

**From Father Baer:**

**Next Fall: A New Approach to 5<sup>th</sup>-Grade and 6<sup>th</sup>-Grade Faith Formation**

I wish to invite all Parents of Students in next year's 5<sup>th</sup>-Grade and 6<sup>th</sup>-Grade Faith Formation classes to join me on Wednesday evening, April 4, for a short-but-important meeting from 6:30-7:00 p.m. We will be taking a new approach to our Faith Formation in those two grades. I have four principal goals:

- a. Our young people should become more excited, not less excited, about learning their Faith and living their Faith as they grow up, and this happens in a different way by the time they've reached 5<sup>th</sup> Grade and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade.
- b. Parents are the first and most important teachers of the Faith for their children, and we need to rebuild the crucial role of Parents in our Faith Formation Programs.
- c. After a day of classes at school, most young people (and most adults, frankly) are bored with more classroom time. We need to be more creative in how we work with our weeknight sessions.
- d. It doesn't make sense to bring a young person to Faith Formation if they, and their parents, are not attending Sunday Mass on a regular basis. Our students need to grow in a deeper commitment to the Eucharist and a deeper knowledge of the Eucharist.

Here, then, are some elements of the new approach in Faith Formation for 5<sup>th</sup> Graders and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders next Fall:

1. We will have one Faith Formation session each month on Wednesday evening, 6:30-8:00 p.m., and we will have one Faith Formation session each month on Sunday morning, 9:30-10:15 a.m., between the two Sunday morning Masses. We will ask the parents to attend the Sunday morning sessions with their children, and we will also expect that their families will attend either the 8:30 Mass before or the 10:30 Mass after. I will lead some of these Sunday morning sessions, and I will give special emphasis to helping the students learn about the parts of the Mass and participate actively in the Mass. The Wednesday evening sessions will have a distinctive focus on formation in prayer, in character, and in service to others, and we will keep it lively!
2. Some of the Wednesday evening sessions will combine everyone in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grades (especially with guest speakers or special activities), but the Sunday sessions will distinguish between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, and will sometimes be organized with boys and girls in separate sessions.
3. The worship time on Wednesday nights for the 5<sup>th</sup>-Graders and 6<sup>th</sup>-Graders will be separate from the Praise time for the younger children, with a style of music and prayer that is more engaging for their age group.

I hope to see many of next year's Parents of 5<sup>th</sup> Graders and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders on April 4!