

August 2025

Dear Families:

Such an exciting time! The weather is beautiful yet it is cooler in the evenings, gardens are beginning to produce, flowers are in full bloom, back to school supplies popped up in stores and kids have tried out for their fall sports... AND, if you are anything like me...we wonder where the summer went! I pray that your summers with your families were filled with many graces and opportunities to see God's endless love in your lives!

This year, we continue to offer Faith Formation for all youth in our Mission Field- mainly targeting youth from St. Lawrence, Holy Family, St. James, and St. Elizabeth's. We challenge all families to register their children for the programming, regardless of their attendance at Stella Maris or if they are homeschooling their young ones- this opportunity is not solely a faith building program but also a *community building* one as well- for both youth and parents alike. We have a few opportunities that we pray will help the entire family's faith grow, and we are striving to connect the head (learned information) with the heart (personal relationships with the Lord!) Encounters through Adoration, Confession, and special talks are regular happenings at Faith Formation- no one can get enough opportunities for such encounters- what we offer helps kids learn to love the Lord with all their hearts, minds, souls, and strength!

Notably, we will be starting the Faith Formation year a little later than we traditionally do as the renovation at St. Lawrence is nearing its completion of phase 1, and we want to ensure the space is ready to go for the youth! (Thank you for your flexibility.)

NOTABLE ADJUSTMENTS: To better serve our young families, our faith formation team has discerned that some simple changes would benefit the children- please note a couple of adjustments:

2025-2026 "Young Disciples" program- our preschool through 5th grade:

1. The children will meet weekly from **6pm-7pm**

2. The **1st grade children** will have a separate class- they will not be in the atrium this year. This year will be focused on prayer, Bible Stories, and preparation for the sacraments in 2nd grade.

3. CGS will have more room for our youngest students- **ages 3, 4, and 5!**

As always, we look forward to meeting our 'Young Disciples' and helping them to grow in their love for the Lord! All are welcome!

2025-2026 LifeTeen: Our 6-12th graders will experience an opportunity for growing and nurturing personal relationships with the Lord through small group discussion, talks, Adoration, Confession opportunities, praise & worship, prayer opportunities and more! Our 6-8th graders and 9-11th graders will be separated for most talks and have their own spaces to meet. Our priests will be joining us as often as they are able and we have a great team of adults ready to share the faith with this group! We will meet every other week throughout the year. *Note: make sure to look at the schedule as we have 2 back-to-back meetings- 1 per session.*

Youth Ministry Events: Throughout the year, there will be opportunities for both the 6-8th graders as well as the 9-12th graders. These will be promoted through LifeTeen, Flocknote, and in the bulletin- all kids are welcome to join in! These events help strengthen relationships with Jesus as well as build the greater Catholic community! Watch for more details! +++Fundraising to offset these events will be offered.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns! Please help us pray for a fruitful year.

In His Name, Karen Ball 218-348-6003