

2020-2021 Faith Formation @ St. Max Rationale

The past weeks and months have been difficult for us all. The sudden pause to our lives three months ago was just the beginning of a new normal and uncertainty regarding the future. Through it all, we have remained grateful for your efforts of keeping the faith alive in your homes. You are truly inspiring! We do believe that the Holy Spirit guides and energizes us to continue our work, but your kind words and encouragement also bring joy and purpose to our efforts. Thank you! We are very excited to be starting anew with you this coming fall. Keep reading to see how we will move ahead with faith formation in 2020-2021.

As you know, public Masses in the Archdiocese have resumed, but with the caveat that this will not be a “return to normal.” Archbishop Schnurr has directed that health and safety requirements and recommendations must continue to be followed. Among these are social distancing, use of masks, and concern for the most vulnerable. [See the archbishop’s full letter here.](#) These restrictions are currently in place for the entire St. Max campus, including the complex where we hold our weekly Early Childhood and RFY Grade 1-8 classes. Therefore, it may come as no surprise to you, that our youth formation offerings will look different in the 2020-2021 year. **We will not be offering weekly in-person classes for RFY grade 1-8 or Early Childhood this academic year. Catechesis will be mostly family-based in the home with an in-person option for middle schoolers.** We do understand the struggle, workload, and anxiety that many of you have experienced due to COVID-19. Losing something familiar and comfortable brings disappointment and frustration, but we are actually really excited for the potential rewards that alternatives can bring to our parish community. A plan for faith formation has been developed with the following ideas in mind:

1. **Certainty:** We want you to be certain that faith formation will happen this coming year with a reliable schedule in place. Our plan will work regardless of possible changes in safety guidelines. Also keep in mind that our team now has direction and certainty for the year. Establishing a set plan means that we have already begun work to prepare for a quality experience.
2. **The Journey:** We have thought long and hard about evangelization/catechetical opportunities we have always wanted to provide for you, but time did not allow. We paid particular attention to the unique faith journeys of our students and families; students are not all in the same place spiritually, even though they may be in the same grade level. We also considered gaps in our program, how to fill them, and ways to create uniformity between our classroom and family home study programs.
3. **Safety:** We want to keep your children and our volunteer catechists healthy. The plan we have in place will be the best option for the common good.
4. **Simple and Uplifting:** Encompassing all the ideas above leads me to the best part! These formation experiences are designed to be simple, enjoyable, and engaging for your family. All can be done from your home and on your own time schedule! Don’t worry that you don’t ‘know enough’ to help your child in their faith. We will provide all that you need and really you just need to be honest in your pursuit of a relationship with our Lord. We even have some on-site fun planned throughout the year!
5. **Fuel for YOUR journey:** With the current situation we know how hard it can be to carve out time for your own spiritual journey. That is why all of our programs will be aimed at the family and will provide opportunities to you to learn and grow alongside your child.

Since this is new to our team as well, we expect to be fine tuning details as the year progresses. Please be patient with us as we strive to make this year the best experience possible for you.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me. I am excited to be with you on the journey!

God bless you.

Mary Lou