



Dear Families,

The past year has certainly been one with a lot of challenges, but through it all we were able to create new opportunities, especially here in our parish. Our “award winning” Faith Formation program, **“Meet You at the Altar”** proved to be a great success, keeping our families and students connected to our parish community during the pandemic. As we transition back into some sense of normalcy for the fall, we want to keep our focus on the weekend Mass while at the same time providing more opportunities for our students to learn and grow in their faith.

For our program this year we will continue with our weekly Mass journals, and encouraging continued participation at our weekend liturgies. The Mass is the central form of our worship of God and is truly the best way for us to grow deeper in our faith. Since the Mass restrictions have now been lifted for a few months, students and families **are expected to attend Mass in person**. We will still be offering Mass via our livestream (www.falmouthcatholic.org/live-stream) for those who are unable to attend in person due to illness but strongly encourage participation in one of our churches each weekend. For the Mass journals, we will be offering the following methods to completing them each week:

- **Preferred option:** Online via our website at www.falmouthcatholic.org/faithformation. During our first parent meeting of the year we will go through how to complete the journals. We will **NOT** be using the Canvas site this year for our online journals. Our new method should be easier for sending in journals and receiving feedback each week.
- Download a hard copy from our website and email it to your child’s catechist or drop off to the Faith Formation office
- Hard copies—we will provide hard copies of the journal entries at each of our parent meetings (similar to last year) or you may obtain a copy at the designated area in each of our churches

The weekly journal entries will be reviewed by a catechist assigned to your child’s grade, as well as occasionally by Fr. Steve and Jonathan, who will provide feedback on the journal entries and see how your child is progressing each week.

In addition to our weekly Mass journals, we will also be holding **once a month in-person sessions for the students in grades 1, 3-8 (non-sacramental years)**. These sessions will provide our students with the opportunity to come together as a community to learn more about the important fundamentals of our faith. Since we will be meeting only a few times during the year, it is important that students are present for all sessions. Please see the enclosed **“Meet You at the Altar”** calendar to view the dates for these meetings.

For students preparing to receive First Communion (Grade 2) and Confirmation (Grade 9) next spring (2022), we will be meeting **in person twice a month** to further ensure that they are properly prepared to receive the sacraments. As a reminder, our sacramental programs are typically a 2-year program beginning in gr. 1 for First Communion and gr. 8 for Confirmation. Participation in the **“Meet You at the Altar”** program (Mass attendance, completing weekly Mass journals) is expected not only for those planning on receiving the sacraments this year, but also for those who are entering into gr. 1 and gr. 8.

In response to some families who have expressed the desire to go deeper with their children in learning about the faith, we are introducing a new component to our program this year called **“Meet You at the Altar Plus +”**. This program, which comes to us from Loyola Press, will provide families with the tools needed to explore further the topics that we present at our monthly group sessions (non-sacramental years **only**). For those who are interested in learning more about this supplemental program, please select the **“Meet You at the Altar Plus +”** option on your registration form.

In order to explain the entirety of our program and provide important materials for the program, Jonathan and I will ask parents to meet several times during the year. We realize that many of you are already overwhelmed by everything going on, so we will keep the responsibility for you and your children to a minimum. And yet, there is **nothing** more important than sharing your faith with your children, for as the Baptism Ritual states, parents are the “first and best” teachers of their children in the ways of faith. Our goal with this program is to have you, as parents, continue to engage with your child in talking about your faith at home.

Our introductory meeting for parents will be held in mid-September on the following dates and times (choose **ONE** from 4 different options):

All meetings will be held at St. Anthony’s (only church with livestream capability)

1. Tuesday, September 14 at 11:00am
2. Tuesday, September 14 at 7:00pm
3. Wednesday, September 15 at 11:00am
4. Wednesday, September 15 at 7:00pm

While we prefer that you attend one of these meetings in person as we will be handing out various materials, the meetings will be livestreamed if you are unable to attend.

As in past years, you may register for the program at www.falmouthcatholic.org/faithformationregistration. A hard copy of the registration form is enclosed with this letter and can also be found on the website and at the Faith Formation office. A copy of the **“Meet You at the Altar”** program calendar has also been included with this letter.

The program fee for this year will be \$35/student (max \$70/family). This will go to covering materials and operational costs for our program. We recognize that the ongoing pandemic has put a financial strain on some of our families, if you are unable to pay the registration fee at this time, please contact Jonathan to make arrangements. Please make all checks payable to St. Joseph, Guardian of the Holy Family Parish (include “Faith Formation” in the memo line). You may also pay via online by visiting our website at www.falmouthcatholic.org/online-giving and click on the St. Anthony logo. If you have any questions about using Online Giving, please contact Dan Cunha, our Director of Business Operations, at office@falmouthcatholic.org.

It is my hope that **“Meet You at the Altar”** continues to be an opportunity for you and your children to grow in your Catholic faith. I hope you will consider participating this year. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Jonathan at jgalo@falmouthcatholic.org or 508-548-3515.

Yours in Christ,

