

***Holy Cross Parish
Faith Formation
Programs and Schedules
2011/2012***



Office:

Anne Tarallo, Director of Faith Formation

Phone: 508-238-2235

Fax: 508-238-0500

atarallo@holycrosseaston.org

The Best of Both Worlds!!

Holy Cross Faith Formation Programs 2011/2012

As you know, four years ago, Holy Cross embarked on a new process for Faith Formation entitled *Generations of Living Faith (GOLF)*, based on the program *Generations of Faith* that was developed by the Center for Ministry Development in Naugatuck, Connecticut. *Generations of Faith* is the product of many years of research funded by the Lily Foundation that sought to improve the faith development and education of all Catholics of all generations. The program involves bringing people of all ages together to learn, to grow in the faith, and to worship with the hopes that the entire parish would realize a closer and more intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.

In many cases, the goals and dreams of the *GOLF* program have been embraced by our families. The families who participate do so with enthusiasm and a real sense of Christian Community. In other cases, families have ceased to participate and many have expressed a desire to return to traditional children's classes.

As promised 4 years ago, the Pastoral team of Holy Cross has constantly evaluated and tweaked the program to meet the needs of our parishioners. Unfortunately, the numbers of participants has steadily declined over the past two years for a variety of reasons. The most important thing to consider is that all of us, but most especially our young people, need to be catechized in the faith if they are to grow in relationship with Jesus Christ and to participate fully as productive members of this Eucharistic community, the Body of Christ. That said, we have decided with the blessings of the Pastoral Council to make some significant changes. Hopefully, we will bring together the best of both styles of Religious Education and Faith Formation.

Beginning in the fall, Holy Cross will revamp our Faith Formation programs to include:

- One large family gathering held in the fall to begin the year (these gatherings would be held at various times over one week to accommodate all families in our space – much like *GOLF*).
- This year the fall family gatherings would focus on the changes coming to the Liturgy and why.
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- Traditional style classes for children grades 1 through 6 will be held on Sunday mornings from October to March twice per month for an hour and a half 9:30-11am. Additional workshops for Grade 2 sacrament preparation will continue.
- A large family gathering in April to end the year of classes, again like GOLF.
- Lenten Family Retreat – Sunday afternoon just before Lent begins.
- The 7th and 8th grades would meet on Sunday afternoons at 4:30 and include attendance at the 5:30pm Teen Mass.
- The Confirmation program will continue as it has on Sunday evenings.
- Adult faith formation: For example: “A Walk through the Catechism”
- **Registrations will begin on the weekend of June 25th and continue through the summer. I will post designated registration weekends and, of course, registrations and the schedule for the year will be available in the office, on our web site, and in the vestibule of the Church at all times.**

Of course, the success of this will depend on you. It will depend on the number of volunteer Catechists (teachers of the faith) and aids who are willing to give the time to share your faith with our children and teens. Of course, we will do everything we can to assure that you are prepared.

Also, we want to stress that classes do not ever replace the practice of the faith and participation in Sunday liturgy is key to the faith formation of everyone. At this time, we would like to thank all those who volunteered and who participated fully in our GOLF program. Also, we would like to thank the parish for your support as we always strive through innovation and new ways, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to bring our community closer to God through relationship with Jesus Christ.

I would like to share with you the words written in the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*: “At all times the Church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the time and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel... if it is to carry out its task.”

Thank you all,
God bless,

Anne Tarallo,
Director of Faith Formation

G.O.L.F. (Generations of Living Faith)

As we prepare for the coming year combining GOLF with catechetical classes many ask what exactly is this Generations of Living Faith (GOLF) and where does it come from? John Roberto and The Center for Ministry Development in Naugatuck, Connecticut developed this new and innovative approach to faith formation approximately ten years ago. In 2001 the Center for Ministry Development received a multi-year grant from the Lilly Foundation to work with parishes across the country in implementing a lifelong, intergenerational, events-centered approach to faith formation. More than 1200 parishes have implemented this approach across the United States to date, many combine children's classes with parish events .

Generations of Living Faith (we will call it GOLF) is an innovative approach to parish wide faith formation. In response to the bishop's call that "adult faith formation must be the axis around which revolves the catechesis (education in the faith) of childhood and adolescence as well as that of old age."

As Catholic children tend to learn more about their faith at home by default and example, it is imperative that parents are equipped to be models of the faith for their children. Faith is one of those things that is more easily "caught than taught."

How does the GOLF Portion of our Faith Formation Program Work?

Families and single adults (parishioners of all ages) will come together two to three times per year to participate in learning sessions that will enable parents to better model the faith for the children and to help each household become a true household of faith. Each 2 hour session will include:

- 1. A prepared meal – parishioners will be able to enjoy a meal while relaxing and socializing with friends and family.**
- 2. Opening prayer and presentation of the theme for the session. This may involve a speaker, video, dramatic presentation, or actual experience.**
- 3. Presentation of Materials and activities designed to "spark a faith conversation" for our families.**

The Spiral Curriculum

Our GOLF sessions and class sessions provide a spiral curriculum, meaning that each year the doctrines and concepts of the Catholic Faith will be covered and taught at age specific learning levels. The topics covered each year are:

Church year and seasons

Sacraments

Creed

Morality

Justice

Prayer

We also hope to have opportunities to take what is learned into the community through numerous Service activities and projects.

Faith Formation Schedule Grades 1 – 6

In order to accommodate all children in our space, classes will be divided into two sections that will meet on alternate Sundays.

Section 1 Student – Sundays (unless otherwise noted)

September 25	GOLF Session Families Parent/Guardian must attend 9:30am– 11:30am
October 16	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
October 30	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
November 13	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
December 11	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
January 8	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
January 22	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
February 5	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
February 12	Family GOLF Lenten Retreat 12:00pm – 2:00pm Note time!!!
February 26	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
March 11	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
March 25	GOLF Session Families Parent/Guardian must attend 9:30am–11:30am

Section 2 Students

October 2	GOLF Session Families Parent/Guardian must attend 9:30am– 11:30am
October 23	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
November 6	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
November 20	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
December 18	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
January 15	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
January 29	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
February 12	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
February 26	Family GOLF Lenten Retreat 12:00pm – 2:00pm Note time!!
March 4	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
March 18	Classes 9:30am – 11:00am
April 1	GOLF Session Families Parent/Guardian must attend 9:30am– 11:30am

**** Stations of the Cross for Families with Children (Lent) – no need to register Fridays March 2nd, March 16th, March 30th at 6pm in the Church.**

Sacraments:

The Sacraments of First Communion and Reconciliation are celebrated in Grade 2.

This is a very important year for both students and parents. Reconciliation will be celebrated in January and First Communion in the Spring. Learning will take place through our family GOLF sessions, classroom sessions, and parent/child workshops that will help parents to actively participate in sacrament preparation.

Confirmation Preparation: Any High School student wishing to prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation must participate in the Holy Cross Youth Ministry program for at least two years. Faith formation sessions for Confirmation are held on Sunday evenings beginning with the 5:30 p.m. Youth Mass and continuing in the Parish Center Great Room until 8:00pm. Each session begins with social time and pizza. The students then break up into designated groups, topics are presented and group discussion ensues. In addition to the Faith formation sessions each Confirmation Candidate is required to participate in Youth Ministry activities, community service opportunities and retreats. Our goal is to give each candidate opportunities to experience what it means to be an active participant in the life of the Church and to live life modeled in Christ. Students will also be expected to participate with parents in of GOLF sessions.

Grade 2 Sacrament Preparation Schedule

***All children are expected to participate in classes and GOLF (see pg. 5 for schedule) as well as the workshops and celebrations listed below:*

All families and children preparing for sacraments are expected to attend Mass each Sunday.

Tuesday October 18th 7pm – Important Parent only meeting

Reconciliation Preparation Schedule

Parent/Child Reconciliation Workshop:

Saturday January 7th 10am – 12pm

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be celebrated on Saturday January 21st at two sessions 10:00am for Section 1 children and 12:00pm and 12:00pm for Section 2 children.

First Communion Preparation Schedule

*First Communion Workshop for at least one parent and child:
Saturday March 3rd from 10:00 – 11:30am.*

*Special Mass (with Rite of Enrollment Ceremony) at 8:30am Mass on
Sunday March 4th*

The Celebration of First Communion Schedule

Sunday May 6th	12:00pm	Classes 2A and 2B
Sunday May 6th	2:00pm	Classes 2C and 2D
Sunday May 13th	12:00pm	Classes 2E and 2F

First Communions are celebrated by class assignment and are a family celebration at Holy Cross. Please consider your desired First Communion date and time when registering.

Confirmation Preparation

Confirmation Preparation Faith Formation Session Format

Objective: *To guide and assist our youth with the lifetime decision to live a good moral life and to follow Jesus Christ in the Catholic tradition through worship and service to others.*

Theme: In keeping with the US Bishop's theme for the Catechetical year: "Catechesis and the Proclamation of the Word", we will base the year and all lessons and activities around the Gospel of Matthew 25:34-40. In this Gospel, Jesus reminds us that whatever we do for our fellow humans we do for him. We are asking the youth to see the face of Christ in all people. We continue to ask the youth to look beyond their material possessions and to live according to the teachings of the Catholic Church. We are asking them to respect themselves and others, to help those less fortunate, to make good decisions concerning their own physical and spiritual lives. In this culture of "if it feels good do it" we must guide our youth to stop and think and to consider asking themselves the question: what would Jesus do? This is no easy task for anyone so that throughout the catechetical process the necessity for allowing the strength of the Holy Spirit into all of our lives and will be stressed. The importance of nurturing our spiritual lives through service and worship will be central to each "lesson".

Catechetical Focus: will be appropriately scheduled according to liturgical season

- The Ten Commandments: Corporal (Matt 25) and Spiritual works of mercy
- Prayer
- The Social teachings of the Church
- The gifts of the Holy Spirit

Grade 10 or Year 2: Sacramental Catechesis beginning in February

Small groups: Students in the Faith Formation Sessions will be divided into several small groups designated by a given Saint. Adult Group Leaders will lead each group in the guided activity and discussion sessions. Each Group leader will be responsible for leading group discussion, keeping in touch with the group between sessions via email or phone. Each group will become a small community and will take interest in each other's lives. Leaders will disseminate information about upcoming Youth Ministry activities, send Birthday or Get Well Cards, inquire about absences, etc... Hopefully, this will lead to a more personal experience of Church for the teen and will convey to them that we as Church care very much about them.

Format for each Sunday session:

Youth will meet immediately following the 5:30pm Youth Mass in the Great Room.

20 min: snack and social time

5 – 15 min: prayer and “saint” presentation (planned by each small group)

20 min: Presentation of “lesson”

30 min: small group discussion or activity

8:00pm dismissal

Exceptions: Service Project

Tentative Speakers :

Fr. Steve Wilbreicht, CSC – Living as a Eucharistic Community

Dr. Ernie Collamatti: Christian commitment as a lifelong process.

Service agency representatives served by Holy Cross (My Brothers Keeper, Louison Shelter, Catholic High Schools, etc)

Small group and individual Community Service Opportunities:

GOLF and class session help

Leaf raking for the elderly

Help Mainspring group serve meals

Brown Bag lunches

Service at Louison Shelter

Clothing drive

Giving Tree

MBK – Christmas help

Various Holy Cross events

Serve at the 5:30pm Mass

Teen Bible Study – Come journey with us through the history of our faith as we explore the scriptures in an informal and interactive way. Call Mrs. Tarallo for more information as the dates and times of meetings tend to vary as we work around everyone’s busy schedules and determined interest level.

Holy Cross Youth Ministry - Grades 9-12 and 7&8

Our program is focused around the dynamic and energetic teen liturgy experienced every Sunday night at 5:30 PM at Mass. Each week and at special events throughout the year, our teens will gather to unwind play games, have a discussion group, play pool and/or worship together in an evening of Prayer. Please visit our "Calendar" link (at our website www.holycrossyouthministry.org) to learn more about upcoming Youth Ministry Nights, social activities, service opportunities, and more. We welcome ALL teens from Easton and Surrounding Towns! Please Contact John Barata at jbarata@holycrosseaston.org for more information.

Confirmation Preparation Schedule

All Sessions begin with Mass at 5:30pm and continue in the Parish Center until 8:00pm unless otherwise noted. Pizza and desserts are served after Mass.

September 25th

October 16th

October 23rd

November 6th

November 13th

December 11th

January 8th

January 22nd Grade 10 only – Retreat 11:00am – 6:30pm

(Mandatory)

January 22nd Grade 9 only – Regular time

January 29th Grade 10 only Candidate/Sponsor Workshop

February 12th

February 26th

March 4th

March 18th

March 25th will be the last session depending on the date of the Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The date for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation is available from the Bishop's office (usually) in December.

*****Important Parent Meeting – Monday September 19th at 7pm**

Please mark your calendars

Grades 7 & 8

Our "Jr. High" School Students will meet in the Great Room on designated Sunday afternoons **at 4:30pm followed by participation at the 5:30PM** Teen Mass. Lessons will be based on the curriculum of the new text *The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schooler's* published by St. Mary's Press. We will also feature presentations, interactive discussion through the use of technology and Catholic media for lesson enhancement. We will use a table group format at each session. As models of the faith for your teens, we encourage all parents to join us for Mass.

Schedule:

Sundays 4:30 – 6:30 (includes 5:30pm mass)

October 2	January 8
October 16	January 15
November 6	February 12
November 13 th	February 26
December 11	March 4
	March 18
	April 1

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Please join the children of Holy Cross Parish as they journey through the Lectionary (Sunday Readings) each Sunday during the 8:30am Mass.

Children ages 4 and up are escorted down to the Church Hall to listen to God's Word at their own age appropriate level followed by stories and discussion. The children return to Mass at the time of the Offertory.

This is a wonderful interactive way for our children to understand scripture and the Mass so that they may be more fully engaged during our liturgical services.

No need to sign up!

This program will begin Sunday September 25th!!

2011/2012 Program fees

Students Grades 1 - 8

\$50.00 per person

\$200.00 family maximum (does not include additional fees for sacrament preparation).

Grade 2 Sacrament preparation fees in addition to GOLF/Class fees:

Grade 2: \$30.00 per child (covers cost of workshop materials and celebration of both sacraments)

Example: A family with 3 children with a second grader

GOLF/class fee \$150 plus \$30 sacrament preparation

Total: \$180.00

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Fees for Confirmation Preparation:

Grade 9 or year 1 of Confirmation prep: \$75.00 per candidate

Grade 10 or year 2 of Confirmation prep: \$110.00 per candidate (covers cost of food, retreat, and the celebration of the Sacrament)

Note: No person or family will be turned away due to financial hardship. Please contact the office (all financial information is confidential).

Help Wanted

Note: All volunteers must complete a CORI Check each year and one time training.
Dates: TBA

Grades 1 through 6 Classes

Volunteers are needed to make each session effective and successful

Volunteer Catechist/Teacher or Aide for classes grades 1 through 6: All materials are provided and we will meet before the year begins to make sure that each volunteer is comfortable and prepared.

GOLF sessions Help

- Food preparation – volunteers needed to help prepare our meals
- Session Set-up and Clean-up: volunteers needed to help set up for meals and learning sessions and clean – up after each session.
- Babysitting Room: At least one adult per session for each group is needed for the younger children to provide our parents with opportunity to listen and work with their older children. Please consider signing up at least once during the year. (Details to follow)
- **Grade 9 & 10 group leaders** - this is a wonderful opportunity to participate with the teens as they prepare for Confirmation. There is no preparation required for each session, simply come and help lead table discussions following each presentation. Pizza is served at each session for your added enjoyment.
- **Middle School/Jr. High:** Table Leaders – to help supervise and lead discussions with our 7th and 8th grade students. Materials will be provided.
- **Childrens Liturgy of the Word** – Each Sunday during the 8:30am Mass the children are escorted to the Church Hall to hear the Word of God at their own age level. This is a commitment of approximately six times per year for about 15-20 minutes. Again, this is a wonderful opportunity to share the faith with our young children. This is probably one of the most rewarding programs that we offer. Jesus is certainly visible in the faces of our young children. All materials are provided.

To volunteer or to simply inquire please call Anne Tarallo at the office or email atarallo@holycrosseaston.org or sign up on the registration form. Thank you as always for your generous gift of time. All volunteers will be contacted in late August or early September.

Thank you all!!!

“It is within the Christian family that members are awakened to the presence of God and learn to pray and to form their consciences in light of the teachings of Christ and of the Church. Children learn by the selfless witness of their parents and other family members.”

National Directory for Catechesis

We look forward to a great year as we all continue our journey of discipleship!!

Please Note: All dates could be subject to change as the year and circumstances present!!