

Saint Elizabeth Seton Faith Formation
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*"The closing of a door can bring blessed privacy and comfort—the opening, terror.
Conversely, the closing of a door can be a sad and final thing—the opening a wonderfully joyous moment."
Andy Rooney*

Dear Faith Formation Families,

As a Faith Formation team, we believe that this year will be the opening, the beginning of a joyous new year. Much time, thought and prayer has gone into decisions to modify, to adjust and in some instances change portions of the Faith Formation program. Changes were not arbitrary, but were thoughtfully considered. New directions were open to discussion, with parish staff, with catechists and families as well. And we are very excited with the end results. We are most anxious to begin our new year. What are these changes? I'll begin to open the doors...

Early Childhood

The Early Childhood/Good Shepherd Program, for children ages 3 through Grade 1, has been an extremely vital, relevant, very welcoming introduction to our Faith Formation program. To enhance and embellish classes at this level,...

- Children will attend classes twice a month, on the 2nd & 4th Sundays
- Sessions will be offered during the 9:30am Mass and the 11:30am Mass
- Children will be dismissed from Mass following the Gospel, which will shorten the instructional time a bit, but will be a more age-appropriate time period for younger children.
- Children would be grouped together by age, 3-4 year olds and 5-6 year olds, allowing for more homogeneous lesson planning
- Classes will begin Sunday, October 10th.

Family Faith Festival

Festivals, for many years, have been a unique identifier for Saint Elizabeth Seton Church. The model was personally launched at SES by John Roberto, who conceived the intergenerational model, along with a very strong, visionary team who helped implement the concept. But, to quote William Drayton, "Change starts when someone sees the next step." And, as a team, we are taking the first of many next steps.

Beginning this year...,

- We will return to a model that is primarily classroom centered, for grades 2 through 5.
- We will try to incorporate, over the course of the year, intergenerational components along with some opportunities for adult faith formation
- Classes will be held on Sunday mornings (grades 2-3) and Monday & Tuesday afternoons (grades 4-5)

Classes and instruction for children grades 6 through Confirmation II will generally follow last year's format, with no significant changes.

With all that said, the next question is, "How do we implement and sustain these changes?"

"The spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all." 1 Cor 12:7

Or

To give a more contemporary twist, "It takes a village..."

We need a broad based parish support system! We will be looking for all kinds of assistance within and outside of the classroom. We will be looking for able-bodied furniture movers, one-time guest speakers, crafters, readers, classroom aides, prayer partners, mentors, resource assistants and of course catechists who will share their faith with the children of our parish. Our children need to hear our faith stories, see our reliance on and love of our God and of our community of faith.

Sign-up sheets to volunteer will be available the weekends of September 4-5th and the 11-12th.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact me.

Most Sincerely,

Mary Ann Fagan
Coordinator of Faith Formation

Prayer in Honor of St. Elizabeth Seton

Lord God, you blessed Elizabeth Ann Seton with gifts of grace as wife and mother, educator and foundress, so that she might spend her life in service to your people.

Through her example and prayers, may we,
whose Faith Community is dedicated in her honor, learn to express our love for you in our love for all your children.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.