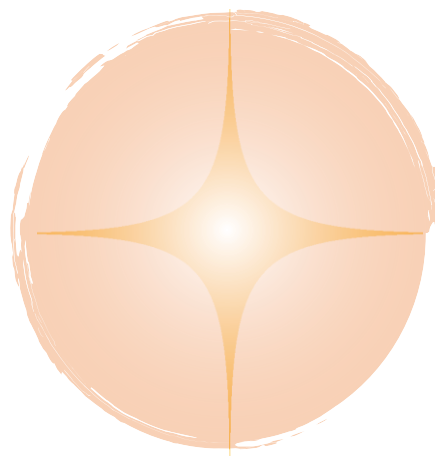




Discipleship Formation

2020-2021

*Learning how to Discover, Follow,
Worship, and Share Jesus as a
Community of Faith*



Welcome to a new year!

Wow, what a crazy time to be disciples of Jesus! We have some exciting events, opportunities and stories to share in the upcoming year and look forward to journeying with each one of you.

Due to the many changes surrounding community and classrooms around the world, I wanted to reach out and share with you our interim plans for Discipleship Formation for Fall 2020.

Please know that any time you have questions, concerns or feedback I am available to talk. I believe that learning to follow Jesus is a path we are all on and that having the relationships and resources to do so is most important. You can reach me at amberlyb@nativitydisciples.org.

First of all, registration is OPEN!

Go directly to <https://www.osvhub.com/nativity-of-our-lord-parish-1/forms/2020-21-discipleship-formation-registration> or www.nativitydisciples.org/parent-resources

This year, payment is built in for online registration! Paper registration is also available in this packet along with the Fall 2020 formation calendar. All forms are also available online along with the parent handbook and calendar at www.nativitydisciples.org/parent-resources

Due to COVID restrictions and the difficulty of keeping our youngest ones separate and safe, we are working through some solutions for our traditional 4/5 Church Time. We will most likely be providing materials to use as you wish and also provide a few online learning sessions for you throughout the year. If you have a 4 or 5-year-old, please register them as usual and we will be in touch.

New staffing!

As most of you know, Mary Carter has stepped back from her role as Director of Discipleship Formation effective June 30th. We are so grateful for her vision and support during this time of transition for all of families. Our new pastor, Fr. Matt Simonar, will be hiring a replacement for the Director's position. We hope this individual will start in the Fall and will be responsible for finalizing the 2019-20 sacraments, initiating the 2020-21 sacrament preparations and planning for the Spring semester.

First Communion and Confirmation Sacrament Completion

We are planning that First Communion will take place on the weekend of September 26th and 27th with Fr. Matt Simonar. We will likely be requiring families to sign-up with the size of their group so we can prepare our limited space as necessary. Families received a more detailed email about sign-up and final preparation expectations earlier this week.

Two Confirmation dates are already in the works for 2019-20 candidates. One will be July 29th, 2020 with Fr. Mike and one will be October 11th, 2020 with Fr. Matt. Paperwork has been sent out as well as instructions for the final preparations. One of our candidate's mothers, Jennie Vyskocil, will be helping me pull together the first celebration in this short amount of time and I am grateful.

COVID-19 Formation Plans

Many of you have been in our facility on class nights. In classrooms of our size, there is very little room for social distancing. As such, we are developing a new format for our weekly formation. We are introducing a hybrid program that will combine an online learning platform and in-person socially-distant gatherings. This will allow your children to continue learning each week, allow us to track their learning and growth, and also allow the parish community to walk with them in-person in a safely staggered schedule where we can use our larger gathering spaces.

In order for us to make sure that we are meeting our expectations for formation hours the following will be expected each month:

- ***Two online learning sessions*** at the various learning levels – you will be provided with a login.
- ***One in-person gathering*** including large and small group dynamics with catechist guides (see *notes below)
 - For grades 1-6 we are expecting **family virtual learning and family attendance** at the in-person sessions. We need to utilize family learning at these grade-levels to provide safely-sized groups. This can be done in many ways including a parent, a grandparent, older sibling or 2-3 families working together.
 - Grades 7-11 will be in small student groups, but we will need enough small group leaders for 1 adult per 8 students to provide these groups safely. **Parents, we need you as small group leaders.**
- ***One Mass worksheet*** per family in grades 1-6 and 1 per student in grades 7-11

For your convenience and to spread out our attendance within the facility, we will have two in-person nights at each level to choose from. This must be done as part of your registration so that we can plan ahead. You are only expected to attend one in-person session each month.

** If you have a family at both age levels in your family, please contact me and we will determine together the best evening for you to join.*

*** If you still find yourself uncomfortable with in-person gatherings or have high-risk immediate family members, we will have online small groups with catechist teams as well – **this will also be the model for any homeschooling families.***

The online learning sessions will be more than simply a faith video – they will include a learning path with activities to be completed and reflection questions to be answered. The good news is that at the beginning of the year and then again at the beginning of each month, we will deliver material packets to you so there will be no printing required and any responses we ask for can be submitted through our platform. Completion of these online sessions are trackable and will be how we track attendance this year.

Moreover, as the Mass is our central worship and critical to our lives of faith, we will be continuing to request a monthly Mass worksheet be submitted – 1 per family in grades 1-5 and 1 per student in grades 6-11. These can be completed and submitted online even if you are still watching Mass from home.

There are a few things we need from you as parents. At the 1-6th grade level, we need you to come to the in-person sessions and make a dedicated time for your children to complete their virtual lessons. At the 7-11th grade level, we will need some new small group leaders to keep our groups small, safe and effective. All materials and formation will be provided. You need not have faith or teaching experience to lead these groups. All you need to be able to do is complete your background check and VIRTUS session (now available online) and talk with a group of no more than 8 children. There will be a place in the registration to sign up to be a small group leader.

If you have been with us for years, we welcome you back. If you have young children just starting with our discipleship programs, we welcome you! If you have been away for various reasons or have new circumstances like grandchildren or nieces, nephews or neighbors who would like to join us on our discipleship journey, we welcome you. **All are welcome.**

Warmest and Healthiest Blessings,

Amberly Boerschinger
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