



August 21st, 2026

Dear Faith Formation Families,

The summer breezes are warm right now, but as we know the new school year is right around the corner. We hope that you have had a very blessed summer! **Please join us for Mass on Sunday, September 20th to celebrate Catechetical Sunday. We will bless both catechists and parents acknowledging your role in your children's learning and growing in faith. After the 9:00 AM Mass in Saint Francis Hall at around 10:15 AM, we will have our faith formation welcome event. Come and learn about this year's Faith Formation.** We are very excited to share this year's program!

Our faith formation this year will take place on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 – 7:45 PM for all grades. We offer a brief summary of each program below. More detailed information for each program will be presented at the welcome event.

First Reconciliation and First Communion

Our First Reconciliation and First Communion preparation is a one-year course for students in 2nd grade. We will use the *Word of Life* curriculum from Augustine Institute. As you may know, Archbishop Hebda is asking for an emphasis on parents as primary educators of their children in the faith. We want to help you and make it an enjoyable process! We will have parents come twice per month to work with their children on the lessons. Please see the enclosed schedule for these dates. Our catechists will be eager to help you! This year, First Reconciliation will take place on Saturday, February 6th beginning at 9:30 AM and First Communion will take place on Sunday, May 2nd at the 9:00 AM Mass unless another Mass is requested.

After First Communion: Grades 3, 4, and 5

We are very excited to present this year's program for these elementary grades! Father Tony will lead this group with the help of other parents. We will use the *A Family of Faith* curriculum from Sophia Press. As with first sacraments, our vision will involve helping parents to pass their faith to their children at these young ages. We will begin a typical month with teaching on the first Wednesday by Father Tony to either the group of parents with their children present or to the group of parents with children learning with catechists separately that evening. In the second week, we will have parents come to work on the lessons with their children on-site, with the support of the catechists and the group as a whole community of faith learning together. In the third week, we will have parents complete brief lessons at home with their children. Depending on the month, the fourth week will involve either a vacation break or a family night planned for all faith formation families. Father Tony looks forward to this experience with you! We are asking Catholic school families to give strong consideration to participating! If your child is seeking First Reconciliation and First Eucharist at these ages, we will offer supplemental instruction and preparation for these sacraments in addition to our Wednesday classes.



Middle School: Grades 6, 7, and 8

Our middle school program for grades 6, 7, and 8 will remain mostly unchanged from last year. We will again use the *Word of Life* curriculum from Augustine Institute. At this particular time, we are considering and planning for two or three parents evenings. Our three teachers from last year will be returning and plan to have the students enact the Stations of the Cross for our entire faith formation that was well-received and that allowed us to prayerfully participate in this devotion. Again, if your child is seeking First Reconciliation and First Eucharist at these ages, we will offer supplemental instruction and preparation for these sacraments in addition to these Wednesday classes.

Confirmation: Grades 9 and up

Our Confirmation preparation is a two-year program for 9th and 10th grade students. We will be using YDisciple's Confirmation Toolkit series for Year I and continue with *The Chosen* series by Ascension Press for Year II. This year, we are emphasizing small groups in order to allow group leaders to become better acquainted with their youth and to help youth feel comfortable learning and sharing their faith in ways in which they are best heard and acknowledged. We will also have a parent night on October 28th with the theme of AI and the use of technology and another parent night on April 7th as Confirmation nears.

For all grades, we are planning family nights from time to time such as the Feed My Starving Children event and our Advent Fair. Of course, the best way to form our children and youth in the faith is to come to holy Mass on Sundays. Please let Jesus do His work in you as families! We will also announce more opportunities to join those becoming Catholic or receiving sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, or Eucharist as an adult (OCIA) on Wednesdays in Saint Francis Hall. We are planning a series on prayer.

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, September 20th as the year begins! You will have the opportunity to meet the catechists and spend time in fellowship with other families. We look forward also to receiving your registrations for our faith formation program. Your promptness in registering will help us plan well and make the purchases we need of books, etc. Please contact us at 952-227-4000 with questions that you may have.

Father Tony VanderLoop
Pastor

Viviana Sotro
Latino Ministry and Family Life Coordinator