April 24, 2017

Dear Parent(s),

Praying that you have a blessed summer this year! Now that school is almost out, look at your family schedules and calendars for the next school year. Please fill out the attached registration form for the 2017-2018 St. Gall Faith Formation and Youth Ministry programs. Registering now ensures that you get the day and time your family prefers and helps us plan for textbooks and classrooms. You will also see a Returning Family Form and the Program Overview for the coming year. Details will follow at the parent meetings at the first class in September. The Parent Handbook should be available in July! We are hoping to have the Parish calendar finalized soon. Watch the bulletin and the parish website for more details, registration and forms.

We are so excited to be in our new Church campus this June! Offices will be closed during the transition from May 28 to June 2. FFYM offices will be at both locations until the end of Vacation Bible School on June 16.

It is very important that families are actively involved in the faith life of the parish, especially attending Mass on a weekly basis. Everything learned in Faith Formation flows to and from the Sunday (or Saturday evening) Liturgy.

Each year, I have a theme for our Faith Formation year. Last year, it was “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances for this is God’s will for you.”

This year’s theme: “Go and make disciples and teach them all that I have told you to do. And remember that I am with you always until the end of time!” We are on a mission! The themes guide our lessons and activities for the year.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops gives Catechetical Leaders and Directors of Faith Formation/Youth Ministry a catechetical focus for our programs. Opening the Word at the beginning of most classes focuses on the Scriptures for the upcoming Sunday Readings as I try to make connections at the grade level of the students. We will continue to talk about how we can get better at showing mercy and forgiveness.

See the attached overview of FFYM programs and registration forms.

Register by June 30 to ensure days/times will be available for your family.

Catechetical Sunday is September 17 this year. It is the weekend that we commission our Catechists, Aides, Outdoor Safety, Office Assistants and Volunteers with a blessing during Mass. Join us in praying for all of our students and volunteers. We are partners with you as the primary Catechist of your children as we unite to offer them the best faith formation that we can! If you think you might be able to volunteer, the pre-requisite classes on June 6 & 7 are helpful. Come and see how easy it can be to prepare for classes!

St. Gall Office of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry (630) 365-9166
FaithFormation@stgall.com
New Classes and Programs:

- JOYFUL SUNDAYS for families of Grades Pre-K to 7 from 8:30-11:30am only 2 times a month
- Gr. 8/9 Confirmation is now 5-7:30pm on Sunday nights including the 5pm Mass
  
  Tuesday Grade 1-5 will be based on registration and may be cancelled.

2-Year SACRAMENT Programs
Both First Communion and 9th Grade Confirmation students need to submit an original embossed/stamped Baptismal certificate in order to receive their sacraments. It can’t be a copy or your original certificate and should be dated no earlier than 6 months prior to a sacrament. Due dates for Baptismal Certificates for anyone who was not baptized at St. Gall are:

  Confirmation – December 1 and First Communion – January 1

The Liturgy of the Word for Children (LOWC) ministry continues here at St. Gall. This program would be open to all families that attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass and is free! Children leave Mass after the Gloria and return to Mass during the Presentation of the Gifts. Let me know if you would like to take advantage of this opportunity for Pre-K to 1st Grade or if you can help out! We need a few more volunteers to rotate weeks.

If your child attends a Catholic school or is involved in sports or music, please make an appointment with me to create a Faith Formation Plan if you have activity conflicts. Keep in mind that students should not miss more than 5 classes or may repeat that grade. It is extremely important for the Sacrament preparation in Grades 1-2 (First Communion) and 8-9 (Confirmation) to attend all classes and Mass weekly.

Parent meetings will be during the student’s first classes. Keep in mind that there is more than one parent meeting depending on your grade level.

Thank you to all of our Catechists, Aides, Outdoor Safety, Office Assistants and Volunteers. Sharing your faith and witness with our students makes the Faith Formation program possible and enjoyable, too. Please prayerfully consider taking the leap of faith to become a Catechist or Aide. The rewards are amazing! God will give you what you need if you ask Him! I would love to help you get started. It not only helps our kids on their faith journey but it will help your faith in amazing ways, too!

In the Peace and Joy of Christ,

Donna Doherty
Director of Faith Formation, Youth Ministry and the Faith Institute
Encl.
FF/YM 2017-2018 Theme and Programs

Living as Missionary Disciples (USCCB)

1. What is a Disciple?
2. How do I live as a Disciple? Being Christ to others
3. Walk the Talk: What keeps us from living as a missionary disciple?
4. Heroic virtue: forgiveness, mercy, patience and compassion
5. Our Father Prayer – The Perfect Prayer

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Catechetical Theme:** Peter approached Jesus and asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times." Mt 18:21-12 The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

2017-2018 FF/YM Scripture:

"Go and make disciples and teach them all that I have told you to do. And remember that I am with you always until the end of time!" – Jesus Mt28:19-20

Then Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” Mt 28:19-20

**FF/YM Discipleship Plan**

Program Highlights

- Vacation Bible School – partner with St. Mary/Maple Park and Ss. Peter & Paul/Virgil
- Children’s Bulletins for ages 3-6 and 7-12 available at all Masses!
- Liturgy of the Word for Children – Year Round – during the 8:30am Mass for Pre-K to 1st Grade. We need more volunteers!
- JOYFUL SUNDAYS for families with Grades Pre-K to 7 – 8:30am-11:30am 2x a month
- Opening the Word Scripture Exegesis at the beginning of classes
- First Reconciliation and Eucharist – Sacrament meeting, Family Reconciliation Retreat and 2 parent meetings
- Tuesday Class Times (may be cancelled due to low enrollment)
- Grade level projects: 5 – Fruits of the Holy Spirit Story, 6 – Works of Mercy Saint Project, 7 – Jesus Scripture Stories (storytelling – tech or not!), 8 – Catholics Who Changed the World (Science, Astrology, Medicine, Geology, Botany, Agriculture and Animals) with parent help, 9 – Expression of Faith Projects
- Youth Nites – Grades 6-7 Wednesdays 6:00-7:30pm
- Eucharistic Adoration on Wednesdays for Gr. 6-7 from 7:00-7:30pm 1x a month
- Family Mass and Dinner – service to parish along with themed/seasonal activities
- Retreats for all grade levels (Gr1-5, 6-8 and 9-12) and Catechists
- Create more interaction between grade levels (i.e., skits, help, etc.)
- Parent Newsletters
- Road trips and service opportunities

**Class Days/Times**

**JOYFUL SUNDAYS – new!**
8:30-11:30am – 2x a month for families with Grades Pre-K to 7 (8:30am Mass)

**CONFIRMATION Gr. 8/9**
5-7:30pm – 2x a month (5pm Mass)

**Tuesday**
Grades 1-5 4:30-5:45pm (based on registration)

**Wednesday**
Grades 1-5 – 4:30-5:45pm
Grades 6-7 – 6:00-7:30pm

~Register by June 30 to ensure programs’ days and times!

St. Gall Office of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry (630) 365-9166
FaithFormation@stgall.com
NEW SUNDAY PROGRAM – 8:30am-11:30am – 2x a month:

- **Joyful Sundays** – begins with 8:30am Mass
  - Pre-K to 7 (8/9 Confirmation on Sunday nights)
  - Continental breakfast/snacks
  - Large group activities – based on the lessons/spiral curriculum with adults
  - Breakout session for age groups
  - Adults help lead the hands-on activities for an age group - assigned
  - Catechist team (6 trained) teach the lesson/theme for their age group
  - Can have adult breakout sessions as needed

**SACRAMENTS**

**First Reconciliation and First Communion**

- **Tuesday or Wednesday 4:30-5:45pm or JOYFUL SUNDAYS 8:30-11:30am (8:30am Mass)**
- Go Seek Find Program from St. Mary’s Press
- Includes Bible to be used until Grade 5 – Bible based!
- Take Home Worksheets
- Treasure Map and Backpack
- Retreats and Family Meetings

**Confirmation Gr. 8 & 9 – Sundays 5-7:30pm**

- 5:00pm Mass – students should be attending weekly Mass in preparation of receiving the Sacrament
- Light meal/snacks
- **Only 2x a month**
- Large group activities (Gr. 8-9 together)
- Gr. 9 Sessions for parents and sponsors (e.g., JPII Renewal Center)
- Deacon Bill Johnson brings Marmion High School team
- Ministry leaders and other adults as guest group leaders or presenters for Gr. 9 Sessions
- Ministry Shadowing Program
- St. Gall Confirmation Retreat

**Grade 8 – Decision Point and Life of Grace from the Faith and Life Series by Ignatius Press**

**Grade 9** – Includes 1 parent, grandparent or Sponsor. Some classes include Candidate and Sponsor activities.

Fr. DiTomo and I will use the Youcat and a combination of Chosen by Ascension Press (videos/discussion), Confirmation by RCL Benziger (textbooks for reference), Catholic Youth Bible St. Mary’s Press Bible Study/Timeline and Altaration by Ascension Press to make this a very faith-filled and fruitful Sacrament year!