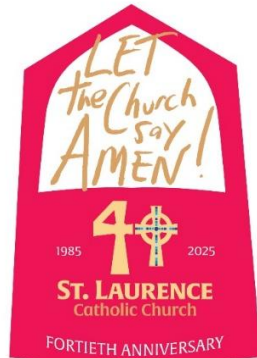


St. Laurence Catholic Church
Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) Parent Night
Smart Families: Shaping Souls
September 16/17, 2025



Meeting Agenda

Opening Prayer

A Parents Prayer

Loving God,
You are the giver of all we possess,
the source of all of our blessings.
We thank and praise you.

Thank you for the gift of our children.
Help us to set boundaries for them,
and yet encourage them to explore.

Give us the strength and courage to treat
each day as a fresh start.

May our children come to know you, the one true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

May your Holy Spirit help them to grow
in faith, hope, and love,
so they may know peace, truth, and goodness.
May their ears hear your voice.

May their eyes see your presence in all things.
May their lips proclaim your word.

May their hearts be your dwelling place.

May their hands do works of charity.
May their feet walk in the way of Jesus Christ,
your Son and our Lord.
Amen.

Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) Overview

Contacts: Christine Hernandez, Ph D, Director of Faith Formation, chernandez@stlaurence.org

St. Laurence Catholic Church
Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) Parent Night
Smart Families: Shaping Souls
September 16/17, 2025

Joan Hastreiter, Elementary Faith Formation Coordinator, jhastreiter@stlaurence.org

Molly Zimmer, Elementary Assistant Coordinator, mzimmer@stlaurence.org

- **Partnership**
- **Registration & Placement**
 - *Registration* opens annually on April 1st and ends June 1st covering classes from Sept thru the last week of April/first week of May of each year. This is also the deadline for First Sacraments registration each year.
 - *Classes are filled on a first come-first served basis* as indicated by parents on what day/time they wish children to attend CCE and the availability of volunteers to fill those needs. Days/Times are not interchangeable due to schedule changes. Transfer to Home Study is the alternative.
- **Separation of First Sacraments (Ms. Naomi Henry) and systematic grade-level faith formation (CCE)**
 - See <https://stlaurence.org/first-sacraments> on the St. Laurence website for details and the annual calendar
 - Registrations for Faith Formation (CCE) and First Sacraments are *separate* – Deadline of June 1st each year
 - The First Sacraments program has separate requirements, schedules, fees, etc. from Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) and begins in mid-August each year.
- **Safety**
 - Safe Environment <https://galvestonhouston.cmgconnect.org/>
 - VOLUNTEERS needed! ***Especially substitutes*** to assist or lead in class when assigned facilitators must be out for personal or work commitments. Please consider preparing yourself by taking the Safe Haven training if for nothing else other than being well informed on how to better protect your own children.
 - **Current Needs:**
 - **Tuesdays:** Hallway Monitor and Substitute facilitators as both lead catechists and classroom assistants.
 - **Wednesdays:** Substitute facilitators as both lead catechists and classroom assistants.
- **Faith Formation (Overview) Policies**
 - Refer to the [Faith Formation Parent Handbook and Acknowledgement](https://stlaurence.org/education) under DOCUMENTS at <https://stlaurence.org/education>, or contact Joan Hastreiter/Molly Zimmer
Please read through this document in its entirety, scroll to the final page – page 12 – and **complete the Parent Acknowledgment linked there.**
 - It is also suggested that you review and are familiar with the St. Laurence [Health, Safety and Environment Policies and Procedures](#).

St. Laurence Catholic Church
Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) Parent Night
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September 16/17, 2025

- CCE Program Procedures & Expectations (found on <https://stlaurence.org/elementary-cce>)
 - [Elementary CCE Class Calendar](#)
 - [Arrival/Dismissal](#)
 - [Expectations and Conduct Policy](#)
 - [Attendance/Makeups](#)
 - [Prayers and Practices by Age](#) Are you smarter than a 5th grader??? LOL
 - Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) specific Updates, Notices & Cancellations can be found at <https://stlaurence.org/elementary-cce> or the main Faith Formation webpage at <https://stlaurence.org/education>
 - Weekly Email Updates for CCE thru FLOCKNOTE. Make sure you are receiving these!
- Questions/Answers

The Importance of Parents in Faith Formation!

PARENTS are the FIRST and BEST teachers of their children!

(This is what the Church believes and teaches; CCC 2223)

- ❖ Parish staff are here to *encourage, support* and *equip* parents and other loving adults to *teach, pray* and *celebrate the sacraments* with your children whom God entrusted to your care. This is a **partnership**.
- ❖ As faith formation and practicing the Catholic faith becomes deeply integrated into your family life, you will experience the *graces* and *blessings* of *strengthening* your family at home.
- ❖ Faith formation is a *lifelong process* from ‘cradle to grave’, childhood through adulthood. This process is a process of *shared growth* for both you and your child as you continue to *intentionally form* your family at home.

The FACTS

Excerpted from:

<https://www.usccb.org/news/2020/partnering-parents-nurture-family-faith-insights-research>

- 1. Parents are the *most* significant influence on the religious and spiritual outcomes of young people.**

The single most powerful force in a child’s religious formation is the spiritual personality of the parent. We know the *parental factors that make a significant difference* in promoting faith in children and youth include:

- parents’ personal faith and practice
- a close and warm parent-child relationship
- parent modeling and teaching a religious faith
- parent involvement in church life and Sunday worship
- grandparent religious influence and relationship (Bengston, et al.)

St. Laurence Catholic Church
Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) Parent Night
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September 16/17, 2025

It is critically important that parents are *authentic* examples of what they claim to believe. Their authenticity includes faithful living as well as sharing with their children their struggles and failings.

2. **The *primary way by which Catholic identify becomes rooted in children's lives are the day-to-day religious practices of the family and the ways parents model their faith* and share it in conversation, collaboration and exposure to outside religious opportunities.**

Bottom Line: The crucial location where young people's religious outcomes are largely decided is not the parish or Catholic school, but the home.

3. **The family is the primary community where Catholic faith practices are nurtured and practiced.**

Certain faith practices make a significant difference in nurturing the faith of children and adolescents at home. Among the most important practices are:

- **Reading the Bible as a family** and encouraging young people to read the Bible regularly
- **Praying together as a family** and encouraging young people to pray personally; unifies the family
- **Serving people in need as a family** and supporting service activities by young people
- **Eating together as a family**
- **Having family conversations about faith**
- **Talking about faith, religious issues, and questions and doubts**
- **Ritualizing important family moments** and milestone experiences
- **Celebrating holidays and church year seasons at home**
- **Providing moral instruction**
- **Being involved in a faith community and participating regularly in Sunday worship as a family**

The quality of a parent's relationship with their children or teens and the parenting style they practice make a significant difference in faith transmission.

Parents who can avoid religious rigidity through balance are more likely to maintain more positive relationships with their children. (Dollahite, Marks, and Boyd)

Parents talk with their children about religious matters during the week. This is one of the most powerful mechanisms for the success or failure of religious transmission to children. When parents talk about their religion in personal terms, that sends a strong message to their kids that it's really important to them. (Smith, Ritz, and Rotolo)

Parents who practice an "authoritative" parenting style (as opposed to authoritarian, permissive, or uninvolved style) and maintain/enforce high standards and expectations for their children while simultaneously expressing a lot of open warmth and connection to their children are most successful.

Parents listen more and preach less. It is a more satisfying and successful religious and relational experience when the conversations were more youth-centered than parent-centered.

St. Laurence Catholic Church
Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) Parent Night
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September 16/17, 2025

Carlo Saved Me! The Mother of the First Millennial Saint

Interesting Facts:

- Born, 5/3/91 and died 10/12/06 @ 15 years of age after a brief, yet fatal illness
- Lived an ordinary childhood – loved his pets, played soccer, enjoyed gaming, cared for the less fortunate and forgotten, taught himself about computer coding and the internet, made funny videos of his pets
- Devoted to the Eucharist, Blessed Mother Mary and the Rosary
- Declared Venerable: July 5, 2018, Beatified: Oct 10, 2020 and Canonized Sept 7, 2025
- God's "influencer"/Patron Saint of the Internet, First Millennial Saint – catalogued the Eucharistic Miracles of the World

Watch Video:

Who is Carlo Acutis? An Interview with his mom (Chris Stefanick)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8E5vTpL_Ew (Long version, 27:45)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNiDf1CwmMY> (Short version, 4:22)

Quotes:

"The Eucharist is my highway to Heaven."

"All people are born as originals but many die as photocopies."

"We have always been expected in Heaven."

"To always be united with Jesus...that is my life's plan."

"Carlo, for me, was a savior." Antonia Acutis, Carlo's mother.

"Blessed Carlo showed me that *our kids are God's more than ours*. He wants them to be close to Him even more than we want that for them."

Excerpt from: *How Blessed Carlo Acutis Surprised Me Most.*

By: Theresa Civantos Barber, 07.01/24

<https://aleteia.org/2024/07/01/how-blessed-carlo-acutis-surprised-me-most/>

Reflection

- What are the ways that we can introduce our children to God and let them form their own loving friendship with Him, instead of thinking of their faith as something that has to be mediated by us, something we can control?
- How do we raise our kids to be ready and able to listen for the voice of God in their hearts?

St. Laurence Catholic Church
Elementary Faith Formation (CCE) Parent Night
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September 16/17, 2025

- How do we listen to and make space to hear His voice ourselves?

Turn to a neighbor or partner and share your reflections, time permitting.

Closing Prayer

A Parent-Catechist Prayer

Loving Father,
pour forth your Holy Spirit upon me that I may be a good catechist for my children of
your Word, your Son, Jesus Christ.
Render my heart and mind so open, receptive and responsive to your Holy Spirit that,
like Mary, I might become a living instrument of your Word to my children.
Help me to be a faithful witness to Gospel life.
Let the fire of your love so enkindle my heart that I may be an instrument
of drawing my children to love you.
I ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.

Resources:

- **Insights from Research - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)**
<https://www.usccb.org/news/2020/partnering-parents-nurture-family-faith-insights-research>
- **Saint Carlo Acutis Resources:**
 - The Eucharistic Miracles of the World, by Carlo Acutis
<https://www.miracolieucaistici.org/en/liste/list.html>
 - Fifteen Fun Facts about Saint Carlo Acutis
<https://ascensionpress.com/blogs/articles/15-fun-facts-about-saint-carlo-acutis>
 - My Catholic Family: Blessed Carlo Acutis
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaNFkxkfLdY>
 - Carlo Acutis Official Website (English)
<https://carloacutis-en.org/>
 - Look to Him and be Radiant – Saint Carlo Acutis Activities for Kids
<https://www.looktohimandberadiant.com/2025/04/new-resource-for-new-saint-carlo-acutis.html>