

Faith Formation 2022-2023

One-In-Faith 4: St. Andrew's, St. John's, St. Mary's, St. Michael's

## **Dear 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and families,**

Thank you for choosing to participate in faith formation this year – we are blessed to have you with us!

The focus of our faith formation program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders is the Bible, the Lectionary, and the Mass.

In the first half of the year, students will have most of their classes (with different guest speakers) and will learn about the Bible, the Lectionary, and various parts of the Mass.

In the second half of the year, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will do service work and have various prayer experiences. Their main service work will be to provide the liturgical ministries for a number of weekend Masses during Lent. We realize that everyone has different comfort levels with different activities, so we will offer our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders different choices for which ministry they will help with (lector, usher, computer screens, greeter, sacristan, etc.). We also know that some 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders already help with ministries at their parishes; these students can continue with those ministries or try a different ministry just for this year. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will also help with collecting the Faith Formation Food Shelf donations in Lent.

For more information about the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade year, see the **Frequently Asked Questions and the Calendar below!**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us! Information about faith formation is also posted on the One in Faith parishes website ([www.oneinfaith.org](http://www.oneinfaith.org)) and the Faith Formation Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/OneInFaithUnoEnFeMN/>).

Thank you for being a part of our community, at whatever level you can be -- we look forward to getting to know your student a little bit better this year!

Blessings,

Juliann Heller, Interim Director of Faith Formation [faithformation@stmarysofmelrose.com](mailto:faithformation@stmarysofmelrose.com) or message through the Remind App

Rita Meyer, part-time Faith Formation Adm. Asst. [faithformation@stmarysofmelrose.com](mailto:faithformation@stmarysofmelrose.com) or text/call at 320 290-5687

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## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

**Q:** Why don't the students have classroom sessions every Wednesday throughout the whole year? Why does the faith formation program devote as much time as it does to activities like prayer, service projects, and fun activities?

**A:** There is a "theological" (religious) reason for why our faith formation program tries to keep a mix of different kinds of activities: some academic/classroom time, some service opportunities, some prayer experiences, and some activities that are simply for fun, to help build community. We have this mix because as Catholics we believe that we find God in all those areas of our lives – God is present when we study, when we serve others, when we pray, and when we find joy in each other's company.

There are also some "pedagogical" (teaching) reasons for the mix of activities. Everyone learns in different ways. Some students will learn more about God through classroom work, some better through service, etc. In addition, research shows that people learn better when they enjoy what they are doing (or at least when they don't dread it!). So the more we can do to make faith formation enjoyable (by mixing things up!), the better our youth will learn.

**Q:** What will this mix of activities look like in 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade?

**A:** In 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade, there will be a number of sessions of classroom study, and then a number of other opportunities for prayer, service, and fun. We would encourage you to talk with your 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grader about how all these different elements are essential ways to deepen their relationship with God and neighbor. It is just as important for them to come to a fun night or a prayer night as it is for them to show up for a class night.

**Q:** Why are parents and other adults asked to attend some faith formation events?

**A:** Throughout our faith formation program, we have been trying to do a better job of involving adults. There are a number of reasons for this effort: 1) By involving parents in their children's faith formation, we are better enabling them to fulfill their baptismal promise, to raise their child to know and love God, 2) By involving adults in faith formation, we are setting a good example for our youth – showing them that a person's faith formation doesn't stop after the Sacrament of Confirmation, 3) We are enabling youth and adults to learn from each other – we all have different stories and different gifts and we'd like to help people to share them a bit with each other.

**Q:** What does this adult involvement look like in 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade?

**A:** For the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom sessions, we ask that one parent/guardian attend at least half of the sessions. If it is impossible for a parent/guardian to attend, due to work schedules or childcare issues, please just let us know!

## Calendar for Grades 7/8 for 2022-2023:

Fall Semester (most of your classes + start practicing liturgical ministry service work)

8/31 Opening night for all students/families

9/14 Class

SUNDAY 9/18 4:00 PM (optional) All students grades 7-12 and their families are invited to join the other Faith Formation families at a Mass at **Cheryl Hellermann's barn** (bonfire afterwards: bring your own hot dogs & beverages!)

9/21 Class

10/26 Service project & prayer: All Souls liturgy (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> graders bring bars/cookies for guests for after the liturgy)

11/16 Class

11/30 Class

12/7 Class

12/14 Class + Advent Reconciliation liturgy

Spring semester: (a few classes + liturgical ministries service work)

1/25 Class

2/15 Class (practice liturgical ministries)

TUESDAY 2/21 Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday celebration - stop by St. Mary's church before school (7:30-8:00 AM) to pick up a doughnut!

3/2 Ash Wednesday liturgy

Throughout Lent: Service project: 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> graders bring Food Shelf donations from church to Food Shelf

3 Weekends in Lent: Service work & prayer: help with liturgical ministries

For this service work, we will have members of our parishes who have volunteered to be mentors for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders meet them at the liturgies they have chosen to help with. They will guide the students through being ushers, lectors, computer assistants, greeters, sacristans, etc. at those Masses.

3/22 Lent Reconciliation liturgy

SATURDAY 4/1 Service: Roadside Clean-up (meet at **Meire Grove** church basement) 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (some parent chaperones will be needed)

4/26 Registration for next year