

**SPRING 2020 – FAITH FORMATION AT
ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER SHRINE**

To facilitate participation for busy, working people, we've adopted a "**Soup and Substance**" format. The Shrine provides a light meal consisting of hearty soups and breads from the kitchen adjoining the presentation hall (anytime after 6:00 pm) to be followed at 7:00 pm by the 90 minute educational session in the presentation hall, ending at 8:30 pm. People could arrive from home or work (at least without the need to worry about getting supper before arriving for the sessions), experience some common "down time," and then participate in the evening's class.

Want to come to a better understanding of why we Catholics believe what we believe? Want to be able to explain the basis of our beliefs to your children or grandchildren? Want to deepen your understanding of Sacred Scripture? Want to be able to defend your faith? Want to better appreciate the uniqueness of Catholicism and its 2,000-year old apostolic tradition? Then these sessions are for you.

The Spring 2020 session of classes will run on the 7 successive Wednesdays of Lent

(February 26; March 4, 11, 18, 25; April 1, 8)

Why not make participation part of your Lenten discipline starting on Ash Wednesday?

To cover our costs (food, supplies, hvac, electrical and staff expenses) we're asking **\$15.** per weekly session for the course – **** seniors and students automatically have a 50% discount !**

The topic area for our **Spring 2020 Adult Faith Formation** series will be the 2nd installment in our series on Major Non-Christian Western Faiths (*combined with Judaism last Fall*)

Part II: Islam: A Major Non-Christian Western Faith

- the emergence of Islam
- the expansion of Islam
- the major divisions of Islam
- the dogma of Islam
- the "Five Pillars" of Islam
- Christianity (*and Judaism*) in Islam's view

We would like to hear from you as to your interest and intention to take advantage of this opportunity to grow in the knowledge of your faith (we at least need a count for the opening session so as to prepare adequate space and provide for dining needs). Please call ***St. Joe's*** at (978) 458-6346 or e-mail us at (Info@stjosephshrine.org) or drop us a note at 37 Lee St. Lowell, MA 01852. Let us hear from you. **Please mark your calendars now and contact us ASAP so that planning can go forward for this exciting offering at *St. Joe's*.** Help us to make the best use of ***St. Joseph the Worker Shrine*** as a spiritual and faith education resource in our area. It would be hard to beat the convenience and quality of the Adult Faith Education Programs conducted here every Spring and Fall.

This course will mark the 21st offering in this series – ***the reprise of a similar course presented 6 years ago***; this time, the material has been more selectively divided to allow for a more considered treatment and to allow for more discussion. Think about it, pray about it and let us hear from you in the coming days.

For more information visit www.stjosephshrine.org

Fr. Gene Tremblay, OMI, S.T.L.

Adult Faith Formation at *St. Joseph the Worker Shrine, Lowell, MA*

Adult Faith Formation has been identified as a very urgent need in our times – it is one of the 5 strategic priorities in the Archdiocese! *St. Joseph the Worker Shrine* is positioned to be a resource for the Archdiocese of Boston to help meet that need. In addition to our regular ministerial service, we are offering faith education/enrichment classes for those interested in educating themselves in the faith and/or possibly working toward catechist certification. **Fr. Gene Tremblay OMI, S.T.L.**, who joined the *Shrine* staff after some 30 years in educational ministry and most recently, Retreat House work, is offering a series of classes on the truths of our Catholic faith. **The Spring 2020 offering will be the 21st in this on-going series.**

The faith education piece finds a place in the Wednesday niche of available time and space; that is, an evening program consisting of a 90- minute session once per week on successive Wednesdays in a 7 week block - faith formation needs to be approached in a systematic way if it is to be effective. There are 2 such “blocks” presented each calendar year (Spring and Fall) and the contents of these “blocks” vary among Scripture, doctrinal and morality courses

The content areas over time will include:

- 1) **Religion and Social Responsibility**
 - Christian Morality and Social Ethics
- 2) **Belief and Unbelief in the Brave New World**
 - comparative religions, atheism, philosophical underpinnings of contemporary Western culture (secularism)
- Major Western Faiths:**
 - 3) **Judaism**
 - 4) **Christianity**
 - 5) **Islam**
- 6) **Religion and Science**
- 7) **Catholicism Today**
 - Introduction to the Bible:**
 - 8) **Old Testament** (Hebrew Scriptures)
 - 9) **New Testament**
- 10) **Message of the Prophets**
- 11) **Letters of St. Paul**
- 12) **Christology**
- 13) **Modern Religious Thought**

The content here is challenging; however, decades of teaching experience have honed the skills necessary for rendering these materials understandable to college age young people and, therefore, to anybody interested in learning.

The populations served by such a program might be:

- DRE's and Youth Ministers
- Catholic School faculty members
- on-going education for Deacons
- any interested laity in the area
- catechists
- collegians
- Oblate Associates
- follow-up for ACTS retreatants

A **full set of class notes** is provided and a **certificate of completion** is awarded at the end of the 7 week session.