Greetings to Parents/Guardians of Grades 1-6,

Happy Summer!

Welcome Back 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. We also believe that the best way to experience our faith takes place side by side with our friends and family. When young and old alike are open to the Holy Spirit they make a wonderful combination; the old dream dreams and the young see visions. The dream of God, our Father is the dream of a vision for each of us, His children. This dream is to be celebrated from generation to generation. This is a precious legacy that we have been entrusted with and therefore should keep alive and pass on.

Our mission is to provide families with opportunities to grow in our Catholic faith and deepen their relationship with Jesus so that they develop a missionary spirit. After all, we have been commissioned by Jesus to echo our Faith. We are the storytellers for the next generation.

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember,* *I am with you always, to the end of the age. – Matthew 28 19:20.*

Therefore amidst this pandemic we will have to work together to continue the legacy and be part of the Great Commission. Families will be able to select a faith formation program from three options listed below.

**Option 1-In –House Classes**

Our in-house classes- limited to 10 families per session- gather at the Church Hall on the day of your session. There are five sessions that include prayer, music and art activities that promote a spirit of sharing and caring among other parishioners of our church. This option will include a community meal whereby each participant will receive an individually boxed meal. In addition to the sessions, families are expected to participate in three prayer services held at the church. Families are also expected to complete an at home mission packet in between sessions. In the event of cancellation all materials will be mailed and an on-line video conferencing class (zoom) will be facilitated by one of our catechists. Completion of these sessions is monitored by sign in sheets and attendance lists and the return of completed projects in the at home mission packet.

**Option 2 -At-Home Classes**

Our at home classes –no limit- families gather together at their convenience. An outline of the lessons and materials needed to complete the lessons can be picked up or mailed. Families are required to complete 10 Sessions one a month for ten months. In addition to the lessons-three on-line guided meditations and/or prayer services will be available by video conference (zoom). Completion of these sessions is monitored by the sharing of completed projects via, email, remind and social media platforms. Families will receive packets from September thru June.

**Option 3- Video Conferencing Classes**

Video Conferencing classes – limited to 10 students per class- STUDENTS ONLY gather with a catechist ten times from September to June. An outline of the lessons and materials needed to complete the lessons can be picked up or mailed. Students are required to complete the questionnaire at the end of each lesson and these are sent back to me automatically upon completion. In addition to the lessons three on-line guided meditations and/or prayer services will take place. Completion of these sessions will be monitored by the sharing of completed projects via email, remind and social media platforms.

Pre-Confirmation (7th and 8Th Grade Students) and Confirmation Candidates (9th Grade Students) options will be sent under separate cover.

Sacramental Preparation to receive the first Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist(typically in the third grade)are in addition to the faith formation classes also known as GOLF and will be held on the second Sunday of each month on campus. Further details will be provided to those students.

A Peer Ministry program comprised of High School Students who have received the sacrament of Confirmation is in the infancy stages. More information regarding that program will be provided under separate cover as well.

Thank you to all of you who have registered already!!! Registrations for all programs will be sent next week to families by session. Once again I apologize for the delay in providing you with the specific dates and times until next week.

Thank you to everyone who has responded to my mini survey for possible days, times and learning options for planning purposes.

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 the upcoming 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 this year. 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.

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