



ST. PETER
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Faith Formation 2020-21

At a Glance

15 Baptisms (ages 0-3)

12 First Communion (ages 7-9)

13 Confirmations (ages 13-14)

12 Adults - Sacraments of Initiation

- 3 Adult Baptisms (June 28, 2020; Nov. 1, 2020; April 3, 2021)
- 7 Baptized Christians received into the Catholic Church (June 27, 2020; November 1, 2020; December 23, 2020; April 3, 2021)
- 2 Confirmations (adult Catholics) (June 27, 2020; November 1, 2020)

6 Additional adults participated in RCIA sessions but are not planning to join the Catholic Church at this time.

44 Children and Teens on Sunday Mornings via Zoom/Teams

15 Preschool – 3rd Grade (Children's Liturgy of the Word)

12 Grades 4-6 (Saints, Scriptures and Virtues)

17 Grades 7-8 (Confirmation Preparation)

60 Adults participated in Adult Faith Formation offerings via Zoom/Teams

- Genesis and other studies with Fr. Ramon (22)
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Book Study (8)
- Liturgy of the Hours (12)
- Introduction to Iconography (25)
- Fratelli Tutti (12)
- Book Study *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today* (20)
- Introduction to Liturgy and the Sacraments in the Roman Rite (15)
- Book Study: *Bury Me in the Sunshine: The Yellow Fever Epidemics of Memphis* (27)
- Women's Scripture Study: Walking with Purpose: Living in the Father's Love (14)

Note: Numbers refer to people who received sacraments or participated or faith formation from June 2020 to May 2021.

Infants, Toddlers and Expectant/New Parents

15 Baptisms (ages 0-3)

7 Families participated in Baptism Preparation (June 2020 – May 2021)

Current offerings:

- Expectant Parent Packet and Prayer List
- Baptism Preparation for Parents (Note: Parents watched the videos from Reborn on FORMED. We met afterwards via Zoom or phone for discussion.)
- Parent Letters – sent to parents each 6 months from baptism to age 3
- Nursery and Quiet Room were closed for most of 2020. The Parish Hall was available with a live feed of the Mass, and the rocking chairs from the Quiet Room were moved to the Parish Hall. The Quiet Room reopened in March 2021, but without a video feed. The Nursery reopened in June 2021.

Children and Teens

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (ages 3 – 6th grade)

- In lieu of regular atrium sessions, we offered CGS resources for families at home:
 - Prayer Table Kits (so that families could set up their own prayer tables like in the atrium)
 - Atrium Materials Lending Library
 - CGSUSA Parent Pages available on our Parent Portal
- First Communion Preparation for 1st and 2nd graders included presentations with atrium materials and use of the new book *I Am the Good Shepherd Year 1*.

Scripture, Saints and Virtues (4th – 6th graders)

- Met on Sunday mornings via Zoom
- Gospel (or other readings) from Sunday Mass plus a chosen saint and virtue for each week

Teen Faith Formation (7th – 12th grades)

- 7th and 8th graders
 - Met via Teams each Sunday morning
 - Optional Confirmation Mini-Retreats (Dec. 6, Jan. 31, Feb. 28)
- 9-12th graders started a virtual book study but did not continue due to low numbers.

Liturgical or Other Events for Children/Teens/Families

- Family Masses (August 30, Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Nov. 22)
- Children's Liturgy of the Word (Met virtually most of the year. Resumed in person on May 23, 2021.)
- MagnifiKids were mailed to families upon request and were available in the back of the church (along with crayons and coloring sheets) each Sunday.
- Lenten Mini-Retreat March 6
- Holy Week Mini-Retreat March 27

- Baptism Anniversaries – Each month we mailed cards to children and teens with Baptism anniversaries that month. Cards were signed by Fr. Auggie and the parish staff and included a home prayer for your anniversary.

First Reconciliation/First Eucharist Preparation for Children

- Parent Meeting via Zoom (October 20)
- Dynamic Catholic Blessed First Reconciliation and First Communion books and videos (done at home)
- Family Prayer suggestions (done at home)
- Optional Sacramental Preparation Sessions at St. Peter (This year's First Communion children: Nov. 22, Dec. 6, March 6, 27, April 18; First Graders: March 27, April 18, May 16)
- First Reconciliation (done 1:1)
- First Communion (April 25 – 4 children received First Communion at other times/locations)

Confirmation Preparation for Teens

- Parent Meeting via Teams (October 27)
- Weekly Sunday Morning Sessions on Teams
- Sessions were recorded and available on the Parent Portal for teens who missed or had to leave early
- Optional Confirmation Mini-Retreats (Dec. 6, Jan. 31, Feb. 28) Each retreat had a unique focus and included elements of the following:
 - Social Activity
 - Prayer (Adoration, Liturgy of the Hours, Confession)
 - Talks and Small Groups
 - Service Projects

Parents

- Parent Portal page set up on parish website
- Some Resources sent home at Family Masses or via USPS or Flocknote
 - August – Prayer Table Kits
 - September – Rosaries and rosary brochures
 - October – Goody bags with service project starter kit, candy and Eucharist holy cards
 - November – Advent wreath kits
- Family Masses (August 30, Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Nov. 22)
- Book Study *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey* (Zoom - Thursday mornings Nov. 12 – April 15)

RCIA

- Wednesday evenings sessions on Zoom (June 3-24, 2020; September 9, 2020 – March 24, 2021)
- In Person Sessions: Tour of the Church, Vespers, Stations of the Cross (Oct. 21, Dec. 9, Feb. 24, March 17, 24)
- Adults who participated in RCIA received Sacraments of Initiation and celebrated their Profession of Faith on several dates throughout the year: June 27/28, 2020; Nov. 1, 2020; Dec. 23, 2020; April 3, 2021 (Easter Vigil)

Adults

Virtual Formation Offerings for Adults (Zoom or Teams)

1. Genesis Study with Fr. Ramon (Tuesday mornings and Tuesday Evenings June 2 – July 7, August 18 – November 10)
2. Additional Topics with Fr. Ramon (Wednesday mornings, June 3 – July 8, August 19 – Sept. 23)
3. Rosary (Saturday afternoons)
4. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Book Study *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey* (Thursday mornings Nov. 12 – April 15)
5. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Book Study *Life in the Vine: The Joyful Journey* (Saturday mornings, Feb 6 – March 6)
6. Liturgy of the Hours (Thursdays, October 1 and 8 at 7 PM)
7. Introduction to Iconography (Thursday, Nov. 12 – Dec. 13)
8. Fratelli Tutti (Tuesdays, Nov. 10 – Dec.13)
9. Book Study *Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today* (Tuesday evenings, Jan. 12 – March 23)
10. Introduction to Liturgy and the Sacraments in the Roman Rite (Thursday evenings Feb. 18 – April 8, 2021)
11. Book Study: *Bury Me in the Sunshine: The Yellow Fever Epidemics of Memphis* (Tuesday evenings April 6 – May 25, 2021)
12. Women's Scripture Study: Walking with Purpose: Living in the Father's Love (Thursday mornings at 9:30, May 6 – June 10, 2021)

Young Adults

- Men and Women's Small Groups
- P4 Prayer/Adoration, Reconciliation, Preaching, Social (Sept. 17, Oct. 29, Nov. 19, Dec. 10, Feb. 4, May 13)
- Soup and Scripture (monthly)

Faith Formation On the Go

- Formed
- Resource List on Website (Resources for Prayer at Home)
- Best Advent Ever
- Best Lent Ever
- Word on Fired Engage (via Lumen Civitatis)
- Bible in a Year Podcast
- Lenten Scripture Challenge: Read the Gospel of Mark
- Hallow App (Prayer Night with Hallow Monday, March 1)

Catechists/RCIA Team

- Catechist Meetings (June 25, 30, August 26, Nov. 18)
- Weekly Confirmation Team Meetings (Sept – March)
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Book Study *The Good Shepherd and the Child: A Joyful Journey* (Thursday mornings Nov. 12 – April 15)
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Book Study *Life in the Vine: The Joyful Journey* (Saturday mornings, Feb 6 – March 6)

Faith Formation Teams

- Catechists of Children and Teens
- Adult Faith Formation Team
- RCIA Team
- Lifelong Faith Formation Team and Strategic Planning Faith Formation Committee: now merged to become Faith Formation and Evangelization Team.

Highlights and Challenges from this Year

Note: These are a few of the top events of the year. Longer term challenges such as attendance or retention are mentioned in the Strategic Planning Report that follows.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Most of our faith formation was done in the home and virtually. Virtual formation for the children was not ideal. As the year proceeded, we began to have some in person sessions, mainly sacramental preparation (First Communion, Confirmation, RCIA)

New Use of Technology

Using Zoom for Adult Faith Formation book studies and meetings has worked well, and allowed parishioners to participate at times when they could not have done so if we had been meeting at St. Peter. The Virtual Christmas Pageant and the Virtual Stations of the Cross were very prayerful and reached many who could not have experienced our Christmas Eve Mass or live Stations at St. Peter.

Pastoral Year Intern

We were blessed to have Br. Carlos who spent much of his pastoral year working in faith formation. He was an instrumental part of our Confirmation team. He joined the RCIA Team after Christmas. He taught an Adult Faith Formation class in the spring.

Part Time Youth Minister

We were blessed to have Kaitlyn Pham as part time (10 hours/week) youth minister again this year. Kaitlyn resigned in May to pursue graduate studies in counselling. We are looking for a new youth minister for next year.

Parish Strategic Planning

The Strategic Planning process begun in early 2020 concluded. Our original Faith Formation group was expanded to include Evangelization. At the February meeting, the team agreed that we need to recruit new members with a passion for Evangelization.

Women's Study

The women who participated in the Thursday morning Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Book Study decided to continue and started a short Walking with Purpose study. The study has been a great way for women to get to know one another, and now the group is considering a Walking with Purpose study for the fall.

Parish Strategic Planning

Faith Formation SWOT Analysis, Goal Statement and Objectives

STRENGTHS

- Current catechists for children and teens include men and women of all ages (including young adults). Catechists are not just “parent volunteers” but ministers.
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
- Long tradition of adult faith formation, including Sunday mornings while children and teens are in session – Sunday mornings offer faith formation for all ages
- RCIA Team and Community
- Young adult small groups, retreats and other faith formation opportunities
- Staff (DRE and part time youth minister and nursery staff)
- Year round faith formation (including summer)

WEAKNESSES

- Community – Children come from different schools and don’t know each other well. Especially a problem for older children, teens and parents.
- Attendance – Some families do not come regularly to Faith Formation and/or Mass
- Youth – Need more opportunities to encounter one another in the faith
- Adults – The average adult does not know much about their faith or how to pray.
- Understaffed, unable to do all we would like to do
- RCIA – Transition from RCIA to active parish life
- Space – lack of space on Sunday morning

OPPORTUNITIES

- Aquinas Institute Certificate Program in CGS
- Opportunities for evangelization because we get to meet short term members (grad students, young adult professional who are in Memphis temporarily)
- Increasing demand for RCIA (year round, people from other places, etc.)
- Influx of downtown resident
- Use of internet (digital Catholic media/video conferencing/prayer resources such as Liturgy of the Hours) as means of faith formation for those who cannot attend

THREATS

- Busy lifestyles - People are rushing between work and family and other commitments, and church feels like one more thing they have to do
- Lack of priority of faith in the lives of families / Parents, adult family members who are not active in their faith and/or do not value its importance
- Retention – High percentage of young people who leave their faith after Confirmation (or First Communion)

- Lack of Deep Pool of Catechists – Having good solid catechists and team members each year (Possible action step would be to require parent involvement)
- Relationship - When a parish is full of folks who are serious about their relationship with God, faith formation is much easier.
- Geographical Location (weekday parking and distance from homes)
- Other churches (especially with teens)
- Global pandemics or other events that prohibit coming to church temporarily but may lead to long term absences

Faith Formation and Evangelization Goal Statement

Provide lifelong faith formation that deepens our relationship with Christ and forms us into active disciples.

“Stir into flame the gift of God.” (2 Timothy 1:6).

Objectives

1. Prepare adults to know and understand their faith in such a way that they can be proactive and transformative members of the Body of Christ at home and in the world. On-Going
2. Nurture Catholic identity and a sense of communion among children, teens and parents in our faith formation sessions. On-Going
3. Meet the spiritual needs of short-term members (grad students, young adult professionals who are in Memphis temporarily) and the growing downtown community. On-Going
4. Strengthen, grow and enrich engaging continuous faith formation opportunities for parishioners of all ages. On-Going
5. Provide parishioners and the broader Catholic community more education into the Four Pillars of the Dominican Order - Prayer, Study, Community and Preaching – through our parish faith formation programs and the St. Martín De Porres Shrine & Institute by 2022.
6. Invite and welcome all to join us in our parish liturgies and partner them with a member of the community to accompany them through liturgy.
7. Assist in outreach efforts directed towards education and faith formation for the poor and vulnerable of all ages in our Memphis community.
8. Share our beautiful historic space through hosting concerts, public tours, ecumenical gatherings, guest speakers, and virtual online tours.
9. Provide education and support on preparing sacramental occasions such as funerals and weddings, especially to unaffiliated persons who, although distanced from the faith, seek meaning at significant moments in their lives.

Action Steps for this Year

Reopen safely all faith formation for children and teens this fall (including Catechesis of the Good Shepherd atrium sessions, Confirmation prep and High School Scripture Study) and offer encouragement and support for families to return.

Resume weekly in-person RCIA sessions this fall with time for meal and fellowship.

Resume in-person Adult Faith Formation as space allows.

Continue and incorporate virtual formation opportunities as appropriate.

Recruit and train new catechists and youth team members. Hire new youth minister.

Recruit new members with a passion for evangelization to join Faith Formation and Evangelization Team.

Work on Strategic Planning objectives and collaborate with other programming groups as appropriate, including:

- Work with Liturgy and Sacraments Team “Welcome all children to our worship”
- Work with In-Reach Team to offer fellowship events for parents and young families.

Expand faith formation opportunities for infants, toddlers and their parents.

- Include elements of a Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Infant-Toddler environment in our parish nursery and other spaces as appropriate.
- Offer a toddler atrium experience on Sunday mornings at 9:45.
- Offer resources for parents to continue formation after their child’s Baptism (for example, sessions about the spirituality of the young child and praying with young children)