



Sacred Heart Catholic

Dear Sacred Heart Parish Family,

Family, faith and church are three words that belong together. My favorite way to think and speak about the Catholic Church is that we are the Family of God.

You and your family are members of the Family of God here at Sacred Heart Parish. As a member of the family, I am excited write to you to announce something new that will begin this fall here at Sacred Heart. It is simply called, Family Formation and will take the place of what we now call CFF (Children's Faith Formation). Parents, you are called to be the first teachers of your children in the ways of the faith. In this new model, parents you will accompany your children to a Family Faith Formation session once a month and then you will share the Home Lessons with your children the other three weeks of the month (see included flier for details).

We the Church are joined together as the Family of God by the gift of faith and the power of the Holy Spirit poured into our hearts in and through the sacraments. We have an unbreakable bond as the Family of God. We come together each week around the altar of the Lord to share our family meal, the Eucharist. The Mass is the place where Jesus is most present to us and gives himself to us in the Eucharist to nourish and sustain us as members of the Family of God.

Parents, when you bring your child to the Church for baptism as part of the ritual you are asked a series of questions. One question is, *"What do you ask of God's Church for your child?"* Parents, you respond to the question by saying, *"Baptism."* The next question is, *"In asking for Baptism for your child you are undertaking the responsibility of raising him (her) in the faith, so that keeping God's commandments he (she) may love the Lord and his (her) neighbor as Christ taught us. Do you clearly understand this responsibility?"* Parents, you respond to this question by saying, *"We do."*

Today, many parents feel ill equipped to truly live out the responsibility of sharing their faith with their children or know how to live their faith in the daily ups and downs of family life. That is why I am so excited about this new **Family Formation** program here at Sacred Heart. We here at Sacred Heart, as your parish family, want to do everything we can to support and equip you at home to grow in faith as a whole family and not just your children. My strongest memories of church and faith growing up were those times that the faith was lived out in our home. My parents were models and teachers by how they simply lived and shared the faith with us on a daily basis in the life of our family.

You, Sacred Heart Parish, are my Family of God! I am so excited about this new opportunity to share and grow in faith together as members of the Family of God. Please join me in praying to the Holy Trinity that our new **Family Formation** program will be anointed by God's grace and that our lives will be guided by the truths of our Catholic Faith so we can share our faith as a family and become Active Apostles on fire with Jesus Christ!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,
Fr. Chris Hartshorn, Pastor