



Saint Mary's, Saints Mary & Martha, and Our Lady of the Snow
Mailing address: 15 Clark St, Auburn NY 13021
Office address: 61 Pulaski St, at the back of St. Hyacinth School
Office phone#: 315-252-3439

Faith Formation Vision

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone! Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength. Take to heart these words which I command you today. Keep repeating them to your children. Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6: 4-7

The above quote from Deuteronomy makes up the great commandment for our Jewish brothers and sisters. The first part of the quote is known as the **Shema**, and every Jewish person learns this and puts it to memory at a young age. It is no coincidence that when the Pharisees asked Jesus “what is the great commandment”, he repeated the Shema.

When we love God with our whole being, we are formed and con-formed more to Him. As we are formed into God we learn how to really love others as ourselves. **Encountering** the Love of God, **Engaging** with the teachings of the Church, and becoming a **Witness** of the Faith make up the three aspects of discipleship formation.

Auburn is blessed with two excellent Catholic Schools that offer top notch Catholic education, St. Albert the Great Academy (Pre-K-5) and Tyburn Academy (6-12). Bishop Matano highly recommends parents to consider having their children educated in a Catholic School. The Bishop considers this the best option for forming our young people in the faith.

For children and families unable to attend Catholic school, you are invited to participate in our parish faith formation programs. At the center of the vision for Faith Formation is the family. Parents have the awesome role and responsibility of being the first and most important teachers of their children. Nothing can replace the role of the parent in forming children in the faith. The role of the Faith Formation Office and the programs we offer is to support parents in fulfilling the promise they made at their child's baptism “to raise them up in the faith”. The catechism calls the family a *domestic church* (2204) and *the original cell of social life* (2207). Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children (2223). Therefore, the family is central to our faith formation programs. Everything we do in Faith Formation is to support the family growing in holiness and the formation as disciples of Jesus Christ!

This year we are offering three programs with a focus on the age specific formation needs of our young people and families, including:

- a) *Pre-K (3&4) and Kindergarten* - the **Allelu** program with **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** time in the atrium.
- b) *1st through 5th grade* - **Family of Faith**.
- c) *6th and 7th grade* - **Alive in Christ** home study with monthly student gathering.



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Allelu and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (*Pre-K 3 & 4, and Kindergarten*) is a two-part program. First, students will complete activities at home with their parents using the **Allelu** Program. Second, students will have access to use the **Atrium of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**. This program founded on the principles of Dr. Maria Montessori. It is a unique approach to catechesis founded in both Sacred Scripture and the Liturgy: rich with the spiritual teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. Beautiful and orderly, the prepared environment, called the Atrium, is designed specifically for children to work with a wide range of materials; materials that are thoughtfully made to reflect beauty. The Atrium is ordered to allow children to work uninterrupted with the materials encouraging concentration. It is a peaceful place to learn, grow and fall in love with God.

Family of Faith (*1st through 5th Grade*) combines whole family at home learning, and age specific class time at our monthly gatherings. Families will meet one Sunday a month at either St. Mary's before the 10:45am Mass OR at Our Lady of the Snow at St. Patrick's in Cato after the 8:30am Mass. If for some reason we had to stop meeting in person for health reasons the program we would meet virtually through Zoom once a month.

Alive in Christ (*6th and 7th Grade*) students with parental guidance will complete lessons in book and then take an eAssessment. Monthly, the students will gather with the Director of Religious Education (DRE) to review the main concepts learned. Students will have a physical book as well as a digital book. Activities will be completed online and tracked by the DRE. There will be a schedule of when lessons should be completed.

Family Faith Enrichment

Throughout the year there will be monthly family enrichment opportunities. Some of these will be gatherings and some of them will be activities that the family does on the own. I hope your family will decide to partake in these Family Faith Enrichment activities.

Holy Mass at the Center of our Week

The Eucharist is the Source and Summit of our faith. The most important thing a family can do to grow in faith and in their relationship with Jesus Christ is to attend Mass. There is no other place that we can come face to face with our God than in the Eucharist. Decide as a family to make your participating in Holy Mass the center of your week!

I am hear for you if you have questions, concerns, or just need someone to pray for you!

In the Peace of Christ,

Mr. Carlo Stebbings, Director of Faith Formation

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