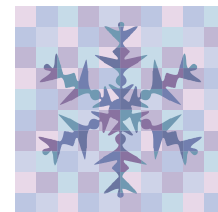


# ELEMENTARY FAITH FORMATION NEWS FEBRUARY 2012



Dear Faith Formation Families,

Welcome Ordinary Time, until February 22, Ash Wednesday, when we will enter the solemn season of Lent.

To date, Mother Nature has been kind and the winter has been mild – no snow closings – YEAH! Hopefully all classes will stay on schedule.

## **If it DOES snow...**

Elementary Faith Formation is cancelled if Cherry Hill schools cancel. Elementary Faith Formation is also cancelled if Cherry Hill schools cancel after school activities due to inclement weather.

All families are notified of class cancellation through our participation in the Honeywell Instant Alert System. If you have not registered your preferred choices of notification, your family will receive a message on the home phone line only. If you desire notification via cell phone, work phone, e-mail, or text message, **you must register online**. Instructions to register with Honeywell were sent home to all families in October. The Honeywell website is: <https://instantalert.honeywell.com>.

All families are encouraged to register. Future notices and reminders will be sent home electronically through the Honeywell system. Need help or access to a computer, call Mary Lou, 667-2440, ext. 346.

## **FIRST EUCHARIST**

Preparations for the celebration of children eligible to receive First Eucharist are underway. On February 4 & 5, First Communion candidates and their parents will come together for lessons 3 & 4 of our parish Living in the Light Eucharist prep.

## **Parish Retreat Day – Getting Ready for Lent**

Are you in need of some time to ponder and pray? Soon we will enter the season of Lent. Christ Our Light Parish Retreat Day will get you ready for the Lenten season. It will be held on Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. More Retreat Day info will be forthcoming – check the Sunday Bulletin and / or go to the parish website at [www.christourlight.net](http://www.christourlight.net) for updates.

## **ASH WEDNESDAY**

Lent begins this year on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ash Wednesday. Students in grades 5 – 8 will join the parish community in Church for Mass and to be signed with blessed ashes. The children will come to class as usual at 7:15 p.m. However, parents who plan to attend Mass should wait for their 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grader outside the student's classroom. When attendance has been taken, please accompany him/her to church and attend Ash Wednesday Mass as a family. **Children will be dismissed from Church.**

## **LENTEN OUTREACH**

Lent is a time of reflection, transformation, prayer, and sacrifice as we remember Jesus' ministry, passion, and death. Our classes will observe the traditional 40 days of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting in the following ways:

**Almsgiving** – Elementary Faith Formation students will participate in the Christ Our Light parish wide effort to be global stewards. Children will bring home Operation Rice Bowl boxes on the class days prior to Ash Wednesday. Please encourage the children to fill the boxes with spare change. This money will assist Catholic Relief Services in their mission to walk in solidarity with our worldwide family.

**Prayer** – we pray every week as a school of religion, and encourage students to pray at home with their families and to participate in the most important prayer of all: weekly liturgy.

**Fasting/ Sacrifice** – “Give up” something or better yet, be proactive and “do” something for someone else. Participating in Operation Rice Bowl will make students aware of the needs of the poor of the world.

## **FAITH SHARING QUESTION OF THE WEEK**

Do you know that all Elementary Faith Formation classes begin each weekly session by listening to the previous Sunday's gospel and reflecting on a prescribed question? I suggest you discuss this with your children. Their reflections can be remarkably insightful! Perhaps you have seen these questions in the parish bulletin. All groups, students, and ministries in our community are praying in this manner. We listen to the Word proclaimed, we reflect on what we have heard, and we share our thoughts on the gospel message as it pertains to the weekly question. Families are encouraged to practice this as well. Just think – a community of faith all participating and sharing God's Word! You can find the weekly questions in the parish bulletin or on the parish website.

## **CALENDAR UPDATE**

Tuesday, Jan. 31 – Gr. 1 Baptism demonstration with Fr. Jon

Saturday & Sunday, Feb. 4 & 5 – 2<sup>nd</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist prep event

Monday, Feb. 6 – Gr. 1 Baptism demonstration with Fr. Jon

Wednesday, Feb. 8 – Gr. 5 Church Tour

Tuesday, Feb. 14 – HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

Monday, Feb. 20 – President's Day – NO EFF CLASSES

Tuesday, Feb. 21 – Gr. 4 Parent visitation & 10 commandments activity

Wednesday, Feb. 22 – Ash Wednesday – All grades 5-8 attend 7:30P.M. Mass & receive ashes

Friday, Feb. 24 – All 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist celebration date choices due to EFF Office

Saturday, Feb. 25 – Parish Lenten Retreat

Monday, Feb. 27 – Gr. 4 Parent visitation & 10 commandments activity

Tuesday, Feb. 28 – Gr. 3 & 4 Mass demonstration in church w/ Fr. Jon – parents welcome

Monday, Mar. 5 – Gr. 3 & 4 Mass demonstration in church w/ Fr. Jon – parents welcome

*I am grateful for your commitment to your children's faith formation in light of your busy lives and I encourage your continued participation at weekly liturgy.*

*Blessings,  
Ginny*

## A VALENTINE'S DAY PRAYER

We are children of a loving God.

We carry God's own love in our hearts.

Let us never be afraid to show friendship, appreciation and love.

God our Creator, bless the love that brings people together  
and grows ever stronger in our hearts.

May all the messages that carry the name of your holy Bishop Valentine  
be sent in joy and received in delight.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

