



GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHURCH

loving as Christ loves, serving as Christ serves
amando como Cristo ama, sirviendo como Cristo sirve

Middle School Faith Formation Parents:

Welcome to the 2011-2012 Middle School Faith Formation (MSFF) program!

Today, families face unprecedented demands on your time in a technological era that keeps us multi-tasking at all times. We are in an age where children may have hundreds of 'friends' on Facebook, yet the only friendship that truly matters is the personal relationship they have with Jesus – the One who keeps everything in perspective. You know this, and it matters to you, otherwise you would not be part of this program.

Although a formal program is important, it is only a *supplement* to the personal witness you provide your children every day. The parish faith formation program supports you as the primary formers of the faith and helps you fulfill the promises you made at the baptism of your child. **Your family's weekly attendance at Mass is the single most important thing you can do for your own and your children's faith formation.** Without that, what they learn will seem disconnected from 'real life' and may not take root. Now, more than ever, youth need to feel that their faith is at the heart of *everything they do*, not just another task/commitment/obligation alongside all the others. The relationship they develop with Jesus, strengthened by participation in the Mass and the Sacraments, builds the foundation needed to withstand life's challenges and opportunities. Their faith will form their moral conscience when making important decisions on their own. **If not for faith, where do we turn in times of crisis? What is our basis for making life-changing decisions – the news? TV shows? our friends?**

Your example will be key - if you are hesitant or unenthusiastic about coming to classes or Mass, that is the attitude your child will have. If you view this as a process 'ending' with Confirmation, instead of being a milestone on a life-long journey of faith, that will be their viewpoint. We ask your commitment to approach each class with an open heart and mind – open to whatever the **Holy Spirit** may reveal. Our commitment in return is to make these classes life-giving and nourishing for you and your children. Our process is evolving and we welcome your feedback to help us live up to this commitment.

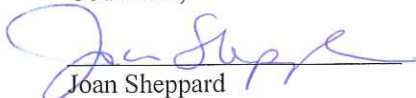
The overriding theme for MSFF is '*Finding God in All Things.*' God is present each and every day; in each and every person, during each and every moment of our lives, not just when we are at Church. It is a key objective that the students become much more aware of God's presence in their daily lives. To that end, all MSFF Students *and Parents* will keep a 'Faith Journal'. Yes, parents, too. What better way to show your children, of any age, that faith formation is a continuous, life-long process. We are never 'done' – we always have something to learn on our journey to God. MSFF classes meet, on average, only once per month, and the concepts learned at each class must be continually reflected upon. The readings and homilies during Mass should be reflected and discussed with your family throughout the week.

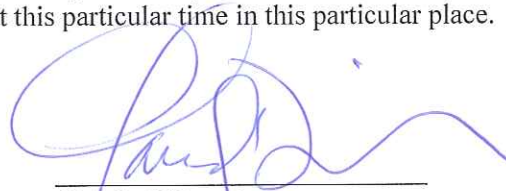
Students and Parents will journal about something that happened– it might be thoughts from the Sunday readings or homily, or you could consider questions such as "Where was God in my week?" or "What is God asking of me today?" etc. The question itself is not as important as the quiet time spent with the Lord..... Each MSFF class will begin in small groups sharing where you experienced God during your week.

We are excited to embark on this journey with you and your family. We look forward to the work of the **Holy Spirit** living in each one of us, whom He has called together at this particular time in this particular place.

"Come, Holy Spirit, Come....."

God Bless,


Joan Sheppard
Director of Faith Formation



Claudia DiRosario
Coordinator, MSFF