

At-Home Faith Formation Week One!

I pray your family is well! Below are some announcements and resources for our first week of teaching our children at home!

First, if you have not yet picked up your books/lesson plans, please e-mail me as soon as possible at mjones@stmonicachurch.org. If you have already contacted me, please disregard! If you lose your lesson plans or need help understanding them, free to reach out to me or your catechist!

Second, don't forget that you can watch a recorded Mass celebrated by our priests at St. Monica on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvnAjNjiz71_uTm4qTHIRjg

Alternatively, you can join our Bishop, Edward Burns, who will be live streaming Mass at 9:00am on Sundays from the Cathedral. You can access it here: <https://www.cathdal.org/covid19-resources>

Third, some tips for our first week of At-Home Faith Formation!

1. Pray daily as a family. This is the most precious gift we can give our children, because we are giving them an opportunity to hear the voice of God! Set up a prayer table or space if you do not already have one. Katie Warner has some great tips and pics: <http://katiwarnar.com/homemaking/how-to-make-a-home-altar.html>
2. Do a little bit every day. We can imagine how disastrous it would be if we left all our child's Math classwork for Friday... we can't make the same mistake with Faith Formation! Schedule a time for Faith Formation. Choose a good time (we have to set ourselves up for success!). Ten minutes every day will be much more fruitful than trying to cram it all in one hour.
3. Practice prayers to learn by heart every day. This is not the same as prayer time (although certainly family prayer will reinforce memorization). This is a time to get creative-
 - a. Let your kids cover the driveway with their prayers in sidewalk chalk
 - b. Make an illuminated prayer card (google this... so cool!)
 - c. Find videos with the prayers put to song (or make up your own songs!)
 - d. Make "prayer cards" by printing out (or drawing) a religious image and writing the prayer on the back- this would make a beautiful gift for grandparents or other Catholic friends
 - e. Create your own family prayer book, adding a prayer each day by hand
 - f. Check out more tips and print free prayer cards here: <http://www.gshilton.org/memorized-prayers-prayers-to-know-by-heart.html>

Lastly, here are some resources for all of us as we take on the role of Catechist and teacher with our children!

Resources for the whole family

- Our Parish Website now has a tab for “Online Family Faith Formation.” We will be uploading videos, resources, and lesson plans under this tab this coming week. Right now there are some links to helpful sites and daily reflection videos from Fr. Wade and Fr. Guadagnoli: <http://stmonicachurch.org/online-family-faith-formation/family-faith-formation/>
- Formed.org is like Netflix for Catholics! There are a plethora of wholesome Movies for family movie night, documentaries, online retreats and meditations, Stations of the Cross, Bible studies, and fun shows for kids (Br. Francis is my kids favorite!). Go to www.formed.org and get free access by using our parish code: JT85TX
- Strong Catholic Family has a wealth of resources from parent formation to advice on how to talk to kids about tough topics to crafts and prayers for kids: <http://www.catholicfamilyfaith.org/>
- Magnificat is offering free online editions to all during these times. They have amazing reflections and prayers to mark and bring peace to our day: <https://us.magnificat.net/free>
- Sweet Little Ones has posted a great list of Free Resources during COVID-19 Quarantine {Especially for Catholics} <https://www.sweetlittleonesblog.com/2020/03/free-resources-during-covid-19.html?fbclid=IwAR3oO3yZzMompHaA6ZBG9-Wc6O9GTv1mxjizTrkZi0BGvnyXYwy47NiFyM&m=1>
- Lisa Cotter’s 10 tips for “Virtual Mass” (just skip #6!) <https://www.instagram.com/p/B9uefcKFbGE/>

Resources for Pre-K and Kinder (3-6 yr olds)

- Wondering how to pray with your 3-year-old? Of if it is possible to pray with your squirrely 4-year-old? Read this article on praying with 3-6 year olds! <https://www.cgsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/Praying-with-young-children.pdf>
- Set up a prayer space for your little one at home! <https://www.cgsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/HowToSetUpPrayerTable.pdf>
- Make prayer cards for your child to trace using a light box or tracing paper (my boys love this and will trace for hours!): <https://www.cgsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/PrayerCardsforParents.pdf>
- Tips for the littlest ones (even for babies!): <https://www.cgsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/ForYourBaby.pdf>

Resources for Elementary (1st-6th grade)

- Catholic Icing has practical homeschooling tips, boredom busters for kids, and amazing crafts and activities to celebrate the liturgical year. <https://www.catholicicing.com/>
- March edition of Magnifikid is free online! <https://us.magnificat.net/flipbook/KID/196/>
- Holy Heroes will e-mail a daily Lenten activity or video that you can sign up for on their website... for free! <https://www.holyheroes.com/>
- Loyola Press has all the prayers our kids are memorizing and more: <https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/prayer/traditional-catholic-prayers>
- Loyola Press also has daily saints activities and lessons: <https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/saints>

Resources for Teens

- There are so many great Faith Formation programs on Formed.org as well as saint movies. See above for the log in code.
- Lifeteen in a blog for Catholic teens: <https://lifeteen.com/>

I am here to support and assist you as we begin this journey of teaching the faith at home! I will be working from home, checking my e-mail several times a day, and returning phone calls as soon as possible. Feel free to call or e-mail with any questions or concerns you may have!

God bless,

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