

FAITH FORMATION NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2021



A Beautiful Day at Faith Formation

Happy Advent!



The Webb "Jesse Tree"

Advent is upon us! The word "Advent" actually means "coming" because we are in the time of the year that we prepare for the coming of Christ. Advent is like Lent's cousin: they are both seasons where we prepare for God to do something incredible in the world. They are both times to remember what God has done for us in keeping his promises to us, and for every gift and blessing that he has given us. Just like Lent, this is a time of year where it is good to pray, fast, and to offer our sins to God in the Sacrament of Confession. While it is better to go a bit more frequently, finding forgiveness and healing in Confession is very appropriate during Lent and Advent. Please find time to take your children who have had their first confession to partake of the sacrament again before Christmas.

ADVENT FAMILY SUGGESTION: JESSE TREE

One great way to keep in step with this time of preparation is to take a journey through Jesus' family tree and retell the story of how we got from the Garden of Eden at the beginning of the world, to the stable in Bethlehem. One great tradition to guide us is the Jesse Tree. It is much like an Advent Calendar, but you read a short passage of Scripture and hang up an ornament that goes along with it. There is a version of this in the back of this newsletter (If viewing on the website, it is a separate PDF). They give you the symbols and the readings to do for each day. You can buy the ornaments online or make it a family craft night where you make the ornaments. My wife and I used oven-bakeable clay to make ours (see my "Root of Jesse" stump ornament above). You can combine it with an advent meditation (there are many books and online resources) or you can just discuss the readings. Either way, this is an excellent way to get into the true spirit of Advent! O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel!

SACRAMENTS

The Extreme Gifts of God's Grace

Baptisms!

An extinguished Easter Candle is a good sign. It usually means God has just done something marvelous. In this case, we celebrated the Baptism of four babies this month. Congratulations to the families of Ronan, Harrison, Ariana, and Brienna! May God bless the parents and Godparents to guard the light that has just been entrusted to them in these new children of God.



FAITH IN ACTION

Loving God – Loving our Neighbor

Christmas Caroling for 3rd-5th Graders

We have an opportunity to take 3rd-5th graders to Elderwood Senior Living Center to do Christmas caroling. The flier will be in the back of this newsletter. Please let us know ASAP if you have 3rd-5th graders who would like to come!

Children's Masses are back!

Starting in January, we are going to start having a monthly Children's Mass! We will feature specific grades of the faith formation kids to participate in different parts of the Mass. Our first day is

Sunday, January 16th at the Noon Mass

6th-8th grade will be taking the various roles at this Mass

(All Children 3rd Grade and up are invited to be a part of the children's Choir)

More information to be released soon!

Children's Choir.

All Children from the parish in 3rd grade and up are invited to be a part of the children's choir. The Children's Mass on January 16th will feature this renewed ministry again. Please contact Chuck Basil for details. His contact information is cbasil@sjvop.org or 716-860-6281.

Thanksgiving Food Drive and Candy for Carly's Club Kids



Great job to everyone who participated in this! We lined the walls with Thanksgiving food and we collected several large boxes worth of candy for pediatric cancer patients! Great job!

Volunteers Requested for Faith Formation

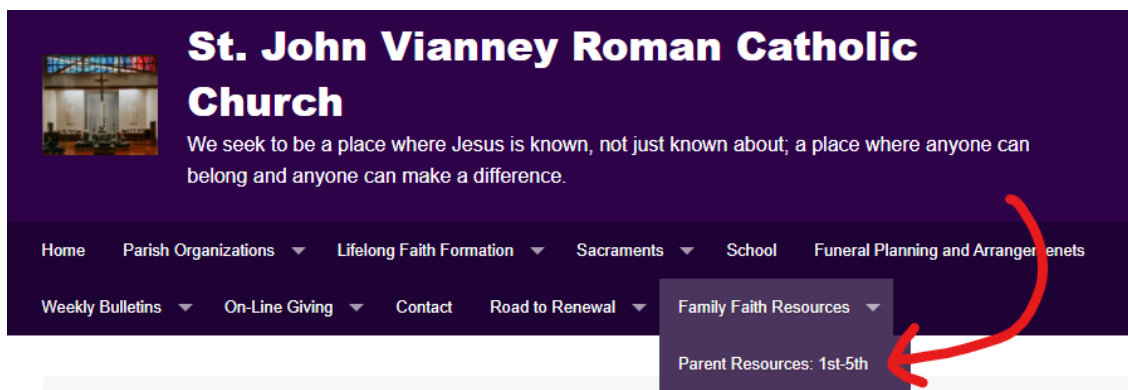
We are always looking for new volunteers for our faith formation programs for all ages. please give Brady Webb a call or an email if you are curious. Brady's office number is 608-6562 and his email is bwebb@sjvop.org.

OTHER NEWS

Some other things you might want to know

December Family Faith Formation Recap

For those who couldn't make it, at our monthly Family Faith Formation Day we covered **segments 5 and 6 of the workshop entitled "A Foundational Vision: The Community of the Family."** Families that cannot attend these days are asked to keep up with which workshops and videos. All parishioners and faith formation families are more than welcome to make a free account with the *Catechetical Institute*. There are detailed instructions on how to do this on the parish website (saintjohnvianney.com) here:



Parish Highlights: Advent Retreat and Christmas Caroling!

Please take a look at the parish bulletin inserts for this week for details concerning these two opportunities.