

# Generations of Faith

## St. Francis Church Faith Formation Program Information and Policies

### What is “Generations of Faith”?

A new approach to faith formation that is lifelong and intergenerational. 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 in the life of the church and participate in them together.

The program's goal is:

- To prepare parishioners for meaningful participation in church events and engage them
- To guide them in reflecting on the significance and meaning of the events
- To encourage them to apply the learning in their daily lives as Catholics.

### Who can attend?

The program is open to all members of the community!!

- **School age children accompanied by an adult**
- Couples, singles, seniors, college students

**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”?

At least one parent or a “sponsoring” adult (if a parent is unable to participate) needs to attend with the children and teens in a family. Of course we welcome both parents to come if possible. This is the genius of **Generations**; families learn and grow in faith together, and become more comfortable expressing and living their faith at home and in the community.

PLEASE NOTE: Children and adults are not always together. There may be portions of the program where age groups will be separated from one another, while everyone is learning about the session topic at age appropriate levels.

*If a parent or surrogate cannot be in attendance, please call the Religious Education Office to arrange for a parish sponsor to accompany the child.*

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

The program will begin with all participants attending the **Opening Experience** which introduces our theme of study for the day. This is followed by an hour and a half **Classroom Experience** where age appropriate groupings will occur. Adults with elementary aged children will stay with their children; all other adults will attend their own session. 2<sup>nd</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> grade will meet separately for sacramental participation. All participants will gather again for a **Closing Experience** to share the lesson learned and prepare for the event to celebrate our learning.

### Is the Generations program only comprised of these learning sessions?

No, and that is another wonderful aspect of the program. The learning sessions are coordinated with five experimental sessions to embody the learning sessions in the liturgical life of the church. Each registered family or individual will also receive thematic materials to support continuing education and practice at home. Attendance at both the 11 sessions (and Opening Mass) comprise approximately 24 contact hours for our faith formation program and complies with the diocesan requirements for religious education. **Attendance at all 11 sessions is required for full participation in the Generations of Faith program.**

### **What happens for students preparing for the sacraments?**

Students need to participate in Generations of Faith and **additional sessions** that will be necessary to prepare them adequately to receive the sacraments. A schedule of these extra sessions will be made available by the coordinators of the two sacramental programs.

***Preparation for First Eucharist requires two years of attendance in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grades.***

***Preparation for Confirmation requires three years of attendance in 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, & 11<sup>th</sup> grades.***

### **Are there any other expectations of school age children beyond participation in Generations of Faith?**

We sometimes do schedule special grade level classes or events. Check the full schedule. 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> graders will each be required to attend a retreat and complete a major service project. Second graders as well have special activities. We also promote service and justice projects throughout the year. Of course we expect families to attend Sunday worship. Masses are at 4pm Saturday, 8am and 10:30am on Sundays.

### **When does the program begin and at what location?**

The program begins in September or October and continues through the early spring. We are grateful for the use of **the Chestnut Hill Community School for our Learning Sessions. The experiential sessions are likely to occur in the church.**

### **How do we accommodate everyone who wants to participate?**

Each Learning Session is repeated three times on a weekend –Sat. PM, Sun. AM, Sun. PM. Participants are placed in a designated time slot based on registration requests (first and second choice). **We will notify you if you did not receive your first choice.** Please make every effort to attend the session to which you have been assigned; however, if there is an illness or unforeseen circumstance that requires you change to another session, please call the Religious Ed office so we can alert the catechist of a visiting student to the class.

### **How do we register?**

We send a postcard to every registered family in the parish alerting them to the dates and location of the registration. **Everyone is asked to register on those dates.** We will also accommodate families who do not register at the beginning of the season, even if we are midway through the year. Anyone who wants to attend a single session is also welcome. In all cases contact the Religious Education office.

### **What does the program cost?**

The program tuition is \$75 per family (\$100 after Sept. 12) regardless of the number of participants in your family. For seniors we offer a discounted cost of \$50. Single sessions cost \$15, for seniors \$8. Partial scholarships are available for those in need; please contact Carolyn Groves in the Religious Education Office.

PLEASE NOTE: On the registration form sacramental candidates have additional fees related to their program; there are no scholarships available for these fees.

### **What can I do to help?**

We love that question because it takes a lot of hands to design, prepare and implement the program. There are numerous behind the scenes ways to help: please see the "Partners in Faith" sheet in your packet to volunteer or contact the Religious Education Office. This program belongs to the Parish community and needs the gifts and service of all to be successful.

Don't hesitate to contact us at 323-6272 Ext.2

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