

August 26, 2024

Dear Faith Formation Families,

Please join us on Wednesday, September 11th to celebrate this year's ***Encounter Faith Formation***. We will meet in St. Francis Hall from 6:30-7:30pm. We are very excited to share this year's program - there is something new for everyone – parents, children and youth in grades 1-12 as well as the GA community.

Our program will be based on the vision of the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). On Wednesday evenings, everyone will first meet in large groups then break out into small groups for more learning, age-appropriate activities and discussion.

FOR GRADES 1–5, parents will join their children – first in the large group teaching, then leading their own family small group by grade level. If you have children in multiple grades, you can either:

- discuss the general lesson together and cover that week's grade-level lesson at home since you will have on-line access to grade level curriculum.
- choose one specific grade to participate in; for your children in the other grades, they will be supported by catechists who will also be there to help guide grade level discussions/ activities and parents in that grade level group.

1ST SACRAMENTS PREP – In addition to the weekly Family Formation sessions, we will meet for four Saturday sessions. There will be a First Sacraments parent meeting with information on preparing your child for first Sacraments, 1st Reconciliation Retreat, and the 1st Communion Retreat. Parents work with their children at home between sessions.

FOR 6TH – 8TH GRADERS, youth will meet in one large group, led by catechists who will teach the large group lesson, then facilitate grade level small groups. Parents will attend Encounter.

For grades 9-12, teens in Year 1 & Year 2 Confirmation Preparation will meet in one large group taught by the lead teacher, then break out into small groups by year, led by classroom assistants and small group leaders. Parents will attend Encounter.

ENCOUNTER will also have an updated look that includes videos for selected weeks and discussion of topics of concern such as gender identity and same sex attraction that your children in grades 6-10 will attend with you. The weekly adult small group discussion and prayer will not change and we have trained group leaders ready to lead you in these groups.

We look forward to seeing you on September 11th. You will have an opportunity to register your family if you have not pre-registered, ask questions, meet the catechists and spend time in fellowship with other families. Due to the importance of the information that we will share at this meeting, we ask that at least one parent from every family attend.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 952-227-4000.

Father Tony VanderLoop
Pastor

Viviana Sotro
Latino Ministry Coordinator