Greetings to Parents/Guardians of Grades 7 and 8

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. 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.

In keeping with social distancing guidelines we can divide this group up into four segments. 2 classes on Tuesday and 2 classes on Thursday with an average of 17 students per class plus mentors. Of course, wearing masks, having individual meal boxes, no sharing of materials, and keeping our distance will be the only way this can happen. There are only five faith formation classes for this group. We hope they will be able to participate in a retreat live or virtual and complete the required work of a Saints and Service Fair. It is also our hope that they participate in other faith formation activities with their families.

You do have two options for faith formation this year.

Option 1 –In-House

Tuesday OR Thursday- 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. OR 6:30- 8:00 p.m.

Gather at the church Hall for a meal and fellowship – in the event we are unable to gather the assignment will be provided. In addition to the assignments students will need to attend a retreat and participate in the Saints and Services Fair.

Option 2 – At- Home

Faith shared with family at home –

You will be provided with materials and/or directions for 8 projects – one a month, plus a virtual retreat and participation in the Saints and Services Fair.

Thank you to all of you who have registered already!!! Once again I apologize for the delay in providing you with the specific dates 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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