



ST. MARY'S

CATHOLIC CHURCH

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I hope this letter finds you and your family well. Unfortunately, it has been a while since we have been able to connect. I do miss seeing everyone around the parish and town.

In these uncertain times, faith has taken on new importance in many of our lives. What we once counted on as a guaranty is not always certain now. For many, the longing for faith and our parish community is growing in our hearts without a clear answer. Where does one turn when the standard answer is not there?

These questions have been weighing on my heart as we looked towards the upcoming Faith Formation year. It's not just our children who are looking for peace, calm, and love amidst the fear and anxiety that surrounds us. Christ is there, ready to be the calm amidst the storm, the refuge amidst the fear and anxiety. As a parish we want to help our *families* see the loving hand of Christ reaching out to them.

This year, for many reasons, St. Mary's is not able to offer our traditional 'classroom' model of Faith Formation. Instead of focusing on what we cannot provide, I am finding great joy in the new opportunities awaiting us. St. Mary's is offering Family Faith Formation for the 2020/2021 school year.

A growing number of our families participated in our monthly Household Sundays last year. It was beautiful to see so many families growing in faith together. This year we are going to continue to grow our family Faith Formation as we work to build up our families and parish community through prayer. St. Mary's will support our families through ongoing Faith Formation in two key ways. First, we will provide month activities and prayers for families to do together throughout the month. Second, we want to put our families into small groups that can help support each other in faith. It is a new plan, and I am sure we will have some bumps along the way. But together, we can help and support one another.

This year's parent handbook has the **Family Faith Formation plan on page 3**. You will also find a registration form and envelope in the pack for your convenience. Information on **Middle School activities and Sacrament Preparation is on page 4**, with the **High School schedule on page 5**. *Everything* looks a little bit different this year. But I do believe we can help each other find Christ in ways and deepen our faith together.

There will be parent meetings on Sunday, August 23, via Zoom at 7 pm and Thursday, August 27, at the Church at 6 pm. (We will use the Church to better practice social distancing and mask will be required.) I encourage you to join us as it will be an opportunity for you to hear more about the upcoming year and ask questions. You are also welcome to contact me directly via email oskystmarydre@diodav.org or phone 641.673.0659.

There are a lot of good possibilities amidst the uncertainty that surrounds us. Together we can support one another in faith and build up the Kingdom of God. I hope you will prayerfully consider taking part in this year's Family Faith Formation, saying yes to meeting Christ in new ways this year.

God Bless!

Samantha

"The Church needs you. Your enthusiasm. Your creativity and the joy that is so characteristic of you."

-Pope Francis