

Church of All Saints, Keokuk, IA

FAMILY
FORMATION &
YOUTH
DISCIPLESHIP
REGISTRATION
PACKET

Kindergarten through 12th Grade

2019-2020

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Family & Youth Ministry Handbook 2019-20

All Saints Family Faith Formation & Youth Discipleship Program

Introduction

It is in this time that we recognize the needs of our parents, families, & teens supporting parents in their role as 'primary educators in the faith' it is not easy to be a parent today which is why parents, families, & teens need every support and help possible.

A partnership of Church and family life

"It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."¹ As a community of faith we wish to reflect these realities, displaying the many fruits of Christ in our midst. It is our mission to invite all to the sacred meal of which as Jesus says, "my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink... the one who feeds on me will have life because of me."² Nothing is more important than teaching and promoting these realities in our own families. So that our families might be fruitful, filled with the Lords blessings and graces, and so that our families might be able to share this grace with others.

Our Blessed Lord joyously instructed the faithful to: "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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."³ The Lord Jesus continues to bless us and works in his Church, so that "we, though many, are one body in Christ."⁴ As the faithful of God we are designed by our very nature for community life. Our families form what is called a "domestic church" or a mini Church in which young people learn to interact and explore their faith. As we gather as one body for Holy Mass on Sunday we share the one Eucharist as a larger community comprised of many "domestic churches". This also is true for our gatherings as a community for formation and deepening of faith through learning. Both worship and learning are essential for our spiritual growth as witnessed in Luke 24 the walk to Emmaus.

It is also essential that the Church accompanies modern families in serving their needs. Not taking from parents their role as primary educators in the faith but complementing and supporting parents in keeping the promises made at their child's baptism. Most needed in the Church today are holy families. Families who are supported and equipped with not only knowledge but also membership in the living community of Christ. This isn't achieved through any one program but by direct person to person relationships.⁵

¹ Galatians 2:20

² John 6:55,57

³ Matthew 28: 19-20

⁴ Romans 12:5

⁵ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*. (Rome: Holy See, 2013) 127-129.

Universal Call to Holiness

“All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity.”⁶ “Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”⁷ We are all called to be holy. As part of the baptismal call, we all are called to sanctify ourselves and the world around us right where we are at in the world.

“[Lay Christians] live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven.”⁸

“By their very vocation, they seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations.”⁹

“Hence the laity, dedicated as they are to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvelously called and prepared, so that even richer fruits of the Spirit may be produced in them. For all their works, prayers, and apostolic undertakings, family and married life, daily work, relaxation of mind and body, if they are accomplished in the Spirit — indeed even the hardships of life, if patiently borne — all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. In the celebration of the Eucharist these may most fittingly be offered to the Father along with the body of the Lord. And so, worshiping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God, everywhere offering worship by the holiness of their lives.”¹⁰

In order to become families truly dedicated to Christ we must understand that Christ calls all of us to holiness of life and dedication of the world to God. Holiness is something both ordinary and supernatural, as we take the ordinary circumstances of life and lift them up to God and make an offering of each day by prayer, ever deeper learning in the faith, deeds of kindness, and personal sacrifices. By living our days simply, raising our families in the word of God as well as living out and in witness of his continual presence with us each day in every circumstance.

.....
***It is therefore impossible to share the gospel if it is not
first lived.***
.....

Learning the faith as a family

“The witness of Christian life given by parents in the family comes to children with tenderness and parental respect. Children thus perceive and joyously live the closeness of God and of Jesus made manifest by their parents in such a way that this first Christian experience frequently leaves decisive traces which last throughout life. This childhood religious awakening which takes place in the family is irreplaceable.”¹¹

⁶ *Lumen Genitum* (Rome: Holy See, 1964), 40.

⁷ Matthew 5:48

⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, 31.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Washington DC: USCCB, 2001), 901.

¹¹ *General Directory for Catechesis* (Rome: Holy See, 1971), 226.

In reading the “signs of the times,”¹² it has become ever more apparent that the model of faith formation required to meet the needs of the modern family is that of whole family catechesis. Particularly here in our small corner of Iowa. Largely this is necessary in an effort to support parents in their role: “Parents receive in the sacrament of Matrimony “the grace and the ministry of the Christian education of their children,” to whom they transmit and bear witness to human and religious values.”¹³ This transmission is not meant to be taken from parents by the institution of the Church nor is it to be left to them as an overwhelming burden. It is meant that parents be truly accompanied, supported, and uplifted in their role by catechists, mentors, peers, and pastors assisting them in their essential role in which no one else can fill. “This educational activity which is both human and religious is “a true ministry,” through which the Gospel is transmitted and radiated so that family life is transformed into a journey of faith and the school of Christian life.”¹⁴

Policy

“There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test [Jesus] and said, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “What is written in the law? How do you read it?” He said in reply, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” He replied to him, “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.”¹⁵

Love God before all things...

1. Attendance at weekend Masses each week is essential to the success of this program. As on the road to Emmaus the disciples of Jesus, receiving instruction on the road, only truly understood and saw the person of Christ at the end in Emmaus after the breaking of the bread.¹⁶ Both learning and worship are necessary for the growth of faith and the benefit of grace.
2. Attendance will be taken it is assumed that only grave circumstances prevent attendance as every youth ministry night and family formation night are necessary and essential to this program.
3. It is essential in our K-5 program that parents/faith partners (those who accompany a young person in place of a parent such as a legal guardian or grandparent etc.) attend every session with their child unless otherwise instructed as each session is designed for the family / faith partner dynamic.
4. Arriving early allows one to excel in personal holiness by valuing the time and presence of everyone else involved in the program.
5. Assignments and projects sent home are for the benefit of your family and are seen as opportunities for growth, meritorious for grace, are essential to the effectiveness of this program, and are required to complete.
6. God asks us to give everything, we ask that you do your best in articles 1 through 5 but understand the fallen human condition in us all. There is no judgement here only concern for your welfare and the hoped benefit we can provide. There is always room to improve and there is always room for those who struggle with any of these points in our community of faith.

Love our neighbor as ourselves...

1. There is no judgement of family, status, past, or personhood save the call to conversion only Jesus makes to us all.
2. Gossip and calumny will not be tolerated.

¹² *Gaudium et Spes* (Rome: Holy See, 1965), 4.

¹³ *General Directory for Catechesis*, 227.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Luke 10:25-28

¹⁶ Please See: Luke 24:13-35

3. *Cursing, fighting, or using the Lord's name in vain are all unacceptable behaviors which will be subject to disciplinary action.*
4. *Participants are to keep hands to themselves at all times, hugging or reasonable displays of affection must be limited to members of the same family.*
5. *Personal property must be kept on one's persons at all times, please leave expensive and/or breakable items at home.*
6. *School property is to be cared for and safeguarded in such a way that it is left better than it was found.*
7. *No running or horseplay is allowed in the building as this poses a danger to others in proximity as well as increases the likelihood of damage to the school.*
8. *Cell phones are allowed for the use of emergency and communication with family only. Time spent at Family Formation & Youth Ministry is designed for one's full and active presence, person to person.*
9. *Disregard or disrespect toward one's classmates, catechist, or parents/guardians' is deemed as unacceptable as the fourth command explicitly states that honor is due to one's parents and superiors, and above all one ought to love ones neighbor. Failure in this regard will be subject to disciplinary action.*
10. *In order to love others, one must love oneself. All are created in the image and likeness of God and have an inherent dignity and rights. As a community we strive to love even those who do not love themselves and will take every action to make it known. Falling short of any of the above may be cause for embarrassment or a call for attention. In any case every response made is towards a spirit of reconciliation and rehabilitation as God intends.*

Other practical matters

1. *"Youth Ministry" is defined as 6-12th grade which gathers weekly; "Family Formation Night" is defined as an evening in which Families with K-5 youth participate in monthly meal, learning activities, parish activities, and home activities which bring the faith home in engaging ways.*
2. *Each minor who wishes to attend All Saints Formation & Discipleship program (K-12) must complete and turn in a registration / medical release form.*
3. *No parking in the fire-lane as this inhibits a smooth pick up. Please park in a designated space.*
4. *On Youth Ministry Nights (6-12) Drop-off and pick-up needs to take place at the main entrance for safety reasons.*
5. *If your family or your youth will be late or absent, please let the parish office know. (either via remind or 524.8334)*
6. *If your youth will be walking themselves to Faith Formation or home, please make this known.*
7. *Medication of any kind may not be on a minors persons without special and explicit permission.*
8. *Please take special note that any pictures taken during Faith Formation activities will only be used for promotional purposes. If you object to this, please do so in writing; your objection will be effective when note is received.*
9. *In the event of a cancelled Youth Night or Family Formation Night our phone tree will activate to notify you as well as by email. One may also verify on our Facebook page, twitter, website, or on KOKX*

VIRTUS Safe Environment Curriculum & Safe Environment Policy

"Virtus is Latin for excellence, valor, moral strength and courage—the same characteristics needed for caring adults who interact with children and protect them from abuse."¹⁷ We will have a single one-hour course on appropriate boundaries and awareness this year. Information will be forthcoming in advance, with an opportunity to opt-out. Any youth who misses the course will be scheduled for a make-up session. Concerns or questions should be brought to Director of Faith Formation Trevor Pullinger.

We have zero tolerance for violations of the "Policies relating to Sexuality and Personal Behavior" most recently revised and approved May 1st 2018 by Bishop Thomas Zinkula. This document can be found on the diocesan website: www.davenportdiocese.org.

¹⁷ VIRTUS: Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide. (Tulsa, OK: NCS Risk Services, 2015) preface.

To report child abuse contact: Iowa Department of Human Services Child Abuse Hotline: 800.362.2178 and if it involves clergy or church personnel also notify Alicia Owens, the Victim Assistance Coordinator, 563.349.5002; vac@diodav.org or PO Box 232, Bettendorf, IA 52722-0004.

Conclusion

“With God’s grace, you have to tackle and carry out the impossible... because anybody can do what is possible.”¹⁸

Overview of program & goals

All Saints Faith Formation program is an all-inclusive endeavor, supporting and up-lifting parents in their role as first educators in the Faith. Rather than having an institutional based model for catechesis it is our goal to deliver a systematic as well as dynamic educational program deeply founded in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

Thank you, parents

We want to thank our parents who make so many sacrifices to raise their children in the Faith, fulfilling their vows at marriage and at their children’s baptism. It certainly is not an easy feat, but by many sacrifices and struggles you have made the good fight.¹⁹ Let us help in encouraging you in your efforts at raising wonderful saints as well as becoming a saint. Alas, all are called to be saints of God in the ordinary circumstances of life; life is too short to be anything else.

Entrustment to Mary

This program and all our endeavors are entrusted fully to the Blessed Mother who for her part serves as Mediatrix of all Graces, Co-redemptrix, and Advocate. She who was foretold of at the fall of Adam and Eve, who said ‘yes’ to Jesus before Gabriel the Archangel, who stood at the side of Christ along with the Father offering Jesus for the sins of humankind, who stood quietly and expectantly at the birth of the Church on Pentecost, and who was raised up body and spirit into heaven and is now the queen of heaven.²⁰ She intercedes for her spiritual children who constantly beseech her by use of the Rosary and other heartfelt prayers.

St. Maximilian Kolbe referred to Mary as the ‘Immaculata’ or the ‘Immaculate one’ because of the state of her cooperation with God, serving as a model of discipleship and of holiness.²¹ She constantly sanctified the world around her most beautifully recorded in her visitation of Elizabeth bringing with her Jesus to meet others and at the wedding of Cana when she interceded on behalf of the wedding couple.²² May Mary be our example as well as our guide, constantly pointing towards her son, beckoning each of us closer to him in ardent love.

¹⁸ Josemaria Escriva, *The Forge* (New York: Scepter Publishers Inc., 2002), num. 216.

¹⁹ Cf. 1 Timothy 6:12

²⁰ Cf. Genesis 3:15; Luke 1:38; John 19:25; Acts 1:14; Revelation 12:1; Luke 1:46-55

²¹ H.M. Manteau-Bonamy, *Immaculate Conception and the Holy Spirit: The Marian Teachings of St. Maximilian Kolbe*, (Libertyville, IL: Marytown Press, 2008).

²² Cf. Luke 1:39-56; John 2:1-11