

Church of the Immaculate Conception
Youth Ministries Office
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FAMILY FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH - OVERVIEW 2020-2021

A Christian family should be a miniature church. All Christian family members are invited to strengthen one another in faith and to outdo one in their zeal for God. They should pray for and with each other and collaborate in works of charity. (YouCat 373)

What is Family Foundations of Faith?

Reinforcing and supporting parents as the primary catechists this new model of YM Formation “Family Foundations of Faith” will offer suggested experiences that families will complete together, at home, on their own schedule. Activities and experiences will be parent led.

What is the commitment?

Families will commit to completing a minimum of eight experiences (approximately one each month) throughout the year. The length of time to complete each experience/activity will vary based on many factors.

Why introduce Family Foundations of Faith this year?

The question “Do you have a home study option?” is raised to our office almost every year. Traditionally youth ministries has not offered a home study option, however the Covid-19 pandemic provided us with an opportunity to re-think how we approach formation. We know that now, more than ever, families have many things to balance in their lives and are coming from a wide range of backgrounds, personal situations, and underlying concerns. With sensitivity to all that families are balancing, we are committed to developing meaningful faith formation opportunities to meet people’s needs. We knew that some people would not be comfortable or ready to return to in-person, gathered sessions this Fall and that the prospect of a fully remote e-learning model (more screen time) might not be the best fit for everyone.

More than just a response to Covid-19 concerns

While the reality of today’s circumstances opened the door to Family Foundations of Faith, we know the idea of home based catechesis is deeply rooted in our Catholic Faith Tradition. The church clearly teaches that parents are the primary catechists for their children.

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by *creating a home* where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for *education in the virtues*. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2223)

Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child’s earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2226)

How will participants be accountable to the Youth Ministries Office?

Participants will email a short written or video reflection about how they grew in faith from each experience.

What types of experiences will be included?

We plan to offer a variety of options. Some will be prayer based, others may include scripture reading, reflection and sharing, we plan to include outdoor experiences, media-based activities. We hope that each family finds an activity or experience that fits their personality and style, but is also encouraged to try something new and grow together in faith. Parents who would like to suggest an activity or experience that is not on the list are encouraged to contact Christine Goss.

What if parents have a question, need support or resources?

The Youth Ministries Office is only a phone call or email away? Our goal through this model is to empower and support parents to pass the faith along to their child(ren). Optional parent workshops will be scheduled throughout the year to coach and assist parents prior to the upcoming month's activities and experiences. Workshops will be scheduled based on the needs of the families that select this model.

How do we begin?

Enrollment in the Youth Ministries Program is required. Enrollment fees are per youth participant and are consistent across all models of formation. If enrollment costs are a financial hardship for your family, please reach out to the Youth Ministries Office. No one will be turned away for financial reasons. If you did not receive an enrollment form in the mail in mid-September or are new to our parish, please contact the Youth Ministries Office.

Specific activities and experiences will be posted on the Parish website beginning in September. Additional activities may be added throughout the year.