



Dear Home Faith parents,

Welcome to all new and returning to our Home Faith families!

**“Let the children come unto me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of Heaven.” (Mt 19:14).**

Throughout the gospels, Jesus makes it clear that children are particularly precious to Him. As a culture, we at one point agreed with Jesus of Nazareth, the formation of the child was the first principle of our culture. Children’s growth in moral and intellectual virtue set the pace and determined adult behavioral norms, public discourse, entertainment, civil laws, etc. Those days are long gone. Today the words of our Savior seem to not haunt many souls.

Not us! We know that you all want Heaven for our children above everything else. All of our Lord’s words inspire us to work tirelessly for their innocence to be protected and their holiness to be achieved. We feel the weight of the sacred role that our Father has given us. Thank you abundantly for entrusting your children to our care. From our end, we pledge to do all that we can to assist you in forming your child into a committed disciple of Jesus Christ!

We want them to know their worth in the eyes of God, to make good choices, to live out the truth, and to be authentically happy both now and forever. Therefore, we strive to help them discover the timeless truths of the Catholic Tradition and to meet Jesus.

As your child goes through the most formative years in their faith development, the most valuable thing you can do is continue to invest in your own faith as an adult. This in turn, will provide a deeper contribution to your child’s faith than our children’s faith formation programs ever could. We want your children’s faith experience to take root in their lives—and know that you do too—which is why we invite each parent to join their child in faith formation by committing to the following:

- 1) Attending the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass weekly and frequenting the Sacrament of Reconciliation monthly.**
- 2) Committing yourselves to a daily prayer life.** Reading Scripture or praying the Rosary every single day is a great place to start. There are many resources on FORMED to help you in making this a daily habit. God pours forth tremendous graces through these spiritual exercises!
- 3) Growth in catechetical formation never stops.** Please join our parish community as we delve deeper into the Tradition of our Faith. St. Brendan offers several worthwhile opportunities for adults including ChristLife, Walking with Purpose, Adult Bible Studies, That Man is You, and weekly Eucharistic Adoration.
- 4) To serve others in our parish community through offering your time, talent and treasure.** The mission of St. Brendan is one we all share together—when each of us contributes to this mission, everyone benefits, and our parish thrives!

Thank you again for responding to the call to serve as the primary teachers of your children. We want to be the best secondary teachers as well, so please always feel free to reach out to us for assistance when needed.

Together, as we look forward to this coming year, let us pray that the youth of our parish would continue to draw closer to Jesus and build a life-long foundation for their faith!

**Enclosed with this letter you will find important details regarding the 2019-2020 catechetical year. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us.**

Please be assured that you and your families are in our prayers,

Joshua Kilmer  
Director of Youth Evangelization and Catechesis

## General Information about Home Faith

Below is a summary of general information for Home Faith this year. For additional information, please see the **Home Faith Parent Policy Handbook**, which is available at <https://stbrendans.net/childrens-faith-formation/homefaith/>. Each parent should be thoroughly familiar with the parent policy handbook. The handbook will serve as the go-to resource for important information about requirements and assignments, meetings, communications, and Sacramental preparation.

**As a Home Faith parent you commit to:**

1. **Attending all Home Faith meetings (Family of Faith for parents of children in grades 1-4 or One-on-One meetings for parents in grades 5-7) 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents will attend ONE Confirmation Parent Meeting.**
2. **Using the lesson plans to teach your child the faith from home each week.**
3. **Ensuring that each child completes all homework and assignments**, including two mandatory online semester reviews for grades 1-8. Children in 5-8 grade will also need to complete weekly online assignments.
4. **Striving to become an authentic witness of the Catholic Faith by living and communicating all the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.**

### Grades 1-4 Home Faith Catechesis

The Home Faith program has been around at St Brendan for quite some time now. Undoubtedly our Heavenly Father has called this program into being. All of those involved have cooperated with His grace over the last decade to make it into a dynamic formative endeavor in the mystery of His Son. It is abundantly clear that He has blessed the ideas, the implementation, and the execution every step of the way. Which is why I am extremely confident that He will continue to do the same.

For the next four years all 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> grade parents will be working through Sophia Institute's *A Family of Faith* series. In the series, parents will go on a journey through the four pillars of the Catechism (Year One: The Creed, Year Two: The Sacraments, Year Three: Life in Christ, Year Four Christian Prayer) for the ultimate end of helping parents create a more vibrant Catholic home.

We will meet once per month September - April (excluding December) on Sundays from 6:40- 8:00 PM in Wellnitz Hall (or hopefully in the new St Brendan School Media Center once it's completed, but we will keep you posted!) Though there will be a few exceptions because of holidays and such, the basic breakdown will be as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Parents-	mostly 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Parents-	mostly 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Month
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parents-	mostly 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month

#### 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade A Family of Faith Schedule

September 8<sup>th</sup>  
October 6<sup>th</sup>  
November 3<sup>rd</sup>  
January 5<sup>th</sup>  
February 9<sup>th</sup>  
March 1<sup>st</sup>  
April 5<sup>th</sup>

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade A Family of Faith Schedule

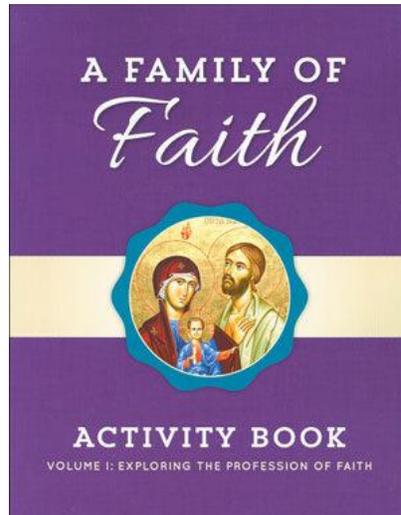
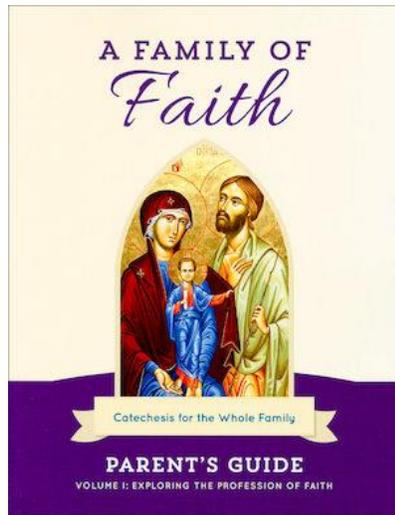
September 15<sup>th</sup> (School Cafeteria)  
October 13<sup>th</sup>  
November 10<sup>th</sup>  
January 12<sup>th</sup>  
February 16<sup>th</sup>  
March 8<sup>th</sup>  
April 19<sup>th</sup>

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade A Family of Faith Schedule

September 22<sup>nd</sup>  
October 20<sup>th</sup>  
November 17<sup>th</sup>  
January 26<sup>th</sup>  
February 23<sup>rd</sup>  
March 15<sup>th</sup>  
April 26<sup>th</sup>

Second, we are making big curriculum changes this year. We will be moving away from RCL Benziger's *Faith First* and to Sophia Institute's *A Family of Faith*. Sophia's products are simply much more in line with the fullness of the gospel. They do an incredible job of ensuring that God's love is not watered down while at the same time made accessible and intelligible to the grade level. Plus, of course this will allow for parents to apply directly what they learned in their monthly parent session to their conversations with their children. This harmony should ensure a more enlivened lesson and a dynamic encounter with the living God should be possible for both parent and child!

### A Family of Faith – Sophia Institute Press



**A parish-based program that catechizes the entire family.** This program is designed to be used by parishes as an alternative to classroom Faith Formation programs. Studies have shown that parental involvement in the faith-life of their child is the most important element in ensuring that a child develops into a practicing Christian. *A Family of Faith* was created to meet the demand among parishes who recognize that families are disengaging from the Faith. Even many parents who send their children to parish Faith Formation programs struggle to create an authentic Catholic family in the home! *A Family of Faith* provides the parent with an easy-to-use solution to catechizing the whole family and helping parents lead their children. The program follows a four-year cycle: one pillar of the Catechism is covered each year from September through May.

Check out <https://sophiainstituteforteachers.org/shop/family-of-faith> to learn more

## Grades 5-7 Home Faith Catechesis

I met with probably 50% of you back in the Spring, so for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade parents most of this will just be a reminder. However, for 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents, everything has changed.

**5<sup>th</sup> grade parents:** you will no longer be doing *Family of Faith* as previously discussed in the spring meetings. Rather, they will be working through the *Great Adventure Storybook* produced by Ascension Press. The curriculum will take on the format that you have been used to doing with RCL Benziger for the last few years. However, that the curriculum is much more engaging. Parents will journey one-on-one with their children through a salvific narrative of the Bible. There will be short quizzes and activities provided with each lesson. Susan Nussman, our new Middle School Youth Minister, will oversee Grade 5 Home Faith.

**6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade parents:** your curriculum will be almost entirely video based. However, due to many difficulties with Google Forms this year in Middle School Home Faith, we will be switching things up. There will still indeed be weekly assignments, but they will be given to parents at the very beginning of the year in paper form (with answer key as well— besides Short Answers of course) during a One-on-One curriculum meeting. Josh Kilmer will oversee Grades 6 and 7.

**Meetings:** All 5<sup>th</sup> grade parents will meet with Susan three times for One-on-Ones over the course of the year, and all 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade parents will meet with Josh three times for One-on-Ones. Come mid-year the First Semester assignments will be given back to Josh for the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders, and Susan for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders at a mid-year meeting. Also, at that meeting, we will provide you all with the Second Semester assignments. These will be returned when the final year wrap-up meeting happens in May. The Mid-Terms and Finals will be taken through Google Forms. (This will be the only online assessment for the year).

Below you can find all the requirements for the year in an easy to understand format:

### *Grades 5-7 Parent Requirements*

Aug or Sep (Sign Up Genius) October 7*	One-on-One Curriculum Meeting Faith Formation Mass
Dec or Jan (Sign Up Genius) December 2*	One-on-One Mid-Year Meeting Faith Formation Mass
March 2*	Faith Formation Mass
May 4*	Faith Formation Mass
May or June (Sign Up Genius)	One-on-One Year-end Review Meeting

\*Must attend at least two Faith Formation Masses at 4:45 PM or 6:30 PM on these dates. These Faith Formation Masses occur in place of our regularly scheduled Faith Formation classes. We really want Home Faith students and families to feel a part of the community. Fr Bob greatly desired for us to make it a requirement for older Home Faith families to attend our masses (Given that 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> grade families already come for monthly meetings; they do not have to come to Masses but are very much encouraged to come). We know that most of you do Home Faith because of Monday night conflicts but considering that we are only asking for you to attend two of the possible eight options (4 dates, 2 times each date), we think this is reasonable.

There will also be an increase in student participation in Middle School Youth Ministry. Below are the requirements for Grades 5 -7 students (Obviously Grade 5 Students will not have to attend Middle School Youth Ministry).

### *5<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Requirements*

- Attend at least two Faith Formation Masses during the year
- Attend at least one night of the Parish mini mission (dates to be determined)

### *6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Requirements*

- Attend at least two Middle School Youth Ministry events
- Attend at least two Faith Formation Masses during the year
- Attend at least one night of the Parish mini mission (dates to be determined)

## The Roots 2019/2020 Schedule For 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Graders

### September

- Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> – Parent Info Meeting 7-8:30 PM in the School Cafeteria
- Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup> – Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Kick-off (6:30-8:00 PM)\*\* in Wellnitz Hall
- Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event\* (3:30-5:00 PM) in Wellnitz Hall

### October

- Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event

### November

- Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event

### December

- Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>

### January

- Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup> – Damascus Event

### February

- Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event

### March

- Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event

### April

- Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday April 21<sup>st</sup> – Damascus Event

### May

- Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> (End of Year Party)

*\*DAMASCUS EVENTS ARE INTENDED FOR STUDENTS IN GRADE 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>*

*\*\*ALL EVENTS WILL BE AT THE SAME TIME AS LISTED IN SEPTEMBER*

*\*\*\*ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY EVENTS WILL BE IN WELLNITZ HALL*

## Grade 8 Home Faith Catechesis

Back in the Spring I met with probably 50% of you and mentioned that this year would be a bit different than years past. This will still be the case, but not quite like I described in the Spring. Upon further thought and personnel issues, we will forego the three one-on-one meetings throughout the year. Instead, your children will continue to do their quizzes and semester assessments online.

However, there will be more Middle School Youth Ministry requirements for your children like I had mentioned. Here are all the student and parent requirements for the year:

### *Grade 8 Student Requirements*

- Attend at least four Middle School Youth Ministry events
- Attend at least one Faith Formation Mass during the year
- Attend Confirmation Retreat at Damascus Mission Campus September 27-29

## ***Grade 8 Parent Requirements***

- \*October 1- Confirmation Parent Meeting @7:00pm in the Church
- \*October 23- Confirmation Parent Meeting @7:30pm in the Church
- Attend at least ***one*** Faith Formation Mass with your child (see dates in Grades 5-7 section)
- Attend ***two*** nights of the Parish Mission (Dates TBA – but will definitely be in Lent)

\*Must only attend one Confirmation Parent meeting

### **The Roots 2019/2020 Schedule For 8<sup>th</sup> Graders**

#### **September**

- Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event\* (3:30-5:00 PM)
- Friday, September 20<sup>th</sup> – Roots 8<sup>th</sup> Kick-off (6:30-8:00 PM)\*\*

#### **October**

- Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event
- Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 8<sup>th</sup>

#### **November**

- Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event
- Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> – The Roots 8<sup>th</sup>

#### **December**

- Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 8<sup>th</sup>

#### **January**

- Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup> – Damascus Event
- Friday, January 24<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 8<sup>th</sup>

#### **February**

- Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event
- Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 8<sup>th</sup>

#### **March**

- Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> – Damascus Event
- Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 8<sup>th</sup>

#### **April**

- Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> – The Roots 8<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday April 21<sup>st</sup> – Damascus Event
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***\*DAMASCUS EVENTS ARE INTENDED FOR STUDENTS IN GRADE 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>***

***\*\*ALL EVENTS WILL BE AT THE SAME TIME AS LISTED IN SEPTEMBER***

***\*\*\*ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY EVENTS WILL BE IN WELLNITZ HALL***

## **Other Important Information for All Grades**

### **Semester Reviews for Grades 1-8**

Students in Grades 1-8 are required to fill out online unit reviews that will be posted online at the end of each semester. Students will typically have two weeks to complete the reviews. Each review will consist of a series of questions based on the lessons that children will need to answer. We will notify you by Flocknote or email when these reviews will be available. The purpose of these reviews is to help motivate learning as well as to assess student progress. Younger children will likely need parents to assist them in taking the review. The reviews are an important part of the Home Faith Program, so each family is responsible for completing the reviews on time.

### **Lesson Plans & Additional Information**

Go to <https://stbrendans.net/childrens-faith-formation/homefaith/>. There, you will find program news including per grade lesson/chapter listings that are being taught each week.

## Communications

Regular communication about Home Faith Formation will occur through Flocknote and/or email. If you have not signed up for Flocknote yet or need to adjust your settings to receive all, please do so at: <https://app.flocknote.com/login>

## SCRIP

Do you want to earn a reduction in registration fees for Home Faith Formation for the next catechetical year? The SCRIP program is your answer. Visit <https://www.stbrendans.net/school/scrip-program/> for more info.

## Children's Liturgy of the Word

Children's Liturgy of the Word will be offered during the 8:45 & 10:30 AM Masses (for children ages 4 to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade). During the first part of Mass, children will be invited to go off to a separate area where they will hear about the Mass readings and receive a lively teaching that is geared toward them. Then, when the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins, children will re-join their families. Children's Liturgy of the Word will be starting on Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>.

## Special Events – Save the Date!

- Be sure to save the date for these BIG family events coming up this year! (*these events are not required but are highly recommended for all Faith Formation families*):
  - **Trunk or Treat** – Thursday, October 24 at 6:00 PM (*Families dress up, decorate the trunk of their cars, and come to St. Brendan's to hand out candy in the parking lot!*)
  - **Live Nativity & Advent Family Celebration** – Sunday, December 15 at 6:30 PM in the MPR
  - **Parish Mission and Mini-Mission** – Date TBA (I know that's silly to save that date!)

## Home Faith Contacts

- Joshua Kilmer, Director of Youth Evangelization and Catechesis, ext. 231, [jkilmer@stbrendans.net](mailto:jkilmer@stbrendans.net)
- Susan Nussman, Middle School Youth Minister ext. 237, [snussman@stbrendans.net](mailto:snussman@stbrendans.net)
- Bonnie Creeger Assistant to the Director, ext. 233, [bcreeger@stbrendans.net](mailto:bcreeger@stbrendans.net)