

May 18, 2017

To All Parents of Incoming 6th graders:

Today we **introduce to you a powerful and innovative new approach for the faith formation of your 6th grader.** With the approval and input of our pastor, Fr. Robert Kinnally, the St. Aloysius 6th grade religious education program for 2017-2018 will now only be a Family Faith Formation program.

Family Formation is a partnership: the church working with parents in bringing the love of God to children through the Word of the Lord as revealed in the Bible. We invite parents into this process of faith formation and through this new format pledge to stand and support you every step of the way.

In response to your requests for increased flexibility we have developed a program where bible readings can take place whenever it works best for the family schedule, as part of the fabric of every day family life.

As a parish staff, we will provide you with quality instructional materials and all the resources necessary to present a comprehensive, systematic and age-appropriate process of the Story of Salvation History. The program will consist of:

1. **Selected weekly Bible readings** (posted on starcc.com – click on Religious Education)
2. **4 required classes (with featured speakers) during the year attended by one parent and their 6th grade student.** This is an opportunity for parents and children to learn how God reveals himself through scripture and to grow in faith together:

Saturday	September 16, 2017	9:30am Kick off @ Sacred Heart University
Sunday	November 19, 2017	Meet at the 11:30 am Mass with instruction to follow*
Sunday	January 21, 2018	Meet at the 11:30 am Mass with instruction to follow*
Sunday	March 18, 2018	Meet at the 11:30 am Mass with instruction to follow*

** will take place at St Aloysius church*

3. **2 required Catholic sacred Traditions attended by student** (sacred Tradition is The Word living continuously in the hearts of the faithful. The Holy Spirit works to bring the grace and truth of Christ into our own lives.) *Parents are invited and encouraged to attend:*

Eucharistic Adoration (led by Religious Education) – age appropriate prayer and guided meditation

The Living Nativity – sing in the choir

Stations of The Cross (led by Religious Education) – age appropriate understanding of Jesus' suffering

Holy Thursday Mass of the Last Supper

Good Friday – meditate on the Passion of Our Lord

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available during Advent and Lent. *Your child should plan to go at least once. We will notify you when the dates are set.*

4. Throughout the year, we will provide **review sessions for our students** with an experienced catechist. These may include a movie or additional enrichment to support the family on the following Thursdays from 4:00pm – 5:00pm at St. Aloysius:

October 12, 2017

November 9, 2017

December 14, 2017

January 11, 2018

February 8, 2018

March 8, 2018 (*mandatory for private school students if they will miss March 18, 2018*)

These sessions are available and valuable to your child's understanding of the story of salvation! Questions can be answered and discussion of the readings will also take place. Attendance at these sessions will increase their understanding of what they have read so that they are better prepared to move forward with the required readings.

5. **Six required Survey Monkey questionnaires** will need to be answered by the 6th grade student.

The elements of this Family Faith Formation Program have been developed with flexibility in mind. We realize that families are stretched and stressed in new and challenging ways ... there are new demands today on family life. This program is designed so that parents and children can work together at home ... at your pace ... at a time that is convenient for your schedule.

After you have read this, you may have questions. Please contact Marie Pascale Vandall at 203-652-1170 or at marieccd@starcc.com.

Our pastor, Fr. Rob Kinnally, will host two meetings to answer any questions you may have. Please plan to join us on Thursday, June 1 at 9:30am in the St Aloysius Stapleton Social Hall or 7:00pm in the St Aloysius Stapleton Maple Street Dining Room.

A great deal of thought and prayer went into this undertaking. It is our hope that this new direction will better address the needs of our families and present everyone with the opportunity to know more about God's love for us and mark the beginning of a life-long learning adventure for all of us to grow in faith and holiness. **As Mother Teresa said - "The family that prays together stays together, and if they stay together they will love one another as God has loved each one of them."**

Marie

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