

# Living in Faith Together (LIFT) FAQ's

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## **What is Living in Faith Together (LIFT)?**

**LIFT** is an approach to faith formation that seeks to encourage life-long intergenerational learning for all ages within our parish community. The goal of faith formation is ultimately to encourage participation in the Eucharist and the life of the parish. **LIFT** seeks to help our parish family not only learn about their religion but also develop their faith and a sense of belonging to the parish community. It is this sense of lived faith within the parish community that provides the rationale for what we will do at **LIFT**.

## **Who can attend LIFT?**

**EVERYONE!** **LIFT** is for everyone in the parish, not just families with school-aged children. **LIFT** is designed for the whole parish – Single Adults, Couples, College Students, Young Families, Teenagers, Kids, Parents, Young Adults, Grandparents, Empty Nesters, Retirees, Newcomers and Families. Through **LIFT**, adults deepen their faith and act as a witness to the children who need to see faith-filled adults growing in faith with them.

## **Will we still offer our current Faith Formation model for Grades Pre-K through 11<sup>th</sup> Grade?**

No. Our new **LIFT** program will replace our current weekly Faith Formation program. Research has shown that when children see their parents and others in the parish living their faith and being witnesses for Jesus Christ, they are more likely to encounter Him for themselves and have a lasting relationship with Him.

## **Once someone has been confirmed, why do they still need faith formation?**

Confirmation is really the beginning of our faith life in the Church. With Confirmation, we are just completing our initiation into the Church. Learning about our religion and gaining deeper awareness in our faith life is a lifelong journey.

## **Does LIFT “cover” all the necessary topics in faith formation?**

The curriculum of **LIFT** is guided by the General Directory of Catechesis, a document published in 1997 by the Catholic Bishops which outlines all the necessary components of faith formation. **LIFT** is based on a six year cycle, with each year presenting one of the themes mandated in the General Directory of Catechesis. The six themes are: Church Year Feasts & Seasons (Liturgy), Sacraments, The Creed, Social Justice & Morality, Prayer & Spirituality, and Scripture (Bible).

## **Will it be mandatory for parents to attend with their children?**

We believe that parents want to be kept ‘in the loop’ as to what their children are learning, we believe they want to share in their children’s faith journey, and, more importantly, we believe that children – adolescents included – need their parents and other adults to be involved in their faith journey, providing positive role models and encouragements. For this reason, we expect parents to attend faith formation sessions with their children. However, we realize there might be situations in which this is not possible – parents may have to work, parents might not see the value to coming to a faith formation session – in which case a responsible adult who is involved in the child’s life (grandparent or other relative, godparent or family friend) may attend in the parent’s place.

## **What if I don't have any children, can I attend LIFT?**

**LIFT** is for **EVERYONE!!!**

### **Why do children need to be accompanied by an adult family member?**

The Church has long taught that parents are the primary educators in the faith. Our role as a parish is to provide as much support and resources as we can to assist parents in this important responsibility. With **LIFT**, parents and children, along with the entire parish family, are provided an opportunity to learn and grow in faith together.

### **Having only two sessions a month, how will children get the reinforcement they need to learn about the Catholic faith?**

We don't expect that **LIFT**, twice a month, is the only time families will learn and practice their faith. For children to grow up knowing what it means to be Catholic, parents need to bring them to Mass so they can participate in the Eucharist and be part of the parish community. In order for children to learn to pray, parents need to pray with them and need to make faith part of the family's daily lives. Unless parents make being Catholic a central part of family life, then anything that is learned at **LIFT** will lack context in children's lives.

**What will happen to the children who don't come to Mass, whose parents won't do the home piece with them?** Although it is true that the frequency of meetings will decrease, we believe the parental and parish involvement in faith formation, even if occurring only twice per month, has the potential to impact the faith development of a child or adolescent to a greater extent than more frequent religious education class with little parental and parish involvement.

### **What happens if we can't make our regularly scheduled monthly session?**

Since the same session is offered two different times each month, it is possible for families to request to attend a different session if they are unable to make their scheduled session. Families will need to contact the Program Coordinator prior to making the change to check on the availability and make arrangements to switch sessions.

### **What is a "take home-kit" What do I do with it?**

The "take home-kit" provides additional resources for **ALL** participants to foster their learning at home as they prepare for the next session. Kits include reminders, review sheets, service suggestions, adult faith material and child activities. Participants are urged to use whatever aspects of the "take home-kits" meet their needs and share the other materials with relatives and friends.

### **How will my child learn his/her prayers?**

The only way to learn prayers is through repeated practice. This cannot be accomplished solely through monthly or even weekly faith formation classes. To assist children with learning their prayers, parent(s) should join them in prayer each day or night, focusing on a particular prayer until they have mastered it. Prayers will be provided in the "take home-kits" to assist parents in helping their children learn their prayers. Bringing children to weekly Mass will help them learn the Sign of the Cross, Our Father and Creed.

### **If I'm not eating the meal, what time do I need to arrive?**

Even if you're not eating the meal, we encourage everyone to arrive at the scheduled start time so that all can join in this important community-building time. There will always be "table activities: as well as conversation with other table members to occupy those who are not eating the meal.

### **Will there be additional sessions for those students participating in a Sacramental year?**

Yes. There will be additional sessions for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation. Parent meetings will be held early Fall, 2017 for those families.