## Parent Faith Formation at Home

## Chat Questions & Comments

I love "ask them what they want". It's how I have been able to adjust my FF program so that it worked for them and the Church.

Just stood in front of them and asked them to tell me the truth about how the program was going. It took some time for them to start opening up but eventually they did.

Small groups are very important!!

As a way to create accountability in our sacramental preparation program, we have children create piece of art during the family faith formation experience they do at home. Then, the parents turn them in, and we post them in the vestibule at the church with an explanation of what the experience was. It also helps the parish be a part of the sacramental preparation program by seeing what is going on.

I have been all about the idea of creating PODS among our families. I have been trying to figure out how to start and transition from classroom to family pods

First, "the way it was" wasn't working. Second, Covid gave parents a reason to walk away from obligation/commitment to parish. Third, parents have found other things to fill the parish time: travel everything from sports to dance to cheer. Now I am thinking I need to shift my focus away from the parents who are "fighting" faith formation to the parents who want to be part of faith formation. Sounds terrible, but maybe we do need to "trim the database."

Love the idea of the Family Journal

Let families self-select

Some introvert parents need help

I have just been concerned about those families who aren’t good at making those connections

Attended your conferences years ago and you have helped us to jumpstart our FFF. We have Pre k through 5 in class with catechists. Parent session running same time and middle school together in a youth ministry feel. We still use the Mass reflection form you offered. parent sessions we are in year 5. first year topics on what children were learning. 2nd year of 16 forms of prayer. 3rd year covid... The Wild Goose is loose from Fr. Dave Pivonka, parish wide small groups and FFF Metanoia with Fr. Dave Pivonka. this year’s parent session. living joy with Chris Stefanik. next year... you tube videos on Re-discovering your faith.

Could be based on available times too. afternoons, evenings, weekends..

We were doing a home approach before the pandemic. During the pandemic went to all family and took the classroom activities and created opportunities to do them at home. We haven’t look back and are all family centered now with multiple ways for families to be engaged as we accompany them. Lost some families but are gaining new and younger families too.

Every human being needs choices.

What about the less outgoing parents, those that are uncomfortable meeting new people for the first time, those that are more private or those that feel insecure in larger groups. I have a very large Hispanic parent base. They are comfortable in their own community but seem less outgoing when they are in the English speaking community yet want their children in the English speaking formation groups.

Has it been a transitional process or just move forward with a new model?

Any recommendations on how to get lukewarm families and/or sports families involved, especially with those with multiple siblings and teams? Many of them are rarely present even with the drop-off model, so finding a free time for all of them to attend together seems nigh impossible. How would you encourage them to attend?

Yes! We offer 7 different ways to grow in faith and over 30 family ideas a month. We also give supplies with crafts and get a lot of pics of the done crafts!

Used to have this issue, but as we moved to focusing on "your Mass community" and having all bilingual materials. It has helped so much.

Ideas for middle schoolers in family faith formation?

Then hand out a survey 3 months after beginning so you know how it's going and what needs to change.

For grades 6-8: We have a small group model that meets less days for a longer period of time including two retreat days at the Parish with fun components.

During covid distancing, I had to go to groups of ES age families, and MS/HS families with adults instead of one large group. I changed to look like college semesters year round. MS/HS families have choices in their courses that they want to participate in. I'm always asking what they want to know more about. They get to choose their family project each month based on the lesson with one option always being a family service project. Options of days and in person or virtual also. Families are much more engaged and parents aren't as afraid to ask questions. The children realize that this is a lifelong learning/growing process. The children also have better conversations at home. I can see their animation as they are muted when we meet virtually. Covid did give us an opportunity to adapt.

We also need to be aware of/sensitive to our multi-lingual and multi-cultural populations...

The semester idea is a good one

We are looking at the year around options too!

We have a full Family Faith program from grade 1- confirmation (grade 10/11) includes the Sacrament preparation programs. would you or who would you suggest to be available at some point to hear how we are running our program to possibly get your opinion on what we already have in place? We have been offering a family model since 2017.

Talk to the parents, explain how family centered works within their schedule. I had a mom say her son use to hate RE class because they made him miss sports, now he likes it because it is not interfering with his life and he knows it’s still important to his parents

I also began offering home lessons for MS/HS families that don't have time to join us when we offer courses. They can work at home when it works for them as a family and complete a brief reflection (how are they inspired, what surprised them etc.) so it's not like school or homework.

Question: how do you encourage parents to say "no" to coaches, especially when the coach demands last minute changes?

Be a parent. You know what's best for your child and your family.

I used to work for a public school. The athletic director told me that none of my parish children would be punished for missing practice or a game.

As a parent, I inform coaches early with total transparency that this is a priority. Usually goes okay.

I have had parents upset about these things, but still say yes to the coach...

I have often tried to affirm the parents for whatever decision they made. Agree with Barb. And they need to build confidence of making decisions. It’s not my place to put additional shame and embarrassment onto the parents

That’s my biggest hurdle, parents don’t know how to be parents

Unfortunately I had more challenges from Catholic school coaches and moderators than public school leaders.

We need to work to bring in Catholic school families into the beautiful ministry parishes are doing!