

Restore•Renew•Proclaim

The Hope that is Christ



The Goal is Lifelong Faith Formation

A new model of faith formation has been developing over the last 40 years. We have become accustomed to the classroom-instructional model. This model assumes that it is enough for young people to learn facts about the faith, once a week during their formative years. We all know that it takes much more than this for children to develop a strong foundation in their Catholic faith. The new model emphasizes that the community is at the heart of all faith formation. "Faith is communicated by a community of believers and the meaning of faith is developed by its members out of their history, by their interaction with each other, and in relation to the events that take place in their lives." (C. Ellis Nelson, Where Faith Begins, p.10)

The life of our Church is centered in events that have the power to educate and transform individuals and the whole community. As Catholics, these include Church year feasts and seasons, sacraments and liturgy, justice and service, prayer and spiritual traditions, and community life. We know that these events are important to us, but we have to constantly learn how to participate in them so that we can understand them more fully. Only then will they have the power to change us both personally and as a parish community

Lifelong faith formation is a process of growing in the faith that begins with baptism. Immersed in the life of the Trinity, we are adopted sons and daughters of God our Father, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit.

Like all human relationships, developing and deepening our relationship with the Trinity happens gradually and over time. Consequently, lifelong faith formation provides opportunities and experiences throughout the entire life span to strengthen our relationship and knowledge of God, Jesus and the Spirit; to enhance our understanding of Scripture, Tradition and doctrines of our faith; and to sustain us in living as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Catechesis is no longer for children only. If we are to be a church of missionary disciples, we all need to enter into the process of deepening our faith by continually learning and experiencing what it means to be a Catholic Christian