

August 7, 2019

Dear Parents and Families of All Saints Parish,

I hope that you have enjoyed a restful, relaxing and family filled summer; it's not over yet! This summer has been busy for the parish staff. Our wonderful Pastoral Assistant Maureen Cartier let me know that she wants to step away from religious education in order to dedicate all of her time towards her other roles in the parish. At the same time, our Youth Minister Jamie Deignan has stepped up to become our new Faith Formation coordinator.

We have been working hard to be sure that our upcoming year of faith formation is inspired, organized and well suited to your already busy life. We realize that it is so difficult to fit in all that is good for your kiddos, but we also know and believe as Catholics that God is the Highest Good, and parents are the primary teachers of the faith. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) emphasizes this:

“The home is the first school of Christian life and “a school for human enrichment.” Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous — even repeated — forgiveness, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one’s life” (CCC, 1657).

“The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason the family home is rightly called “the domestic church,” a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity” (CCC, 1666).

Faith formation is a life-long process which begins at baptism. In this spirit, we have prayerfully constructed a faith formation program that seeks to stand alongside you, the parents, as you journey with your kids in faith, toward heaven.

This endeavor begins with a simple “motto”: **We are All Saints- Holiness Is Possible.** The double entendre is implied- not only are we All Saints Parish, but we are called to be ALL SAINTS. It is so important that we remember this and strive to be just that. Let’s remember that the saints we recognize- the canonized saints we venerate- were simple, sinful humans like all of us- with a desire for discipleship, holiness and Heaven.

Every Saint had their own family and connection with their local community of faith. Last year, for example, my favorite saint- St. Therese- recently had her parents Rene and Zelig also canonized as saints. With the example of the saints and our families, we are happy to introduce a new “Family Model” of faith formation beginning this year at All Saints Parish.

The goals of our new “Family Faith Formation” program are:

- 1) Help every person to develop and grow in a personal relationship with the True God and His One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church
- 2) Build authentic friendships among fellow believers and their families at our Parish community
- 3) Engage all families from all different backgrounds, and at all levels of spiritual development

At the heart of “Family Catechesis” is the authentic and consistent worship of God at Sunday Mass. The Eucharist is the “source and summit” of our lives as Catholic Christians. Therefore, our teaching and community building will be centered around the Sunday Mass. Religious education must *supplement* the Mass, it cannot *supplant* it.

It is our sincere hope that by growing together as a parish family, you and yours will feel more energized in your faith, confident in helping your kids grow in theirs, and, over time, be willing to share the Good News with new people. We are ALL saints.

Holiness is possible! Please keep this new transition in prayer and keep an open mind as we learn and grow together. These words from scripture will inspire us for the year:

“1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the father loves [also] the one begotten by him. 2 In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments. 3 For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, 4 for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith.” – 1 John 5:1-4

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Christopher Wallace, Pastor

& Mrs. Jamie Deignan, Faith Formation Coordinator