

ST. FRANCIS CHURCH FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM
“GENERATIONS OF FAITH”

What is “Generations of Faith?”

A new approach to faith formation that is lifelong and inter-generational. It is intended to serve the whole parish, (not just school age children!) as everyone learns and grows together. Parishioners grow in faith as they learn about events of church life and participate in church life together.

The program will prepare parishioners for meaningful participation in church events, engage everyone in the event, guide people in reflecting on the significance and meaning of the events and encourage them to apply the learning to their daily lives as Catholics.

Who will attend?

We hope to see *all* members of the community participating !! — school age children accompanied by a parent(s), couples, singles, elders, college students, etc. We welcome non-Catholic spouses or interested non-Catholic friends or relatives to join us.

What do you mean, “school age children accompanied by parents”?

Children and teens in a family must be accompanied by *at least one* parent, or a “sponsoring” adult if a parent is unable to participate. We do encourage both parents to join us if possible.

As families learn and grow in faith together, they become more comfortable expressing and living faith at home and in the community.

Communication with the office is necessary to make special arrangements for a child whose parents or a relative or friend cannot be in attendance in order to arrange for a parish sponsor to accompany the child.

Who can be a “sponsoring adult”?

A sponsoring adult can be a Catholic grandparent, godparent, relative, neighbor, or friend who not only will bring the child to sessions and the Church event when the parent cannot, but be involved in supporting the child in their faith formation.

Any parishioner or family willing to be a sponsor to a child interested in attending Generations of Faith is encouraged to communicate with the Religious Ed office, or indicate your interest on the “Partners in Faith Formation” form found in the registration packet.

What does the program involve?

The program has 6 scheduled 2 ½ hour “**Preparation sessions**” that are focused on preparing the community for a special **celebration of liturgy** that will take place in the month that follows the session. Each registered household will also receive a “**Home kit**” at each session which will contain materials to support each individual and family with continued learning and faith enrichment opportunities at home. The total contact hours average 24 hours for the season—only one day a year to devote to active learning and faith formation!

Where will the Preparation Sessions be offered?

We are grateful for the use of the Chestnut Hill Community School for our learning sessions. All sessions will begin in the auditorium.

When does the program begin?

The program begins in October and continues through the early Spring. The schedule is mailed with registration confirmation.

How can we all learn together when our levels of interest, experience, and abilities vary so much with age?

The program will begin with a large group opening introduction and prayer experience, followed by “break out groups” that will separate different age groups for learning activities, and culminate with a large group sharing and closing session. The sessions will be varied with many creative ways to learn and grow together.

What happens for students preparing for sacraments—First Reconciliation and Eucharist, and Confirmation?

Students will be required to participate in Generations of Faith and **additional sessions** that will be necessary as supplements to prepare the students for their sacraments. A schedule of extra classes will be mailed by the coordinators of the two sacramental programs.

Preparation for First Eucharist requires two years of attendance in 1st & 2nd grade.

Preparation for Confirmation requires three years of attendance in 9th, 10th & 11th grade.

Will there be requirements for school age students beyond participation in Generations of Faith?

Yes. Every student is expected to attend a special grade level class, grade level reconciliation service and special grade level mass. See the Program for scheduled dates. The 9th, 10th and 11th grade students will each be required to attend a retreat and complete a major service project. We will also continue to promote service and justice projects throughout the season. To comply with Diocesan Policy, programs will be conducted on Protecting Children from Abuse.

What is being studied?

In our first year, the program was oriented to learning about places in our new church. Our theme in 2005 was Following Jesus on the Path to Holiness. In 2006 the theme was the Ten Commandments & Precepts of the Church. The 2007 focus is on the Sacraments.

How do we register?

Registration packets are mailed to every registered household in the parish in late summer. Contact the Faith Formation office if it was not received or if you are new to the Parish—323-6272, ext. 2.

Please note that the number of registrants for each of the 4 weekend sessions will be limited in order to manage the size of learning groups. We will assign session preferences on a first come first serve basis, so register early if you want to insure placement in your first choice.

Will there be open registration?

The Religious Education office has always accommodated families who do not register at the beginning of the season. We welcome any registrant, even if we are midway through the year. Makeup work will be provided for sessions missed.

We also will accommodate those interested in attending single sessions. Arrangements can be made by calling the office.

What does the program cost?

In order to provide quality programs and home kits, the cost for the six sessions is \$70 per household regardless of the number of participants from your family. We offer a discount of \$35.00 for Senior Citizens. Of course waivers or reduced rates will be provided upon request to those who cannot afford the cost of registration. The cost for attendance at a single session will be \$12.00, or \$6.00 for Seniors.

Please note on the registration form that 1st Communion candidates and 9th, 10th & 11th grade students have additional fees related to their programs.

How can we accommodate everyone who wants to participate?

Each Preparation session will be repeated four times on a weekend—Sat. AM, Sat. PM, Sun. AM, Sun. PM. Participants will be placed in a designated time slot based on registration requests for 1st and 2nd choice. Placement will be on a first come, first served basis.

Will there be flexibility in the schedule?

We ask that families plan to attend the session time to which they are assigned for planning purposes and to accommodate everyone in limited space. Time assignments will arrive in a mailing before the 1st session. This is necessary to enable us to manage the number of people in attendance. Please note that students in Sacramental Prep Programs can only attend the sessions earmarked for them.

If a conflict in the family schedule, illness, or other unforeseen circumstance requires a change to another time, a call to the Faith formation office will be necessary to arrange for an alternative time.

How can you handle different age groups at each of the 4 sessions?

During the 1 ½ hour learning part of the sessions, groups will be separated in the following way: pre-school age children (P3, P4 and K), elementary age children with parents (1, 3, 4 & 5), middle school age children (6,7&8 grades), teens (9,10 grade), and adults (12th graders, college students & adults). Second grade and 11th grade will meet separately to provide opportunity for sacramental preparation.

Be mindful when registering that only specified session times on the registration form will accommodate special groupings of students in First Communion and Confirmation programs.

Who is responsible for implementing this program?

WE ALL ARE !!! It takes lots of hands to plan, design, prepare, and implement the program. There are numerous behind the scene tasks, a need for folks to assist in designing the sessions, prayer leaders and musicians, and folks to facilitate the learning sessions for special age groups. Please complete the “Partners in Faith Formation” enclosed in the registration packet to let us know how you might be able to help us out. You are also encouraged to contact the Faith Formation office at 323-6272, ext. 2.

Will there be opportunity to express concerns, offer comment, ask questions etc.?

We provide opportunity to evaluate our program year and take to heart the comments and suggestions offered. Last season’s end of year evaluation provided meaningful and thoughtful suggestions and comments which have led to some changes that will be reflected in the program this year. Check out the Parish website for the results of our end-of-year evaluation at

www.STFRANCISBTOWN.org in the Religious Education section.

The Core Team for Generations of Faith is made up of Fr. Vern, Judy Trickey, Deb Robinson, Linda Racicot, and Michele Gousy. Feel free to contact anyone of the members with your questions, or concerns. Judy Trickey is the Director of the Program.

What can I do to help?

See the **Partners in Faith Formation Form** in the registration packet for ways that you can offer your services.

We are especially in need of people with creative energy to share!! We can benefit greatly from your ideas and help to make the Opening and Closing experiences more interesting and dynamic. Please consider joining our Design Team!!!! It’s a great way to be involved, meet new people, and have your faith life enriched!