

## **St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church**

### **Faith Formation and Evangelization Programs for Children and Teens - Updated**

All of us, from the youngest to the oldest, are on a journey of faith. Jesus says to us, as he said to two of his earliest disciples, “Come, and you will see.” (John 1:39a) What we will see, if we persist in our journey of faith, is the unfolding of God’s plan for our salvation, the revelation of his love for us in Jesus, and the promise of eternal life with him.

The volunteers, staff and clergy who make up St. Mark’s Faith Formation and Evangelization team look forward to journeying with your family as each member, and all together, grow in faith and in the love of God. We offer a variety of programs for children from age 3 through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. A brief description of each program follows. Schedules and prices are on the following pages.

#### **Classroom-based (Pre-K 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade)**

For children from 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, this program resembles a class they might take at school. We place an emphasis on fostering faith as well as knowledge, however, seeking to ensure that children not only learn about the faith, but grow in their faith and their love of God.

For children from Pre-K 3 through kindergarten, we offer a unique form of classroom-based formation called Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS). Guided by the work of educational pioneer and devout Catholic Maria Montessori, the CGS classroom (called an atrium) invites our youngest disciples to explore God’s creation and their faith through stories and activities.

#### **Family Faith (1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Children enrolled in Family Faith attend classes with one or both parents. Catechists engage both the children and the parents in the journey of faith. Parents and children grow together in faith, sharing the experience of the classroom. Parents frequently report that they, too, learn and grow a great deal during these sessions. Another unique feature of Family Faith is that it is on a semester model. Families complete a full year of faith formation in a four-month period.

#### **Home-based (Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Some families prefer to take the lead in providing faith formation for their children, teaching and learning on a schedule that best suits the family’s needs. We support this through a home-based program. We provide textbooks, access to other resources, a suggested plan of study, and periodic events that bring families together to share in faith and fellowship.

#### **Edge (6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and Life Teen (9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade)**

The Edge and Life Teen programs combine fun, fellowship, worship, instruction, and reflection for pre-teens and teens. These programs foster both individual and shared growth in faith, encouraging St. Mark youth to build peer faith communities. Such communities are critical not only to their engagement with the faith as teens, but for supporting a living faith for a lifetime.

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**The 2023-24 Faith Formation / Evangelization Calendar**

**All programs meet weekly**

Start Date for all programs: Week of September 10<sup>th</sup>

Christmas Break: December 21<sup>st</sup> thru January 20<sup>th</sup>

Classes Resume: Week of January 21<sup>st</sup>

Easter Break: Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> thru Tuesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>

Last Week for classroom-based and Family Faith programs: Week of May 5<sup>th</sup>

Last Week for Edge and Life Teen: Week of May 19<sup>th</sup>

**Specific Program Days/Times**

**Classroom-based**

Sundays 8:45-10:15 a.m.; or

Sundays 10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.; or

Mondays 4:00-5:30 p.m.

**Family Faith** (One semester = One Full Year of Faith Formation)

Fall Semester (September thru December)

Sundays 1:00-3:00 p.m.; or

Mondays 6:30-8:30 p.m.; or

Spring Semester (January thru May)

Sundays 1:00-3:00 p.m.; or

Mondays 6:30-8:30 p.m.; or

**Edge**

Wednesdays 6:30-8:30 p.m.

**Life Teen**

Sundays 3:15-5:15 p.m.

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**Prices**

**All families registering children or teens in any of our programs pay a \$75 family fee. Additional charges per child are as follows:**

Children Pre-K 3 through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade		
Classroom-based		\$40
Family Faith		\$40
Home-based		\$25
Middle School Youth (6 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)		
Edge		\$40*
High School Youth (9 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)		
Life Teen		\$40

\*Some families with middle school youth have liked combining the Edge program with a home-based component (especially when the family's schedule makes regular attendance at Edge difficult). Families have the option of adding a middle school home-based program to Edge for an additional \$15.

**Ready to register? Please complete the Faith Formation Registration Form:**

<https://forms.gle/dcgekZUY75fRqjUF6>

**Questions?**

For more information about programs for children Pre-K 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade:

Martha Gaska – 813-907-7746 x308 – [mgaska@stmarktampa.org](mailto:mgaska@stmarktampa.org)

For more information about programs for middle school and high school youth:

Deacon Hector Rios – 813-907-7746 x318 – [deaconhector@stmarktampa.org](mailto:deaconhector@stmarktampa.org)