop a relationship with Jesus, their peers and the church. This can be difficult during a pandemic.

We want our middle school students to pray together, enjoy a meal together, listen to music together and develop friendships while reflecting on their faith. We want them to understand service and what it means to serve family, church and community. We want them to feel safe in an ever changing world. We also want them to be bold in their faith and to be able to express all of their potential because after all they are made in the image of God. That is looking at themselves in a whole new way.

Coming together as a group fosters those relationships.

Most of our young people in this age group attend in house sessions.

It has been an incredible two sessions with these young people!

We have been using the Edge/Life-Teen Middle School Ministry Curriculum.

This curriculum has generated lots of participation among our young people in class.

During the month of November students should participate in our Virtual Advent Prayer service.

We will film in advance and by scene the Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Pageant.

Please encourage your children to participate in this program.

The next session for this class is a Retreat Session and more details will follow.

I am always available for discussion with regard to faith formation and bringing our faith to life for our families. We certainly will need additional catechists (especially those willing to participate via zoom) for this catechetical year. If you or someone you know would be interested in joining the faith formation team please contact me.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to work together with your family to pass on the treasure and traditions of our Catholic faith.

I look forward to reuniting with all of you soon. Just a friendly reminder that church is open for daily and weekend Masses. When you are ready and feel safe Jesus is waiting for you.

Wanda J. Mascola

Director of Faith Formation

St. Thomas the Apostle Church

(203) 888-2382 X 102

[faithformation@stthomasoxford.org](mailto:faithformation@stthomasoxford.org)

[www.stthomasoxford.org](http://www.stthomasoxford.org)