

# FAITH FORMATION



Growing In  
Faith Together



## Why is Guardian Angels revising our approach to Faith Formation?

This past winter, Fr. Rodger commissioned a Task Force comprised of twelve parishioners and two staff to vision ways to improve parish faith formation for children, youth, and families. The Task Force began by reading church documents, examining models of faith formation from other parishes, and soliciting feedback from our parishioners. Research tells us that 40% of young adults today are not affiliated with any religious tradition and the average age when youth stop identifying as Catholic is 13 years old (Pew Forum and St. Mary's Press). We want to counter that trend by more effectively engaging children, youth, and families in their sense of belonging to our community and finding value and relevance in our Catholic faith. Task Force recommendations explained here were approved by the Parish Pastoral Council on March 9, 2021. All Faith Formation programs are **FREE** if registered by September 30.

## What are the mission and goals for GIFT?

**Mission:** Engaging children, teens, and families in following Jesus by BEING church through faith development, community building, worship, and service.

**Goals for 2021- 2022:** to meet in person as we recover from COVID as a community, provide accessibility to all, and make learning engaging and fun.

## What are the key benefits of the GIFT model?

- Provides a balanced approach to experience faith in community, prayer, learning, and service.
- Makes Faith Formation engaging and fun for children, youth, and families.
- Supports parents by providing Family Ministry opportunities.
- Increases flexibility for family schedules by providing a variety of options.
- Improves the prayer lives of children, youth, and families.
- Provides Faith Formation at no cost to parishioners to help with family budgets.



# **What are the GIFT Programs?**

## **Early Childhood for ages 3, 4, and 5 on Sundays from 8:30-9:30 a.m.**

Children grow in self-awareness and experience God's love for them.

## **Wednesday Nights for Grades 1 to 8 from 6:15-7:30 p.m.**

Children learn the basics of our Catholic faith and build community together. Youth in Grades 7 and 8 will continue to participate in JOLT (Jesus Offers Lots Today). JOLT includes mixer games, PowerPoint and video presentations, small groups, discussion, and other activities.

## **Family Ministry on the 2nd Sunday of each month from 9:40-10:50 a.m.**

Families seek to be church together through community building, service, worship, and learning. Some special events will be included on other dates.

## **Home Option for Grades 1-6**

The parish will provide resources to support parents in teaching our faith to their children at home.

## **First Reconciliation and First Eucharist for Grades 2 and older**

Children experience sacramental preparation with prayer, discussion, activities and full participation in the reception of the sacraments guided by parents. Preparation starts with a parents-only session for orientation and then 3 parent/child sessions are offered followed by reception of the sacrament. Parents are the primary formers of the faith and take-home materials support the large group sessions. Reconciliation preparation starts in January with reception of the sacrament following and First Eucharist preparation is offered starting in March with candidates receiving the sacrament in May.

## **Confirmation for Grade 9 and older meets monthly Sundays 12:30-1:45 p.m.**

Candidates and sponsors learn together and share faith. Candidates preparing for Confirmation must complete four formation sessions, one retreat, one Safety Session, two hours of service to the poor or vulnerable, and involvement in our high school CONNECT program.

## **CONNECT Grades 9 to 12 meets monthly Sundays 12:30-1:30 p.m.**

CONNECT discusses matters of faith relevant to youth in a safe and supportive environment.

## **Youth Council Grades 9 to 12 meets monthly Sundays from 10:00-11:00 a.m.**

Youth are empowered to grow in leadership by planning our youth ministry programs.

## **When will GIFT programs begin?**

Programs are scheduled to start in person in October of 2021 and run through the end of April. Registration opens in August at [www.guardian-angels.org](http://www.guardian-angels.org).

## **How can I volunteer in GIFT?**

We need a variety of adult and high school youth to help with our Faith Formation Programs. You do not need to be an expert in the Catholic Faith to help. We will support you, resource you, and help you grow in faith while serving our community! Please contact Paul Deziel for more information at [pdeziel@guardian-angels.org](mailto:pdeziel@guardian-angels.org) or **651-789-3178**.

If you have questions or would like to help us in these new programs contact Paul Deziel at [pdeziel@guardian-angels.org](mailto:pdeziel@guardian-angels.org) or Judy Foster for First Reconciliation and First Communion at [jfoster@guardian-angels.org](mailto:jfoster@guardian-angels.org).

