

ST. MARK FAITH FORMATION

January 2021

MERRY CHRISTMAS and Happy New Year!! I pray you each are having a blessed Christmas season! (Remember that for Catholics, Christmas does not end until Epiphany which we will celebrate this Sunday.) While the break was nice, I am ready for us to begin having gatherings again next week.

Since many of us may be struggling to get our brains out of "holiday/vacation" mode, I wanted to start with a few reminders...

1) Mass Time Changes begin this weekend. The new schedule is:

Saturday 4:00pm – St. Mary, Ackley

Saturday 6:30pm – St. Mary, Eldora

Sunday 8 :00am – St. Mary, Hampton

Sunday 10:30am – St. Mark, Iowa Falls

Sunday 5:30pm – St. Patrick, Hampton (Spanish)

2) We will be continuing to meet virtually for Faith Formation for the time being. The Faith Formation Commission will meet again in February to re-evaluate. The attached calendar shows the schedule for the remainder of the year, showing options for both virtual and gathered sessions.

3) Classes resume for students in Kindergarten – Grade 3 on January 6, Grades 4-8 on January 13, and Grades 9-10 on January 10.

4) If you haven't already, you can pick up your family's next sets of **Gospel Weeklies**. They are in a basket in the chapel entrance. Please feel free to stop and pick up the packet for your family. We will also have a pick-up night on January 5 (5:30-7:00pm). Pull up to the front of the church as we have done in the past.

5) **Epiphany Blessing**: This is a beautiful tradition of our faith. If you would like to bless your home this year I have attached the blessing to this email.

Kindergarten – Grade 3:

- Continue to do weekly home lessons using the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies that you will pick up. These should take about 20 minutes per week.
- Please be sure to have your student prepared for monthly virtual sessions (they should have their prayer book and Bible with them) and connected prior to 6:30pm. They should not be eating or drinking during the sessions. Contact me for connection information.

- Once a month we hold virtual family activities. All students and at least one parent is expected to attend these events. In January we will meet on January 20.
- We encourage you to check out the Wanderlight game if you have not done so yet. (Links were sent out, but let me know if you need the information again.) As administrator I can see how students are progressing, so if you ever have any questions, let me know.

Grades 4-5:

- Continue to do weekly home lessons using the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies that you picked up. These should take about 20 minutes per week.
- Please be sure to have your student prepared for monthly virtual sessions (they should have their prayer book and Bible with them) and connected prior to 6:30pm. They should not be eating or drinking during the sessions. Contact me for connection information.
- Once a month we hold virtual family activities. All students and at least one parent is expected to attend these events. In January we will meet on January 20.
- We encourage you to check out the Wanderlight game if you have not done so yet. (Links were sent out, but let me know if you need the information again.) As administrator I can see how students are progressing, so if you ever have any questions, let me know.

Grades 6-8:

- Continue to do weekly home lessons using the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies that you picked up. These should take about 20 minutes per week.
 - Please be sure to have your student prepared for monthly virtual sessions (they should have their prayer book and Bible with them) and connected prior to 6:30pm. They should not be eating or drinking during the sessions. Contact me for connection information.
 - Once a month we hold virtual family activities. All students and at least one parent is expected to attend these events. In January we will meet on January 20.
- **Youth Ministry**
 - *Virtual gatherings* for youth in **grades 6-12**, are held once per month. Our next gathering will be Sunday, January 24 (6:45-8:00pm). Join us for fun, fellowship (sometimes with prizes) and to pray. Contact me for connection information.
 - **NCYC...** We have begun some fundraising for those interested in attending in November 2021. An email is being sent out with another fundraiser idea. If you are interested in attending or have not received an email by next week, please contact me ASAP.

Grades 9-10:

- We gather (virtually) typically twice per month for three hours each (we include breaks). These classes are a combination of Religious Education and Sacramental Prep. *Please review the Zooming policies with your student prior to class beginning.*
- Please be sure to have your student prepared for monthly virtual sessions (they should have their prayer book and Bible with them) and connected prior to 6:30pm. They should not be eating or drinking during the sessions. Contact me for connection information.

- **Youth Ministry**
 - *Virtual gatherings* for youth in **grades 6-12**, are held once per month. Our next gathering will be Sunday, January 24 (6:45-8:00pm). Join us for fun, fellowship (sometimes with prizes) and to pray. Contact me for connection information.
 - **NCYC...** We have begun some fundraising for those interested in attending in November 2021. An email is being sent out with another fundraiser idea. If you are interested in attending or have not received an email by next week, please contact me ASAP.

Family (and Adult) Faith Formation:

We will continue to offer some fun opportunities throughout the year for all of our families to enjoy together. We hope you will be able to join us occasionally for these events.

- **Mass**

While the dispensation of Mass attendance has not been lifted we do still encourage you to participate in Mass each week. We now live-stream Masses from St. Mark daily and weekend (currently Sunday at 10:30am). The connection to watch live or watch it later can be found on our linkage website: <http://franklinhardincatholic.org> or linkage Facebook page: *Mark Mary*.

- **Archdiocesan Women's Conference - Beauty in Christ: ON FIRE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT!**

Need renewed energy for the new year? Then join us for 2021 Virtual Event, on Saturday, January 30th, 9:00am to 1:00pm. Dynamic speakers, Maria Vadia and Caroline Gambale-Dirkes, will ignite women with the fire of the Holy Spirit! Don't miss this opportunity to connect with other women through prayer, music, and conversation! Maria Vadia will speak in English and Spanish. Invite your friends and register (group discounts available): www.archwomensconference.org Any questions, reach out to me ASAP.

- **COMING SOON**

Plans are being finalized for special offerings for adults in the new year, both virtually and in person. Watch for upcoming information on ways to help you grow in your faith in the new year.

Brenda Strayer
St. Mark Director of Faith Formation

Faith Formation Calendar of Events at St. Mark

January

- **Wednesday, January 6**
RE Group A (6:30-7:30pm)
- **Sunday, January 10**
High School RE & Conf. Class (5:30-8:30pm)
- **Wednesday, January 13**
RE Group B (6:30-7:30pm)
- **Sunday, January 17**
High School RE & Conf. Class (5:30-8:30pm)
- **Wednesday, January 20**
RE Family Night (6:30-7:30pm)
- **Wednesday, January 27**
RE Group A (6:30-7:30pm)
- **Saturday, January 30**
Archdiocesan Women's Conference @ Cedar Rapids