Dear Families,

The Basilica of Saint Mary is excited to introduce a few changes to our Faith Formation programs. Our goal at The Basilica is to offer resources and opportunities through our classes and programs that allow families to connect, grow, and live out their Catholic faith.

We are excited to be in our second year of **Online Registration**. There are some tweaks we have to make to allow this process to run more smoothly and we have made them. We have had a successful year with our **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program** level III for Grades 4 through 6.

**PLEASE NOTE:** We have only one catechist who is trained to teach both Level I and Level III so we found the need to move Level III to a different time slot—Sunday, 11:15am-12:30pm.

As the cornerstone to what happens in our classrooms and homes, we ask families to make **weekly Mass attendance a priority**. The Mass and the Eucharist are the core of our Catholic faith. Attending Mass as a family helps strengthen bonds within the family, builds the greater parish community, and supports the global Catholic community. We need each other to live our faith in our daily lives. We cannot do this alone!

As always, our wonderful Faith Formation programs would not be possible without the incredible team of volunteer catechists and helpers. They share their many talents and gifts, and make a great commitment to pass along our faith to the next generation. They spend time in training and preparing lessons, as well as in the classroom each week. This year parents are expected to help in their children’s classes at least once throughout the year. We do need at least two adults in each classroom and those adults have to have gone through training through **VIRTUS**. If you want to get a jump start are getting ready for this, please visit VIRTUSonline.org. You will receive more information about this in August.

If your family is continuing with our Faith Formation programs, welcome back, and thank you for seeing the value this commitment brings to your family life. If you are a family new to The Basilica of Saint Mary and our Faith Formation programs—welcome! We look forward to starting this journey with you.

**Online Registration—Continues for its second year!**

Please go to [mary.org/faithformation](http://mary.org/faithformation) to register for classes and sacramental preparation. Registration is in **two** sections: class information, and child(ren)/family information. You **must complete both** sections.

- We welcome all children and youth into our programs. If a section fills up, we will find a spot amenable for your child and your family. We do not turn anyone away. The Basilica reserves the right to limit the size of our classes and to cancel or combine classes that have fewer than six students registered.

**Payment Information**

- Early Bird Registration is $125.00 per child (through 6/30/19); $150.00 per child (after 7/1/19). Maximum of $375/family (through 6/30/19) or $450/family (after 7/1/19). Tuition includes curriculum, classroom supplies, and materials.
- Students in Grades 1-6 are asked for a nominal, weekly contribution to help offset the cost of their evening meal. Scholarships are available. Please contact the Learning Office at 612.317.3414.
Children—Preschool to Grade 5/6

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is offered on Sunday mornings during 9:30am Mass from 9:30-10:45 for Preschool—Grade 3. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Level III for grades 4,5,6 meets Sunday mornings during 11:30am Mass from 11:15am-12:30pm

These sessions occur in a Montessori-style room called an Atrium and follow seasonal themes in the Church’s year. We explore a variety of parables and Gospel readings throughout the sessions. We invite children to respond to presentations on scripture, liturgy, and doctrine through Montessori-style materials and artwork. We offer three levels: Level I combines Preschool and Kindergarten and is open to children who are age 3 by the first day of the program year; Level II combines Grades 1, 2 and 3; Level III combines Grades 4, 5 and 6.

Faith Formation classes are offered Sunday mornings during 9:30am Mass from 9:30-10:45am, and Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:15pm for Preschool—Grade 5

This program uses a Lectionary-based curriculum in a traditional classroom setting. In each class we explore the weekly Gospel and incorporate liturgy, Catholic traditions, moral formation, and social justice. We incorporate prayer and discussion as well as service and community opportunities.

Youth—Grades 6 to 12

Youth Ministry, Sunday Evenings, 5:30-7:00pm

With our Youth Ministry we encourage our students to work together to learn, share their faith, serve others, and have fun while making the world a better place. Components include prayer, service, justice-seeking, socializing, examining our rich Catholic traditions, and relationship-building. We ask our Youth participants to attend 4:30pm Mass with their families, and stay for the program afterwards. A light meal is served weekly.

Basilica YES—Sunday Evenings, 5:30-7:00pm

A service-based program for recently confirmed high school students. Students gain leadership experience, involve themselves in the community, grow their faith, and continue friendships formed at The Basilica.

Sacrament Preparation

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Children preparing for both sacraments must be in at least Grade 2. The Basilica’s preparation consists of a mandatory parent meeting and parent/child sessions. (Please note, children must complete preparation for First Reconciliation before preparing for First Eucharist.)

- The sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated in November 2019 or January 2020.
- The Sacrament of First Eucharist is celebrated in Spring 2020.

Confirmation

The Basilica incorporates preparation for confirmation into six Saturday morning sessions for those in Grade 10. In addition, we incorporate a mandatory parent/sponsor meeting and a retreat day.

- The Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in Spring 2020.

Volunteer Opportunities

What gifts can you share with the young people of our parish? It takes many volunteers in a variety of roles to make The Basilica’s Faith Formation programs so successful, and we invite everyone to become involved. Opportunities include preparing materials, teaching and assisting in the classrooms, and many other roles. If you are interested in helping in any capacity, please contact the Learning Office at 612.317.3414. There is an application and interview process, a background check, a signed code of conduct, and attendance at an Archdiocesan VIRTUS class required for these volunteer opportunities for the safety and care of our children and yours.

Weekly E-newsletters are emailed to parents each week with vital information in them. It is very important to “opt in” to our e-newsletter system through MyBasilica so that you are informed of special events or weather cancellations.

For more information on Children and Youth Ministry programs, please contact:
The Learning Office at 612.317.34140 or visit our website at www.mary.org.