

Faith Formation 2021-2022

One-In-Faith 4: St. Andrew's, St. John's, St. Mary's, St. Michael's

Dear 7th and 8th grade students and families,

Thank you for choosing to participate in faith formation this year – we are blessed to have you with us!

The focus of our faith formation program for 7th and 8th graders is the Bible, the Lectionary, and the Mass.

In the first half of the year, students will have most of their classes (with different guest speakers) and will learn about different liturgical ministries at Mass.

In the second half of the year, the 7th and 8th graders will do service work and have various prayer experiences. Their service work will consist of helping with different Masses throughout the school year. Some of those Masses will be at St. Mary's and some will be at whatever your home parish is. We realize that everyone has different comfort levels with different activities, so we will offer our 7th and 8th graders different choices for which ministry they will help with (lector, usher, computer screens, greeter, sacristan, etc.).

For more information about the 7th/8th grade year, see the **Frequently Asked Questions and the Calendar below!**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Juliann Heller, who is the interim Director of Faith Formation for the One in Faith 4 cluster of parishes (St. Andrew's, St. John's, St. Michael's, and St. Mary's), or Rita Meyer, who is our new part-time administrative assistant. They can be reached at faithformation@stmarysofmelrose.com or by messaging them through the Remind App. Information about faith formation is also posted on the One in Faith parishes website (www.oneinfaith.org) and the Faith Formation Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/OneInFaithUnoEnFeMN/>).

Thank you for being a part of our community, at whatever level you can be -- we look forward to getting to know your student a little bit better this year!

Blessings,

Juliann Heller and Rita Meyer

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Why don't the students have classroom sessions every Wednesday throughout the whole year? Why is the faith formation program "wasting" time doing things like youth Masses, service projects, and fun activities?

A: There is a "theological" (religious) reason for why our faith formation program tries to keep a mix of different kinds of activities: some academic/classroom time, some service opportunities, some prayer experiences, and some activities that are simply for fun, to help build community. We have this mix because as Catholics we believe that we find God in all those areas of our lives – God is present when we study, when we serve others, when we pray, and when we find joy in each other's company.

There are also some "pedagogical" (teaching) reasons for the mix of activities. Everyone learns in different ways. Some students will learn more about God through classroom work, some better through service, etc. In addition, research shows that people learn better when they enjoy what they are doing (or at least when they don't dread it!). So the more we can do to make faith formation enjoyable (by mixing things up!), the better our youth will learn.

Q: What will this mix of activities look like in 7th/8th grade?

A: In 7th/8th grade, there will be a number of sessions of classroom study, and then a number of other opportunities for prayer, service, and fun. We would encourage you to talk with your 7th/8th grader about how all these different

elements are essential ways to deepen their relationship with God and neighbor. It is just as important for them to come to a fun night or a prayer night as it is for them to show up for a class night.

Q: Why are parents and other adults asked to attend some faith formation events?

A: Throughout our faith formation program, we have been trying to do a better job of involving adults. There are a number of reasons for this effort: 1) By involving parents in their children's faith formation, we are better enabling them to fulfill their baptismal promise, to raise their child to know and love God, 2) By involving adults in faith formation, we are setting a good example for our youth – showing them that a person's faith formation doesn't stop after the Sacrament of Confirmation, 3) We are enabling youth and adults to learn from each other – we all have different stories and different gifts and we'd like to help people to share them a bit with each other.

Q: What does this adult involvement look like in 7th/8th grade?

A: For the 7th/8th grade classroom sessions, we ask that one parent/guardian attend at least half of the sessions. If it is impossible for a parent/guardian to attend, due to work schedules or childcare issues, please just let us know!

Calendar:

Fall Semester (most of your classes + start practicing liturgical ministry service work)

9/1 Opening night for all students/families

9/15 Intro night with Bibles

9/22 Class with Fr. Vince

9/29 Class with Deacon Ernie

10/13 Class: Introduction to liturgical ministries + safe environment

10/27 Cemetery prayers

11/10 Practice for liturgical ministries

11/24 Thanksgiving Mass – 1/3 of 7th/8th grade students do liturgical ministries

12/8 Feast of Immaculate Conception – 1/3 of 7th/8th grade students do liturgical ministries

12/4 Second Sunday of Advent – 1/3 of 7th/8th grade students do liturgical ministries

12/1 OR 12/15 Prayer: Advent Reconciliation liturgy

Spring semester: (a few classes + liturgical ministries service work)

1/26 Class with Fr. Marv and hospitality leaders

2/9 Class with Morgan and Antolin/Lulu/Frey

3/2 Ash Wednesday liturgy

3/30 Lent Reconciliation liturgy

Service work: help with 3 Sunday liturgies of your choice, throughout Jan, February, March, April in your home parishes

For this service work, we will have members of our parishes who have volunteered to be mentors for the 7th and 8th graders meet them at the liturgies they've chosen to help with. They will guide the students through being ushers, lectors, computer assistants, greeters, sacristans, etc. at those Masses.