

Dear Parents,

May the peace of Christ be with you! As the matters in our world have become unpredictable, I have been praying with the gospel passage of the Lord in the boat with the disciples on the stormy sea. When the waters get rough, the disciples gasp to the sleeping Christ, "Save us, Lord! We are perishing!" Jesus wakes and calms the waters. This story reminds me that the peace that the Lord offers comes from a relationship with him and a closeness to him. Alternatively, the peace that the world seeks is solely the tranquility of the surrounding environment. But Jesus reassures us – if we are with him, we can know his peace and presence, regardless if the waters are rough or smooth.

My name is Caroline, and I will be directing faith formation this year at St. John the Baptist. I am excited and honored to be with you, work with you, and get to know you – even amidst this stormy sea! I am eager to accompany you on the journey of forming your children in the faith. The heart of our journey will be to continually seek Christ's heart – to find him in our lives, the waves of our sea – and to spend time with him, get to know him, and let him transform our lives with his love.

We are shifting to an online program this year for faith formation. We will be using My Catholic Faith Delivered (MCFD). Partnered with Ignatius Press, MCFD provides the online Faith & Life Series for religious education students in grades 1-8. The Faith & Life Series has been found in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church by the Subcommittee on the Catechism, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Students access the same course material online that is traditionally delivered in books. The online lessons are self-contained with prayer, teaching, games, and evaluation. Each lesson takes about 30 minutes, and students will complete one per week. A catechist will be assigned as an online instructor to help keep track of course progress. In addition, I will ask parents to fill out a report for each student at the end of each month to update the catechist on how each student is doing.

One thing online instruction cannot provide is a real-life faith community. Your role as parents is to be the primary educators of your children. Accompanying your child through his or her faith formation at home, will allow you to integrate the faith even more deeply into your family. And beyond the home, this integration of the faith will only happen with participation in the sacraments and involvement in parish life. The fabric of the faith will not hold together for the child if the family is not attending Mass on Sundays, fostering community in the parish, praying together, or incorporating the faith into their daily lives, perspectives, aspirations, and behaviors.

Students seeking First Sacraments – Reconciliation & First Communion – will participate in the MCFD curriculum and meet in person four times this year – two times before the sacrament of Reconciliation, and two times before First Communion. Students seeking Confirmation will meet in person with me twice per month on Wednesday evenings, 6:30 – 7:45 pm at the parish for catechesis. Strict and safe social distancing and masks will be mandated for these meetings. If you are uncomfortable with your child(ren) attending these in-person meetings, please indicate this on the accompanying Google form.

Faith Formation will be \$30 per student this year. Please complete the attached 1. Google Form and 2. Registration Form, if you are interested in enrolling this year and return to the Parish Office by September 23<sup>rd</sup> (note: the office is open from 9 am - 4:30 pm M-F). I will then follow up with information to access and utilize MCFD. The Google form will also gauge family interest in meeting in person for a family formation night every other month or doing virtual formation nights every month. I am doing my best to plan but remain prudent and present to the current Covid situation. The first virtual formation night will be an introduction to MCFD on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 7:45 pm. The first week of lessons with MCFD and Confirmation will begin the week of October 4<sup>th</sup>.

I invite you to pray with me for wisdom in forming the parish youth in the faith. I am praying for your families, that you enter in and encounter the peace and love that the Lord has for us.

Warmly,

Caroline Wright