

## New Religious Education Program in the Fall for Public School Students - Part 3

My dear St. Matthew's parishioners,

A couple years ago, Fr. Bob asked me to look into Family Based Catechesis. I had no idea what this was all about, but I was intrigued. Families growing in their Faith together? Imagine my surprise, excitement and happiness as I began my research and found all these resources and different ways of approaching family-based catechesis. If only my husband and I would have had this years ago! We wouldn't have struggled as much as we did!

I remember the excitement and joy my husband and I shared when our children took their first steps, removed the training wheels from their bikes, learned to read and write and not too long ago, graduated from college. My biggest joy as a mom is seeing my children growing into the men God created them to be. There have been some major roadblocks along the way and through Christ and His Church they have eventually gotten back up. It was not easy for us to make sure our kids truly knew and understood that Christ is their best friend ever, that Mary is their mom, too, and that God's love and mercy is endless. It was even more so when, each, in his own way, would ask one of us to take him to Confession. At different times while they were in college, they would call to ask us if we had any prayer intentions because they were on their way to Adoration.

As young parents of infants, we were looking for ways to make sure our family grew in our friendship with Christ. There wasn't much out there other than Catholic Schools and Religious Education Programs in churches and parishes, but we did the best we could.

When the Catholic Church began, it was through the family and community that everyone learned together and celebrated Mass together. Family Based Catechesis brings us back to this foundation of faith which begins in the family. Together it comes to a better understanding of Jesus' message -- which then flows out from the family into society. In this way we help one another better understand Jesus' timeless message of love and peace.

Learning about our Faith should not be about memorization, grades, pass or fail. Our faith is about relationship and love. Our Faith is fun, engaging and exciting. It is not a subject to be taught like Math or Spelling. Each of us seeks to have a strong relationship with Christ. We cannot do it on our own; we need our loved ones and others to help us along the way.

After much research, prayer, and discernment, Fr. Bob, Fr. Peter and I settled on **Family Based Catechesis** designed by a Catholic church in Minnesota. Their program has been at the forefront of family-based catechesis since 1988. The program is fun and engaging, simple but yet deeply profound.

Sooner or later my children will have families of their own, and I am thrilled that this kind of approach to teaching our faith is available.

I look forward to working alongside you as together we grow into the people and Church God has intended us to be.

Very truly yours,

Your sister in Christ Jesus,  
Joy Orozco