

Religious Education Opportunities for Children Who Attend Public Schools

Over the past several years, in our effort to provide the best possible religious education and formation opportunities for the children of Holy Family Parish, we have introduced a number of modifications to our Religious Education offerings. Our program has evolved gradually -- taking into account current "best practices" in the Religious Education field, the leadership of our Bishop and his Staff, and our local experience as reflected in parent and staff evaluations from past years.

Five years ago, we began moving from a Parish School of Religion (PSR) model to a program modeled on Generations of Faith. This PSR model had been common in Catholic parishes for many years and has many strong points. It proved to be weakest, however, when it came to engaging parents directly in the religious education and formation of their children. Children often fail to recognize any link between their religion class and their lives at home during the rest of the week – or with the Community of Faith on Sunday.

Generations of Faith tries to remedy this by involving the whole family -- indeed, representatives of the whole parish -- in the religious education experience. We have found that this works well for many families. Many parents have welcomed the opportunity to become more involved in their children's religious education experience. Children whose families have participated regularly and enthusiastically in the Generations programs we have offered have done very well. Responding to early concerns that the children needed more "classroom time" as they learned the "content" of our faith, we introduced the Junior Journey sessions. Overall, the Generations of Faith programs have been a rich blessing within our parish.

We remain concerned, however, that a number of parish families have not seen the value of this enriched experience for their children and for themselves and look for PSR-type programs in other parishes. As we continue our efforts to provide the best programming possible for all of our families, we feel that it is time to make some further adjustments. We will re-introduce the "PSR Model" – while at the same time offering a "Generations of Faith-type experience" as an enrichment that we hope most families will embrace.

Designed for children in public school grades 1-8, Holy Family's Parish School of Religion (PSR) will be the **BASIC** religious education program offered to parish families. Registration is required and children attend grade level classes from 10:45-12:00 on twenty-one Sunday mornings throughout the school year (see dates listed below). Catechists use Harcourt Publisher's religion textbooks as a basis for each week's lesson. In addition, children experience various prayer opportunities and explore the Bible, particularly the upcoming Sunday's Gospel reading.

Because we know that parents want more than just “the basics” for their children, we are developing a new intergenerational program – based on the Generations of Faith model – called TEAM. Because Together Everyone Accomplishes More, parents and children together attend the TEAM events that take place during one weekend on Saturday or Sunday in October, December, February and April. These TEAM events will be open to all parishioners, but we sincerely hope that parents will see them as a wonderful opportunity to become involved in the religious education of their children. Whether their children attend PSR or Holy Family School, we believe that they will be enriched by their family’s participation in the TEAM events.

The “Season Opener” for TEAM is Saturday, October 3rd or Sunday, October 4th (attend one). Check the TEAM schedule in this registration packet for more information on the event times and dates.

PSR CALENDAR 2009-2010
(Sundays, 10:45-12:00)

September	20, 27
October	11, 18, 25
November	1, 8, 15, 22
December	13
January	3, 10, 24
February	7, 21, 28
March	7, 14, 21
April	18, 25

TEAM EVENTS 2009-2010
(attend Saturday OR Sunday)

October	3, 4
December	5, 6
February	13, 14
April	10, 11