

FAMILY FORMATION



What is Family Formation?

Family Formation is a truly innovative faith formation program for families with children in Kindergarten through tenth grade. It is based on the principle that "Parents are the primary educators in the faith" (GDC 255), Family Formation is designed to be used at home, in the domestic church.

Family Formation offers a fresh, new approach to catechesis – it is family-based, has an adult education component at its core, is founded on the truth and teachings of the Catholic Church, and strengthens families to become the domestic churches our Holy Father has called them to be. This unique, challenging, and creative curriculum is designed to make living the faith a way of life and a life-long learning adventure.

How is the program run?

Families gather together at the parish once a month, for one with a catechist. During this time, families focus on one of the four pillars of the Catholic faith, (*Creed, Morality, Sacraments, Prayer*), enabling families to have follow-up discussions about their faith. Before each family leaves, they are given a packet of Home Lessons to be used each week throughout the remainder of the month. Each home lesson offers parents a great deal of flexibility and a variety of activities. This allows parents, who are the best judges of their children's needs, skills, and attention span, to tailor lessons to their family's needs. We encourage parents to challenge but not overwhelm their young children, knowing that lessons will be covered again the next time through the three-year cycle.

Approximately one hour per week for the other three weeks is set aside by parents to teach their children from the easy-to-use weekly Home Lessons. Again, the family learns together, enabling parents to draw on common understandings and incorporate them into teachable moments that arise in the course of daily family life.

What do you offer for sacramental preparation?

The Church of St. Mary at Clinton Heights offers immediate family preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist, (offered in 2nd grade or age 7) and Confirmation (offered fall of 11th grade or age 15). Families with children preparing for these sacraments are asked to join the sacramental preparation in addition to the family formation program.

How can parents who feel they are not adequately catechized teach their children the faith at home?

Parents do not have to be experts in the faith to use Family Formation. Each lesson is easily understood by everyone. By simply spending a small amount of time in preparation each week, parents can become familiar with the topic in the upcoming lesson. Additional references from Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church are given for those interested in further study. One of the richest blessings of Family Formation comes as families learn about the beauty and truth of the Catholic faith together. Many parents have said they have learned a great deal about the catholic faith through Family Formation.

For additional information or to register for the program, please contact Maureen Billa, Pastoral associate for Evangelization and Catechesis at paec@nycap.rr.com or 518.449.2232 x12