

Welcome to Families Sharing Faith 2018-19!

The purpose of this program is to form faith communities. We suggest spending time with the other families getting to know each other. Maybe stop for coffee and donuts after a Mass you attend, or meet for dinner before an evening activity. I think you get the idea. I think with the redesign of these activities and excursions it is possible that no one has to have the group over to their house if that isn't in their comfort zone. We hope you will find fun and faith in the activities below.

This program has two steps:

1. If you haven't already, you will need to stop by our office to get your children's books. Each family is responsible for their children completing the chapters of the Finding God Book and taking the online quiz at the end of each chapter. The date of the week each chapter is to be completed by is on the front of the book. You are welcome to work ahead. I will send the links to the online quizzes the week before the first date each month. You may request and quiz early. Even if you get the link early you will still get the group email each month. Please don't be concerned thinking we didn't get the grade for a quiz taken, these go out automatically to the entire registered group. If you get behind please try to be caught up by Chapter 15, the Christmas lesson.
2. This year we have changed your group gatherings a bit. Below you will find a list of things to do. We ask that your group meet 8 times. The first meeting should just be the adults getting together to plan what the other 7 gatherings will look like. Pick seven things from the list to be your planned agenda. Once you have decided that, even if the dates are just estimated please have one family in the group send an email to Jenny Golinski at jgolinski@sjvop.org. The email should include the family names of the members of your group and the planned schedule for this year. Please email this by October 15th. At the end of the year complete the sign off sheet below and return it to our office by April 30.

Pick 7 items for your group to complete this year:

1. Attend Stations of the cross
2. Attend the Parish reconciliation service in Advent or Lent
3. Attend a Taizé prayer service
4. Attend a Mass together at St. Martin de Porres
5. Attend Lessons in Carols – Wednesday Dec 12 7:00pm.
6. Have the adults of your group attend the 3 night parish retreat together April 8 ,9, and 10.
7. Attend and participate in the Chain for Life on Niagara Falls Blvd October 7 at 2:00
8. Attend the Chrism Mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral April 16 at 7:00pm
9. Attend the Living Nativity
10. Visit OLV museum and tour
11. Visit Our Lady of Fatima shrine
12. Visit the Our Lady help of Christians Shrine or Visit St. Anthony of Padua
13. Visit the Creation Walk in Marilla
14. Visit St Joseph's Cathedral and take the tour
15. Visit the St. John Neumann Museum in Kenmore.
16. Visit the St. John Gualbert Reliquary
17. Volunteer at St. Vincent de Paul soup kitchen
18. Volunteer at St. Luke's mission of Mercy
19. Volunteer at the Response to Love Center
20. Volunteer to help at Peaceprints filling Christmas bags for inmates Friday December 7
21. Watch the movie Star
22. Watch the movie Prince of Egypt
23. Watch the movie Soul Surfer
24. Have a Saint movie night -Borrow a movie from our lending library.
25. Pray the Rosary

1. Stations of the Cross:

Each Friday during lent Stations of the Cross is held at the parish. The time for 2019 is yet to be announced but will be listed in the bulletin. This is a reading of the crucifixion and death of Jesus. This is the story/ prayer that leads us through Jesus' suffering to his resurrection celebrated at Easter; a suffering he goes through for our benefit in order to offer us salvation. There are several forms of Stations of the Cross and I recommend that if a "living stations", which is the acting out of the stations, becomes available, it is worth seeing.

Discussion questions:

1. Jesus fell three times. When have you had something very difficult to do where you didn't succeed at first but kept on going?
2. How do you think Jesus' mother Mary was feeling during this time?

2. Parish reconciliation service

The parish holds a reconciliation service with many visiting priests as well as our priests. Usually this is held on a Monday night during Advent and again during Lent. It is recommended that Catholics receive the sacrament of Reconciliation regularly. While children before the 1st Reconciliation in grade two may not receive the sacrament, it is still worthwhile to take them to the service. When they see their parents go to reconciliation they become comfortable with the idea that receiving God's forgiveness is a gift and not something to be afraid of.

Discussion questions:

1. Why do you think Jesus wants to go to confession?(answer: he wants us to acknowledge our sins and ask for forgiveness)
2. Why does Jesus want to forgive us? Do you ever think there is a time he wouldn't want to forgive us? (answer: If we aren't sorry for what we have done or if we intend to keep on doing the same sinful act)

3. Taizé prayer service

These usually happen during advent and can be found listed in the WNY Catholic newspaper found monthly in the back of church. A Taizé worship service involves sung and chanted prayers, meditation, a period of silence, liturgical readings, and icons. There is no preaching. The style of prayer practiced at Taizé in France has attracted many worshipers from around the globe and from many different Christian denominations. The prayers consist of "short chants", repeated again and again, and words are sung over many times.

Discussion questions:

1. What did you think of this type of prayer?
2. Did you participate in the songs? Why or why not?

4. Attend Mass together at St. Martin de Porres (this is not St. Martin of Tours in South Buffalo) 555 Northampton St. Buffalo 14208. The 9:00am Mass usually starts a few minutes late. The choir and the instrumentation are truly a gem in our diocese but definitely different than most parishes.

Discussion questions:

1. What did you see that was different at this Mass?
2. Did you feel out of place or welcomed at this church? Why?

5. Lessons in Carols

In December our parish choir will present Lessons in Carols. This event tells the Nativity story in Song and Word. A wonderful Lenten Tradition! Watch the bulletin for the date this year.

Discussion questions:

1. What did you like about this event? Were you able to follow the story?
2. What was the last song sung? Why do you think they chose that song?

6. Parish retreat

Deacon Bill Hynes will preach at the Masses April 6 and 7 and give a parish retreat Monday – Wednesday April 8, 9, and 10.

Discussion with your group:

1. Name one thing you will take away from these nights
2. What is one item you learned or experienced you would like to share with your children?

7. Chain for Life

October 7 hundreds of Catholics will line up on Niagara Falls Blvd with signs supporting life. People at this event are showing their support and belief that there is value and dignity in every unborn person because they, like you and I, are made in the likeness and image of God. If you have questions about this event or topic please call the pro-life office at the diocese 847-2205

1. Why do you think that the Chain for life is important?
2. Do you think that so many people showing what they believe together can help to change the mind of someone who doesn't agree with you?

8. The Chrism Mass

St Joseph's Cathedral 50 Franklin St. Buffalo 854-5855

This Mass is held at the center of every diocese during Holy Week. Our diocese holds this Mass on Tuesday night of Holy week at 7:00pm in St. Joseph's Cathedral downtown. (Mass will last until 8:30-9:00 which may be too late for younger children.) This year that is April 16. At this Mass the oils used for sacraments by the parish are consecrated. There are 3 oils. The oil of the catechumens is used for anointing at Baptism. The oil of the sick is used for the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. Finally the Chrism, is the oil used for Baptism, Confirmation and Holy orders. The Chrism, during the consecration has Balsam added to it giving it a distinctive aroma which you may remember from the smell of your child's head the day of their baptism. A great time to attend this Mass is the year you have a child being Confirmed as they will see the oil blessed for their Confirmation.

Discussion questions:

1. What about this Mass made it special and different from the Mass you attend on Sunday?- some possible answers: blessing the oils, the priests renewing their priestly vows, the dismissal of the catechumens who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil, the large number of priests and deacons in attendance, the Bishop has a special chair that is only for him.
2. After Mass approach the Sanctuary (Altar area) and look at the Bishops Chair. What symbols do you see on the Coat of Arms? What do you think those symbols represent? Here is a description of what is on there:

Coat of Arms



Blazon

Arms impaled. Dexter: Argent, upon a mount, issuant from base Vert, a North American buffalo Gules, holding, upon a staff Or, a burgee of the Savior (red cross upon white), that extends into a chief of the last. Sinister: Vert, a lion Rampant combatant Or; upon a chief chevronny, Azure and Argent, the monogram of Mary, of the second.

Significance

The episcopal heraldic achievement, or bishop's coat of arms, is composed of a shield, which is the central and most important part of the design, a scroll with a motto and the external ornamentation. The design is described (blazoned) as if the description was being given by the bearer (from behind) with the shield being worn on the left arms. Thus, it must be remembered, where it applies, as the device is viewed from the front that the terms sinister and dexter are reversed.

By heraldic tradition, the arms of the bishop of a diocese, called a "diocesan bishop" are joined (impaled) with the arms of his jurisdiction, in this case the Diocese of Buffalo, that are seen in the dexter impalement (left side) of the design.

These arms are composed of a silver (white) field on which is displayed a red North American buffalo, standing upon a green mound, to represent the world, and the buffalo is holding in his forepaw a gold (yellow) staff that extends into a red chief (upper one-third of the design) that bears the burgee (a flag with a notch in the end) of The Savior. This pennant is in the traditional colors of a red cross on a silver (white) background.

For his personal arms, His Excellency, Bishop Malone has modified slightly the arms that he adopted upon his being chosen to receive the fullness of Christ's priesthood when he was called to be an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Boston and which he retained during his tenure as Bishop of Portland, in Maine.

These arms are composed of two sections. The main section is green on which is presented a gold (yellow) lion rampant, combatant (standing on his hind-paws, as if in battle). This is the main charge of the Malone family coat of arms. The chief of his personal arms is chevronny of blue and silver (white) to simulate a portion of a "carpenter's square," honoring St. Joseph, patron saint of the Diocese of Buffalo, and upon that chevronny field is the charge called "the monogram of Mary" (an interlaced "A" and "M" for AUSPICE MARIA, which means "Under the protection of Mary") to honor and acknowledge His Excellency's deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

For his motto Bishop Malone has retained the phrase "LIVE THE TRUTH IN LOVE." With this phrase, His Excellency, Bishop Malone expresses that as Christians, all of us are called upon to proclaim the truth that is Jesus Christ and his message, especially by the witness of our lives.

The achievement is completed by the external ornamentation which are a gold processional cross, that is placed in back of the shield and which extends above and below the shield, and the pontifical hat, called a "gallero," with its six tassels in three rows on either side of the shield, all in green. These are the heraldic insignia of a prelate of the rank of bishop, by instruction of The Holy See, of March 31, 1969.

By: Deacon Paul J. Sullivan

The author and designer respectfully request appropriate acknowledgement for the public use of these efforts. Rev. Mr. Sullivan is a Deacon of the Diocese of Providence (RI-USA)

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9. Attend a Living Nativity

St. John Vianney HSA is planning a drive through Living Nativity. See the bulletin for dates and times.

Another great option is the walk through Living Nativity at St. Gregory the Great in Williamsville Dec 26 and 27 from 7:00-9:00. Begin in the church. Groups start about every 10 minutes. 250 St. Gregory Ct. Williamsville, NY 14221 (next to Millard Fillmore Hospital) 688-5678. This group has been putting on this Nativity for years and it really is impressive.

1. Why do you think Jesus came to earth as a baby?
2. Do you think it was hard for Mary to believe she would be the mother of God?

10. Our Lady of Victory

769 Ridge Rd. Buffalo 14218, 828-9444

See the Museum telling the story of Venerable Nelson Baker, a priest from the diocese of Buffalo, and his feat in building the Basilica without debt. Tour the church and say a prayer at Fr. Baker's tomb for his cause for sainthood. If you are looking for a catholic gift they also have a great selection in their gift shop. Tours of the church are held on Sunday at 1:00- no reservations needed. As a group pray the prayer for the cause of Fr. Baker being named a saint. Prayer cards can be found up in the area where Fr. Baker is entombed.

1. What are two things Fr. Baker did that make people think he is a Saint?
2. What did you like best about what you saw in the church?

11. Our Lady of Fatima Shrine

1023 Swann Rd. Lewiston NY 14174, 754-7489

The Shrine, located in Lewiston, is beautiful. The center of the property is a large pool surrounded by lights which form the beads of a giant rosary. There are many statues of saints on the grounds and every child loves climbing the church steps to the huge statue of Our Lady of Fatima. Pick a nice weather day so you can fully see the grounds. There is a map telling of the saints statues available on their website. The church ceiling is the top of the earth. The other time you might enjoy visiting is for their festival of lights from Thanksgiving weekend to Jan 1. Special events are also listed on their website including festivals where visitors pray the rosary around the giant rosary pool outdoors. A huge lit nativity is the center of their holiday décor. And while you are there, this shrine has a very reasonably priced cafeteria and one of the best catholic gift shops (books, statues, medals, jewelry, 1st communion gifts, wedding gifts and doesn't every child need a glow in the dark rosary ;)?

Discussion questions:

1. If you go for the festival of lights- Is this like a Nativity scene you've seen before? What is different about their outdoor nativity scene?
2. If you go in warmer weather – before visiting, read the story of Our Lady of Fatima. Can you find the statue of the children who saw the Blessed Mother?
3. What is different about the Church?
4. Light a candle in one of the shrines and pray for a family intention.

12. Our Lady Help of Christians shrine

This Shrine at the corner of Union Rd and Genesee St (4125 Union Rd) in Cheektowaga includes an outdoor grotto and beautiful small chapel (the church building to the right of the main church). It is often referred to by the name Chapel as it was at one time the only chapel in WNY. Check out the grounds and attend the 1:30 Sunday Mass in the chapel which is said in Latin but uses the current Rite of the church (the priests faces the people).

or

St. Anthony of Padua parish

This parish is located behind city hall in downtown Buffalo(160 Court St). Attend the 9:00am Mass to see what Mass looked like prior to the 2nd Vatican Council. Not only is the Mass done in Latin but the priest faces away from the people. This is the reason bells were used during the consecration. This is the moment when the priest lifted the Eucharist and the bells sounded to tell the people that this was Jesus before them- kind of like trumpets blaring to announce royalty. Some churches still use bells today but it is no longer necessary since we can see what is happening and are being told what is happening in English.

Discussion questions:

1. How did you feel about the Mass being in Latin?
2. Why do you think the Bishops at the Second Vatican Council decided that each country could have a Mass in their own language?
3. Why do you think more people attended Mass when it was in Latin than they do today?

13. Creation Walk

1406 Two Rod Rd , Marilla, New York 14102 , 652-7429

Nature is something we often look at without realizing that God has made everything and everyone with purpose. It's created just as he intended. As you walk this nature trail see if you can find things that are unusual, unique or even patterns in nature...trees in straight lines, sounds, plants that connect to each other or seem to be reaching to you.

Together say the following prayer:

*God of the universe,
We thank You for Your many good gifts -
For the beauty of Creation and its rich and varied fruits,
For clean water and fresh air, for food and shelter, animals and plants.*

*Forgive us for the times we have taken the earth's resources
for granted
And wasted what You have given us.
Transform our hearts and minds
So that we would learn to care and share,
To touch the earth with gentleness and with love,
Respecting all living things.*

*We pray for all those who suffer as a result of our waste,
greed and indifference,
And we pray that the day would come when everyone has enough
food and clean water.*

*Help us to respect the rights of all people and all species
And help us to willingly share your gifts
Today and always. Amen.*

- Fiona Murdoch, Eco-Congregation Ireland

14. St. Joseph's Cathedral is the spiritual center of the Diocese of Buffalo. Call to arrange your tour.

50 Franklin St., Buffalo, NY 14202 - (716) 854-5855

Questions to discover on the tour:

1. What kind of bird is in the center of the round window at the front of the church (hint: it is NOT a dove)? Google or ask your tour guide the symbolism of that bird and why it would be in a Catholic church
2. Which Bishops are buried there?

15. St. John Neumann Museum

St. John the Baptist 1085 Englewood Ave Tonawanda NY 14223, 873-1122

This museum is located in St. John the Baptist church in Kenmore. Learn about the Saint who resided at, and started various parishes around Buffalo.

Search: what parishes in the diocese of Buffalo were started by St. John Neumann?

16. St. John Gualbert Reliquary

St John Gualbert church 83 Gualbert St. Cheektowaga 14211, 892-5746

A diocesan shrine with an extensive collection of relics. The relics are only available to visit after the Saturday 4:30 Mass and Sunday after the 9 and noon Masses. Please go to Mass otherwise Father may not know to keep the building open so you can have time with the relics. (They are available in between Masses but be aware the 10:30 Mass is said in Polish so you probably want to attend 4:30, 9:00 or noon) The list of Saints is on the Faith Formation website.- Before you go have each family look up 3 of the saints to share their stories with the others. Then when you look at the relics try to find the relics of the saints you looked up. **The list of saints is quite long and will be available as a separate document on the same page of our website you got this packet from.**

17. St. Vincent de Paul soup kitchen & store

St. Vincent de Paul Society is looking for volunteers to assist our brothers and sisters in need.

If you are interested, please call (716) 882-3360

1298 Main Street

Buffalo, New York 14209

18. St. Luke's Mission of Mercy

Address: 325 Walden Ave, Buffalo NY 14211 Volunteer phone line Call Karen 625-6174

19. Response to Love Center

Address: 130 Kosciuszko St. Buffalo, NY 14212 Phone: Kathleen, volunteer coordinator at 716-894-7030ext.105

20. Peaceprints

Help fill the bags of small items that will be given to the inmates of local prisons at Christmas time. The people who run this tell me that it is a great family volunteering opportunity and that families enjoy it so much they come back year after year. To volunteer call please contact our Administrative Offices at 716-856-6131 and ask for Jennifer or email info@peaceprintswny.org.

21. Gather to watch the movie *Star*, available to rent or Netflix, unfortunately we don't have this movie in our lending library.

Which of the characters did you like best? Why?

What feelings did you experience in this movie?

A new star appears. Why is this star different? What is so special about it?

What does Messiah mean? Who is the Messiah? Why is he important?

Why does Bo pray? Do you pray? How do you pray? Is prayer important?

Is Dave a good friend to Bo? Why? What do we learn about friendship?

What do you think about the dogs? Why do you think the animals save them? Would you save them? Explain.

Discuss that Bo wants to be part of something important in his life but he keeps missing out on what he thinks is important. In the end he discovers he is part of something important but he didn't even realize it.

Discuss Mary's quote: "just because God has a plan doesn't mean it will be easy."

(Discussion questions from <https://www.cboqkids.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/the-star-movie-discussion-guide.pdf>)

22. Gather to watch the movie Prince of Egypt, available to rent or Netflix, unfortunately we don't have this movie in our lending library.

Prince of Egypt – Video Discussion Guide

1. What attracts Moses' attention when he is out tending his flock? **A burning bush- on fire but not being consumed**
2. What does God tell Moses to do? Who are the people he is sent to free and where are they being held in slavery? **To lead the Hebrew people out of slavery in Egypt**
3. How does Moses try to convince Pharaoh and his court of God's power? **He throws his staff to the floor and it turns into a snake.**
4. How does Pharaoh respond to Moses' "trick?" **He has his magicians perform the same, if not, more powerful magic tricks.**
5. What does God send to frighten the Egyptians? **The Ten Plagues**
6. What is the first plague? **Turning the Nile River to blood**
7. What other plagues are shown? **Frogs, gnats, flies, pestilence (livestock dies), boils, hail, locusts, darkness**
8. What is the final plague? **The death of every Firstborn**
9. How are the Hebrew people saved from the final plague? What is that event called? **By spreading the blood of a lamb on their doorposts so the angel of death would pass over. This event is called The Passover**
10. What do we call the event of the Hebrew people leaving Egypt and heading for the Promised Land? **The Exodus**
11. Who comes chasing after the Hebrew people? What stands in the way of the Hebrew people escaping? **Pharaoh's armies; The Red Sea**
12. What does God do to allow the Hebrew people to escape? **He tells Moses to raise his arms and He parts the waters of the Red Sea**
13. What happens to Pharaoh's armies as they try to follow? **The water flows back and destroys them**
14. What mountain does Moses come down from? What does he have in his hands? **Mount Sinai; the Ten Commandments**
15. What do you think the theme of this movie is? **The theme is that when we are obedient to God he will provide us with what we need.**

23. Gather to watch the movie *Soul Surfer*, available to rent or Netflix, unfortunately we don't have this movie in our lending library. (Recommended for older children as the movie does include a shark attack on a young woman near the beginning of the movie. Middle school age children should love it. This movie shows the main character's recovery - physically, mentally and spiritually)

Movie Small Group Discussion Questions
Soul Surfer



Movie Summary: 13 year-old Bethany Hamilton is a champion surfer who was born to be in the water. But after a fun night out night surfing and what should be a fun day in the water, she is attacked by a shark and loses her arm. Rushed to the hospital, she remains calm, and maintains her faith in God. Now she has to re-learn how to do everything with only one arm - including how to surf. It will take her friends, family, and her Christian faith to get her back into the water, but if that is where she is meant to be, she will find a way to get there.

Discussion Questions:

2. How do you think most people today would respond to a tragedy like losing an arm?
3. How do you think you would respond?
4. How did Bethany's faith help her respond?
5. In Philippians 4:13 when it says "I can do all things"... what does "all" mean?
6. How does that affect your confidence level knowing that you've got a God on your side who can bring hope out of hopelessness in "all" situations?
7. What is an area of your life that you might need to allow God to work on your attitude so you depend on him in tough situations?

24. Saint Movies,

Some of these movies as listed are available in our office to borrow. Faith Based movie nights are fun! We have movies for young children (The day the Sun Danced – the story of the children of Fatima, Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Patrick of Ireland, St. Francis Knight of Assisi, St. Bernadette: Princess of Lourdes) and for middle school age children (St. Patrick: the Irish Legend, St. Joseph of Cupertino- the Reluctant Saint, St. Joan of Arc, and Song of Bernadette) Discussion questions will come with the movie.

25. Gather on one of the Marian feast days listed below.

- Look up what that feast day is about.
- Pray an entire rosary together. (The prayers can be found in the purple books that came with your faith kit.) or online at
- If you have a baker in the group, below is a link to some treats you might make to honor our Blessed mother.

<http://www.catholicicing.com/food-for-blessed-virgin-mary/>

January 1 — Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God *
January 8 — Our Lady of Prompt Succor
February 2 — Presentation of the Lord
February 11 — Our Lady of Lourdes
March 25 — Annunciation
October 7 — Our Lady of the Rosary
November 21 — Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
December 8 — Immaculate Conception *
December 12 — Our Lady of Guadalupe

Families Sharing

St. John Vianney Family Faith Formation 2018-2019

716-674-9145

Please return this sheet to the Family Faith Formation Office when completed no later than April 30, 2019.

<u>Name of Activity</u>	<u>Date Completed</u>	<u>Comments</u>

Name and Signature of the Families in your group:
