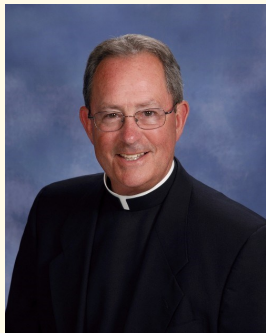


Our Lady of the Assumption
Faith Formation and Youth Ministry
498 Watervliet-Shaker Road
Latham, NY 12110
(518) 785-1605

Summer 2024
Volume 9, Issue 1

Living in Faith

A Newsletter from the Faith Formation and Youth Ministry Office



A Word from The Pastor

Greetings to all!

The school year is drawing to a close. The summer season is almost here and everyone is looking for a break. It has been a busy year for all of us and I want to thank our catechists for their commitment and gift of faith shared with our children and youth. We cannot have a Faith Formation without catechists. In a special way, I want to congratulate our children who celebrated First Eucharist and First Reconciliation this year. Those are very special spiritual moments in our faith journey. Confirmation was also a special moment for our high school students sealed with the Holy Spirit by Bishop Scharfenberger.

Summer is a time to enjoy vacations, a time to relax and best of all to have more time with family and friends. I hope it will be all of that for our families. Please remember to include the Lord in your summer plans. Sunday Eucharist is a time for each of us to be connected to the bigger family of faith; and to give praise and thanks to God for our many blessings.

One of the blessings we celebrate this summer is welcoming our new parochial vicar (pastoral associate) Fr. Joseph Pham. Fr. Joseph was ordained to the priesthood on May 18th and will be joining the OLA Parish Family in June. Please take a moment to introduce yourselves to him at mass. (Please see the special article on Fr. Joseph in this edition of *Living In Faith*.)

Summer is always an active time here at OLA for parishioners of all ages to join in the fun and events that are planned for you. Youth Ministry will be hosting Monday Nights On The Lot in July; VBS (Vacation Bible School) will be held in August; the Parish Picnic is scheduled for Sunday, September 22nd.

Have a wonderful summer and include OLA events on your calendar.

We always have great fun! , Fr. Burke



Please return your Faith Formation Registration for 2024-2025 in the enclosed envelope with payment by August 9! **THANK YOU!**



Join us for BBQ, Bocce, Kickball, Pickleball, and all kinds of FUN!
July 8, 15, 22, and 29
Many hands make light work!
Want to help set-up, run and/or cleanup? Call 518-785-1605 and ask for Rosemary Gavin.

Vacation Bible School 2024

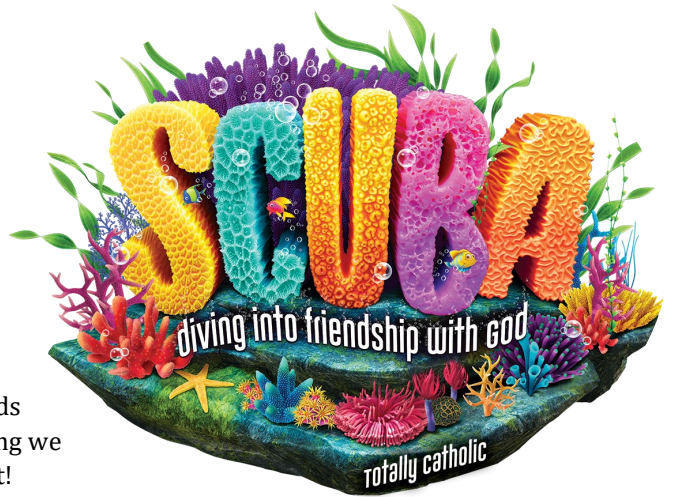
SCUBA—Diving into friendship with God

Send your kids on a splash-tastic adventure August 5-9! At Scuba VBS, kids dive into friendship with God! Scuba is filled with awesome Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, and touch! Hands-on science experiments, team-building games, unforgettable Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith flow into real life. (Since everything is hands-on, kids might get a little messy. Be sure to send them in play clothes and sturdy shoes.) Plus, we'll help kids discover how to see evidence of God in everyday life—something we call God Sightings®. Get ready to hear that phrase a lot!

Register at: www.myvbs.org/VBSOLASCUBA/

August 5-9, 2024 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon Registration deadline is Monday, July 1, 2024

Spaces will fill up fast. Please register as soon as possible. Once you've registered on-line, return the enclosed release form with payment! (It can go in the envelope with your registration for 2024-2025 Faith Formation.)



Elementary Faith Formation (Grades 1-5)

For the 2024-2025 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 receives their own Bible to keep and use in Grades 2-5. Every fall, a folder with grade appropriate activity booklets for each chapter is given to each child. Our First Graders receive a Children's Bible that is a bit easier to read. They will get *The Catholic Children's Bible* in 2nd grade.

All our families are encouraged to attend the 9 a.m. mass. During this mass we offer Children's Liturgy of the Word, where our youngest 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 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 weekly 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. If your child is absent, I will email the home study guide to you so that you can cover that individually.



We are going to shake up our **Family Faith Formation** program this fall. Once a month, October—April, we will host a Family Faith Formation session. We invite our families (**parents and kiddos**) to attend. I ask that you attend a minimum of 3 sessions this year (2024-2025). If you want to come to all of them, I'd be thrilled! Pick those that meet your family's needs, schedules, likes or seem interesting to you. Later this summer I'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 kept. We are going to offer these at different times in the hope of better attendance. Our Hospitality Sunday's are going to be kept strictly for hospitality. Donuts and coffee, friendship and catching up with one another. We will not hold Family Faith formation at the same time.

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. A separate schedule for First Eucharist Sacramental Prep will be sent out to our families celebrating the sacrament.

Flexibility is of utmost importance as we travel the road in Faith Formation this fall. 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 of the greatest gifts that God has shared with me. Thank you!

If you have a first grader starting our program, please complete enclosed the new child registration form (reverse side of the registration form) so that we can establish a permanent Faith Formation and sacramental record at OLA.

Blessed by you,

Faith Formation (Gr. 6-10)

Middle School Faith Formation will return on **Monday** evenings from 7-8 p.m. We will be adding special evenings for FAMILIES to equip them to build the domestic church in the home. Groups will also have the opportunity to serve at 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 and 7th 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 \$32.95+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. They also meet on **Monday** nights from 7-8 p.m. In spring of 10th grade, we share several special sessions in church with Fr. Burke for immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation which takes place in late April or May at the discretion of the Bishop's schedule. One evening of service at the Regional Food Bank is included.

***In addition to regular Faith Formation, we highly encourage you to see that your teen experiences *living their faith* by participating in many of the Youth Ministry activities available to them, including retreats, service opportunities within and outside of OLA, and community building events such as lock-ins! Those times "away" from the routine offer the opportunity for young people to connect with each other and with God. That connection is necessary to serve as a foundation for sustaining lifelong faith.

6th/7th/8th grades: Mondays 7-8 p.m.

Look for dates in an upcoming mailing in August.

9th /10th grades: Mondays 7-8 p.m.

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, 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¢ returnables through the use of the green bags available in the gathering space. OLAYM continues to sponsor a child in Bolivia monthly through *Unbound* towards her 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.

We look forward to gathering our youth together in service, faith and friendship! The Core Team of Youth and Adults will be making 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!** youthola@olalatham.org

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 months and year ahead.

Rosemary Gavin



Welcome Fr. Joseph Pham!

We have a new face here at OLA. Fr. Joseph, one of our newly ordained priests has been assigned to our parish by Bishop Scharfenberger. Fr. Joseph was born in Vietnam and raised in a devout Catholic family. He has a great devotion to Mary, our Blessed Mother, and credits her with leading him on his spiritual journey to priesthood. He says: "Mary has had her hand on my shoulder showing me the way. Now, here I am at a parish named in her honor. I am blessed". Fr. Joseph looks forward to meeting the parishioners and sharing in the faith of the parish. It is a blessing to have this new priest join us here at OLA.

Sacramental Celebrations at Our Lady of the Assumption!



**Welcome to
the Table of the Lord!**

Ava Biviano, Charlotte Childs,
Luisa Criollo Lombana, Roen Goyer,
Brielle Hanczaryk, Vincent
Hanczaryk, Liam Keating,
Jacob Liberty, Sawyer Liberty,
Mara Lopez Tovar, William Luke,
Carson Merrill, Kaiden Moffitt,
Christiano Nylin, & Leah Pailley



**May you be filled
with the Holy Spirit!**

Tessa Clare Carroll
Teagan Anne Cody
Joseph Anthony DeAngelis
Aidan Sebastian Erickson
Emma Sophia Freed
Sadie Anastasia Garber
Grace Madeleine Sophie Hanrahan
Tristan Christopher Hasan
Ryan Christopher Keegan
McKenna Brigid Kelly
Samuel Carlo Acutis Leisner
Peter Cecelia Loffredo
Marissa Veronica Mackay
Ethan Angelico McCormick
Reece Michael Meier
Vincent Sebastian Moryl
Shannon Anne O'Neill
Jacob Michael Perea
Matthew John the Apostle Rourke

