

Our Lady of the Assumption
Faith Formation and Youth Ministry
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Living in Faith

A Newsletter from the Faith Formation and Youth Ministry Office

A Letter from Mrs. Pegarella

Dear Faith Formation Families,



I've finally found a moment to stop and smell the roses, or in this case, the geraniums! Yes, this is pink so when you go, "Where did I put that pink thing that came from church?", it has a shot of being found. *(Assuming your kitchen counter looks like mine, of course.)*

Or it could be my three daughters. I always joke that my household is the only one that can do a weekly load of reds and pinks.

While I'm on the personal tangent, I want to take a moment for a Mom brag...our youngest, Sarah, just graduated from high school. It comes with all the feelings you can imagine; joy and pride for all she has accomplished and all the wonderful memories we now have of her experiences in leadership roles and just having fun with her friends. Sadness and loss, as she is the youngest of our three to graduate. We're done with high school. How is that possible? My fall calendar isn't filled with running to the next performance, meeting or game. It has dates to drop the girls at their respective colleges. How quiet my house will be in September! In the meantime, it is ready to explode with belongings and friends, and I couldn't be happier. I am soaking in each moment I hear our girls laughing together. I thank the Lord everyday for all the blessings he has showered on Jeff and me.

Wasn't I just helping tie a shoe, or putting a band-aid on a boo boo? My start at OLA came as the extra pair of hands at VBS, traveling with the youngest kids. Our oldest daughter was in that group.

Now she's a high school teacher, and coordinating VBS with her sisters this summer!

Isn't God's plan amazing?

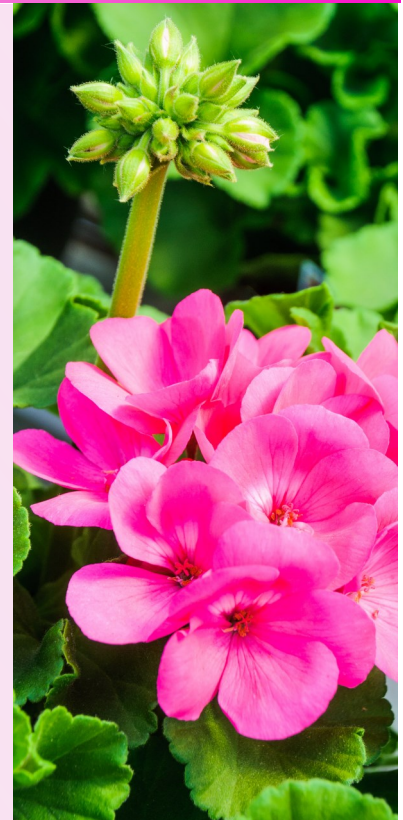
Inside this letter, you'll find a registration form for the 2022-2023 Faith Formation program. Please make any additions or corrections and return it with payment by September 1, 2022.

If your little ones are unsure and **you'd** like to hold that little hand, please just ask.

We'd love to have you.

May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you healthy and safe,

Kristi Pegarella



Elementary Faith Formation (Grades 1-5)

For the 2022-2023 year we will continue to use Saint Mary's Press, *Discover: Finding Faith in Life* for grades 1-5. This program uses as its core text, *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Each child has received their own Bible to keep and use in future years. Children new to our program will receive their own Bible this fall. Each child will receive a folder with grade appropriate activity booklets for each chapter.



All our families are encouraged to attend the 9 a.m. mass. During this mass we offer Children's Liturgy of the Word, where the children step out of the church and discuss the readings and Gospel. It's a wonderful way to introduce God's Word to our little ones. Faith Formation sessions will meet on Sunday mornings following the 9 a.m. mass. Our sessions will run from **10-11 a.m.** (*If the 9 a.m. mass runs a bit over, our end time may also be extended.*) The Discover series has a wonderful Family Page on the back of each activity packet. This lets the parents see all the kids have just discussed with our Catechists, and continue the lesson all week. There are Saints and prayers on each packet to share with the whole family.

Once a month, our Faith Formation session will include our families AND the children, i.e. Family Faith Formation. Later this summer we'll have the exact dates and topics out to you. These sessions are an important part of our Faith Formation program and attendance will be taken.

We will also offer the option for you to participate in Faith Formation at home through use of Home Guides, and not in-person. You will complete the chapters at home with your child and submit those completed chapters in January, and again, in June. Please email me directly (kbpola@nycap.rr.com) so that I can gather the Home Guides for you, or so that I can set up a digital platform for you. Although we'd prefer to see you here at OLA, we do understand that this may not be the best path for your family, and we don't want to lose you!

We will celebrate First Eucharist in early May with our children and their families. As the date gets closer, we will fill in the details.

Flexibility is of utmost importance as we travel the road in Faith Formation this fall. We realize that these plans may change due to an uptick in COVID percentages. If our plans change we will notify you via email as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please give me a call directly at 518-785-1605. Please leave me a message if I am not there and I'll get back to you as quickly as I can. Your children are one the greatest gifts that God has shared with me. Thank you!

*If you have a **first grader starting our program**, we have enclosed a new child registration form so that we can establish a permanent Faith Formation and sacramental record at OLA.*

Blessed by you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Anthony J. Regarulla'.



Have you watched **The Chosen**? This amazing series brings to life many of the stories in the Bible. Each Sunday, while your children are in Faith Formation, we will be playing an episode for you! Time for you to share your love of God, and grab a cup of coffee with other parishioners. Meet us in the Gathering Space!

Faith Formation (Gr. 6-8)

Middle School Faith Formation will return on Tuesday evenings from 7-8PM in-person. For flexibility, we will again be using St. Mary's Press Discovery Series because it adapts somewhat to learning from home or in-person. We will be adding special evenings in the church, and large group gatherings either as grade levels, or as a large group for experiential learning. Groups will also have the opportunity to visit the Regional Food Bank during the year. Fall semester for 6th grade will be *Exploring the Story of Israel*, 7th grade will be *Exploring the Bible*, 8th grade will be *Seeking Justice*. Your young person should have a good readable Bible, and 6th graders should still have their Bible from 5th grade. We do have some extras on hand should you need one. If you would like your youth to have a brand new Bible, they can be purchased at <https://www.smp.org/product/4141/Breakthrough/> for \$29.95 +S&H. Hopefully we will grow deeper into all the sacred Scripture holds for us.

High School Faith Formation is more involved because it prepares the youth for the Sacrament of Confirmation. We are planning to return to in-person learning on Monday nights from 7-8PM using the Dynamic Catholic series *Decision Point* beginning in 9th grade through 10th grade when we finish with seven special sessions in church with Fr. Burke for immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation in spring of 10th grade. We will also do an in-depth study of the mass, and the Gospels using *From Mass to Mission: Understanding the Mass and its Significance for Our Christian Life* from Liturgy Training Publications.

6th/7th/8th grades: Tuesdays 7-8PM

Look for dates in an upcoming mailing in August

9th /10th grades: Mondays 7-8PM

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of regular attendance. Please try your best to set these nights and times aside. Thank you.

Youth Ministry

Here at OLA, Youth Ministry is part of the heart and soul of this community. Teens are valued and revered in every aspect of parish life. Through their active participation, they learn the value of being part of this faith family. They are lectors, Special Ministers of the Eucharist at Mass, Altar Servers, Event Planners, Parish Council Members, and at times the energy that fuels our sails. There is a talented and dedicated group of teens that make up our **Core Team** of youth, supported by a few adult Wisdom Keepers, who create, plan and implement the activities and events the parish enjoys year round. We staff **Vacation Bible School** with teens, sponsor **Monday Nights on the Lot** four Mondays in the summer, featuring a barbecue dinner, kickball, bocce, corn hole, badminton and more to enjoy together as a community. We help at the **parish picnic**, hold **pancake breakfasts**, feature middle school **Roamin' Catholics** events, **Family Game nights**, **St. Nicholas' Workshop** for the little ones, hold special **parish dinners**, and the **Friendship Luncheon** for seniors in February. We offer special occasions to pray together like **Stations of the Cross** in Lent, **Advent prayer**, and a night for high school seniors to pray about their post high school decisions.

But Youth Ministry could not accomplish all of this without the incredibly generous support of the whole parish through our fundraising efforts featuring our three main events, **Spring Flower Sale**, **Fall Mum Sale**, and **Christmas Wreath Sale**. We also continue to benefit from the generosity and efforts of the **CLYNK** program which financially supports our vision with your donations of 5 cent returnables through the use of the green bags available in the gathering space alcove and Hannaford Markets. OLAYM continues to sponsor a child in Uganda with a monthly donation towards his education and development. Thank you for helping us continue the mission. We were also able to continue our support of the American Cancer Society through Relay For Life donations...thank you! We share many powerful **service opportunities** in our nearby communities and beyond.

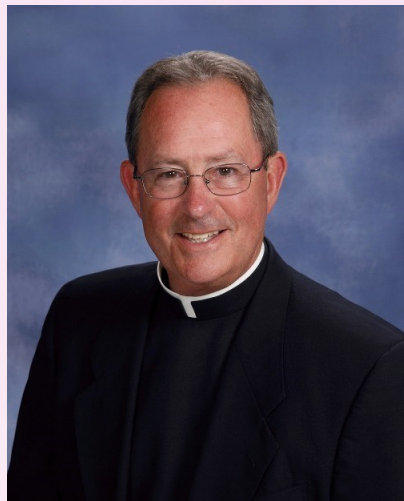
It is time to return to gathering our youth together in service, faith and friendship! The Core Team of Youth and Adults will be gathering soon to make plans for the coming year. Please feel free to submit your ideas, or **contact me if you are interested in being a part of our planning groups**.

Thank you for all your kindness and support throughout the year. We are looking forward to the many ways we hope to give back to all of you in the coming months and year ahead.



A Word from The Pastor

Dear Faith Formation Families,



I hope that you have all had some time to relax and enjoy the summer. Summer always seems to go by way too fast, so take every moment you can to enjoy these days. In September we will resume Faith Formation sessions. The past two years of Covid have made this a particularly hard time for everyone and I pray we will be able to begin anew this fall. Let me mention a few important items for us as a parish

community and as Catholic families. **First** and foremost is our attendance and presence at Mass. I know it was convenient to watch Mass on YouTube in your PJs but we truly miss your presence in church. **Active participation in the Mass is true worship of God.** Recently, we started “Children’s Liturgy of the Word” again at the 9:00 a.m. Mass. We have a small number of children in attendance but hope this will grow and expand. We have a lot of “catch-up” to do since our youngest members of the community have not been with us at Mass. I am counting on you to make the effort to bring your children to Mass and to their Faith Formation session. **Second—We Need Altar Servers!** During Covid we could not have servers on the altar but beginning in September we will recruit new servers. This is a wonderful way for your children to experience and participate in the Mass. **Third—Commitment—**On the day of your child’s baptism you promised to raise them in the practice of faith. Providing your child with “spiritual formation” helps to ground them for life. We hear again the voice of Jesus, our Good Shepherd—“Let the children come to me and do not hinder them”. **Fourth—**we are here for you, but we need you to be actively involved in your faith as well.

I see this year as a rich opportunity to “Renew” our faith, to “Live” our faith and to “Celebrate” our faith in Jesus Christ. Please join me in this commitment.

Fr. Burke

