

Welcome to our Parish Family! Or perhaps you have been in the parish for a while, but are just now looking into our Faith Formation Program. Either way, we are excited to journey alongside you and your family!

Like most churches, we have shifted our faith formation program to a family model since the pandemic began. However, in our case, this was part of our long range vision anyway so it was actually perfect timing! 😊 **Our mission is to build strong Catholic families.** That is the more important element in helping kids to be open to God's work and call in their lives. All of the major studies show this – if you desire for your child to embrace their faith and Catholic values, the best thing you can do is to strengthen your own faith and to build the domestic church! We want to do everything we can to honor and support that.

The way we have it set up is that parents come up to our Faith Formation Center once a month without the kids. Of course, we would love it if both parents could come, but we understand that it is challenging with the logistics especially if you have younger children at home. If at least one parent can come, we are good.

We offer 5 different time slots to choose from that would work best for your schedule. Two of those are during the weekdays while kids are in school and three are in the evening. The monthly parent sessions are 90 minutes long. Of course, we cover various things like Sacraments, Morality, Scripture, etc., but it is not just one long lecture. Far from it.

We want these sessions to be as life-giving and engaging for you as possible. A time of prayer and fellowship. A monthly retreat and respite if you will. Our aim is to do everything we possibly can to create an environment where you are not only formed, but encouraged and inspired in your own faith journey and then equipped to go back and help your kids encounter Christ in a deeper way.

Which brings me to the 2nd main component – the at home sessions. At the end of each parent session, you will pick up the at home sessions to be done with your family the following 3 weeks.

Let me be very clear. We know how busy families can be. The last thing we want is for these at home sessions to be difficult and complicated. We don't want this to be a burden – just the opposite. We design them to be very user

friendly and simple. We know that most parents do not have theology degrees or teaching certificates. The good news is that you don't need to. These are all easy to follow.

Even though this is a departure from what most people are accustomed to, I cannot tell you how much positive feedback we have received. Not only from our parent sessions, but even more importantly from the at home sessions. **Parents saying how wonderful it has been to be regularly praying and sharing faith as a family – how they have discovered so much about their kids they never knew before – deep, meaningful conversations.** That is what gets us so excited.

Now the family formation program isn't the only way to get engaged in the parish. Far from it. We have numerous ministries for the entire family to get involved with. Whatever your flavor, we probably have it. Way too much to cover here, but for starters be sure to check out CREW, BLAST and SPARK.

CREW stands for **C**onfirmed **R**adically **E**mpowered **W**itnesses and is our weekly post Confirmation youth group that meets on Sunday evenings for food, fellowship and fun.

BLAST is **B**elieving, **L**iving **A**nd **S**haring **T**ruth. Same kind of concept except it is for our middle schoolers on the first Friday of each month.

Then we have **SPARK**. **S**haring **P**laying **A**nd **R**enewing the **K**ingdom. This is for our 3rd-5th graders and takes place on the 2nd Friday of the month.

We have Vacation Bible School, Children's Liturgy of the Word, Lock-Ins, Retreats, Mission Trips and the list goes on.

We are excited to meet and work with you and your family. If you have any questions whatsoever, please don't hesitate to contact me or my staff. We are here to serve!

In the meantime, *God Bless and we hope to see you soon!*

Bruce Baumann
Director of Faith Formation

Seton Family Faith Formation - FAQs

Thanks for your interest in Seton Family Faith Formation! We want to make sure you have the information you need to move forward with your registration. Please take time to view the SFFF video, at this link <https://www.setonparish.org/cm-ymregistration>

Below are some **F**requently **A**sKed **Q**uestions that you may want to review.

Register at the same link. Please let us know if you have other questions.

Is the shift to "Family Faith Formation" model due to Covid19?

It was part of our long range plan!
Turns out the pandemic just helped us to move up the time table.

Has something like this been done before?

Absolutely! Parishes all over the country have been doing something similar for years. Our goal is to implement the best aspects of what other parishes have done.

What was the response in parishes that have done this?

At first, there can be some nervousness or even resistance. *Change can be difficult.* However, once engaged in the model, the overall feedback has been overwhelmingly positive! Parents end up loving it. They talk about how much they themselves have learned and how they treasure spending quality time with their family.

Are other local parishes making a shift like this? Many parishes in our Diocese are making similar shifts.

What are the chances of a family getting their first choice of Parent Session time slots?

Chances are excellent, IF you get your registration in right away! Slots will be allocated on a "first come, first serve" basis. So the earlier you register, the better odds. *We will do our best to try to accommodate your 1st or 2nd choice.*

Will there be babysitting available during the Parent Sessions?

We explored all of the possibilities related to providing babysitting, but could not make it happen at this point, *due to restrictions that we still have in place this year (related to safety protocols).* With that in mind, we are offering SIX different Parent Session time slots, knowing it would be easier for families to make arrangements for younger children to stay at home with someone like a grandparent, friend, older sibling or other parent. Parent Sessions only occur every 4-5 weeks.

What if a Parent can't make their time slot on a given month?

We understand that there may be times where you get sick or a major conflict pops up. In those situations, we ask that you contact us to arrange another time for that week. *For consistency and community building, it will be really important to come to your designated time each week.*

How important is it that a Parent go to the Parent Session each month?

It is absolutely essential!!! During the Parent Session you will receive the necessary formation, training and materials needed for that month's family at home sessions. Our goal is to make sessions so meaningful, informative and engaging...
You won't ever want to miss them!

Will the Parent Sessions be crowded?

We planned for plenty of spacing. Having 6 different times allows us to spread people out sufficiently and safely. *If protocols change again, we will move to a "virtual" format.*

How long are the at home sessions?

They are designed to be about an hour in length. *Much of it will depend on your own particular family situation.* There are no hard and fast rules. The Holy Spirit will guide you! Enjoy the conversations.

If only one Parent can come, does it matter if it's Mom or Dad?

No. However, we certainly hope this does not become merely a "mom thing". Too often, we see the mother being the only one making decisions about Mass or Faith Formation. *While we love our moms for that, we want our dads to be equally involved.* Every major study shows that when the father is actively involved in faith matters, the likelihood of the children embracing the faith goes way up!

What about High Schoolers?

We will have CREW, separate sessions for high school Teens. We will email Parents about CREW registration. *Of course, High Schoolers are welcome and encouraged to participate in the family at home sessions as well.*

What about sacrament prep?

For 2nd graders and 8th graders there will be special sessions and workshops, *in addition to the family sessions.* We will send you specific information throughout the year.

Are there at home sessions every week?

The At Home session schedule factors in the normal breaks—*holidays that we would normally have—no sessions Spring Break, etc—*but that does not prevent you from gathering together for prayer and study anyway. *You might use a "holiday week" to catch up on a week that you might have missed.*

Will there be additional fees related to sacrament prep? Everything is included in the Family Faith Formation registration fee. The only major exception to this is the Confirmation retreat for 8th graders at the Pines Catholic Camp. We were scheduled to have a fee increase this spring. Then the pandemic hit—so in order to assist our families, we have actually decreased the registration fee by 25%. The early bird rate is only be \$95 per family.

As always, if your family is experiencing economic hardship, please contact us to work something out. We never want finances to be a barrier to participating.