

- Generations of Faith: an Invitation to All
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- Registration Weekend August 19 and 20

Everyone is welcome!

# *Generations of Faith*

Introducing an all-parish program to help us learn about, share and live our faith

St. Mary's by the Lake and St. Matthew Parishes are joining at least 25 other parishes in the Archdiocese and over 600 nationwide as we begin this new adventure to help us to get to know one another better, to have fun and share fellowship, and to grow in our faith. This intergeneration opportunity is designed for all our families whether you have children in Christian Formation, Youth Ministry or our School, whether you are a young adult or a senior citizen, single, married, or an empty-nester.

People of all generations will come together for "Faith Festivals" that will include a meal, a little prayer, an introduction to a specific topic, "break-out" sessions that will be appropriate to families with younger children, adolescents, and adults. The groups will then come back together to share what they have learned, and finish with a little more prayer. "Home Kits" will be provided to everyone, so that all can go home with more materials to further the learning. When the actual "event" happens at liturgy a week or two later, all those participants will come to worship with a deeper and wider understanding of what we are doing.



In order to meet the needs of our parishes, both St. Mary's by the Lake and St. Matthew parishes will be having a number of Faith Festivals for each event. You will be asked to register for which day and time will be good for you. We will also need many hands to make this successful. You'll find our "Help Wanted Ads" and a "How You Can Help" form in this newsletter along with some frequently asked questions about Generations of Faith.

We are looking forward to your joining us!

Fr. Steve Stradinger, Fr. Bill Stanfield, Carol Daun,  
Diana Erlandson, Shelly Madden, Alice Hatzenbeller,  
Tom Schneider, Lynn Urban, Judy Wargin

*Generations of Faith*  
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Welcome

# Help Wanted

## *Immediate Openings For All Ministries!*

To apply, please complete the "How You Can Help" Form on the other side and return it to the Christian Formation Office SOON! Mail it or put it in the collection basket when you are at Mass.

### **Formation Ministries**

#### **GOF Team Member**

Available to meet for planning/training plus for Faith Festivals. Sense of humor required. On the job training provided. Affirmative Action for interested MEN.

#### **Scripture Sharing**

Someone familiar with Scripture to lead small group faith sharing on an occasional basis during Faith Festivals.

#### **Adult Youth Ministry Leader**

Must enjoy spending time with youth. Availability for meetings, youth events and community service as needed.

#### **Liturgy of the Word Leader - Grades 1 to 5**

Lead children from the liturgy before the readings and break open the Word in an age-appropriate manner. Materials and training will be provided.

#### **Sacramental Preparation Helpers**

Assist in preparing candidates for Reconciliation, Eucharist, and/or Confirmation. Preparation/training provided.

#### **Faith Festival Facilitator**

Work with a group of children, teens or adults to present a topic related to the Faith Festivals. Preparation and training provided prior to each festival.

### **Support Ministries**

#### **Childcare**

Adults and teens to care for preschoolers on a rotating basis during Faith Festivals and as needed throughout the year.

#### **Music/Drama**

Adults and teens with musical and/or drama skills to help with prayer and presentations.

#### **Kitchen/Hospitality**

Set-up and serve refreshments at Faith Festivals and at other gatherings as needed. Help cleanup kitchen area afterward. Hairnet not required!

### **More Support Ministries**

#### **Photographer**

Take pictures during Faith Festivals and events during the Church year.

#### **Baker/Cook**

Help prepare or provide meals or snacks for Faith Festivals and other events throughout the year as needed.

#### **Arts & Crafts — General/Specialty**

Craft projects, sewing, painting, scrapbooking, etc. Availability as needed.

#### **Run Errands**

Pick up supplies for upcoming Faith Festivals and parish events as needed. Must have a car.

#### **Assemble Home Kits/Mailings**

Stuff envelopes, assemble Take Home Folders on a rotating basis. Can work from home.

#### **Phone Caller**

Make reminder phone calls and inquiries for Faith Festivals and Parish events as needed. Can work from home.

#### **Publicity/Promotions**

Advertise Parish events to parishioners through bulletin, newsletters, website, etc. Computer skills a plus. Can work from home.

#### **Setup or Cleanup**

Tables/chairs etc. for Faith Festivals and other events.

#### **Data Entry**

Input information into computer as needed. Hours are flexible.

#### **Handywoman (or man)**

Basic carpentry, electrical, painting, or other maintenance skills to do odd jobs as needed. Hours flexible. Duct tape and band-aids supplied.



# Generations of Faith

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_ GOF Team Member
- \_\_\_\_ Scripture Sharing
- \_\_\_\_ Adult YM Leader
- \_\_\_\_ Liturgy of the Word Leader
- \_\_\_\_ Sacramental Preparations Helpers



- \_\_\_\_ Publicity/Promotion
- \_\_\_\_ Assemble Home Kits
- \_\_\_\_ Run Errands
- \_\_\_\_ Phone Caller
- \_\_\_\_ Data Entry



- Faith Festival Facilitator
- \_\_\_\_ Children
  - \_\_\_\_ Teens
  - \_\_\_\_ Young Adults
  - \_\_\_\_ Adults
  - \_\_\_\_ Older Adults

- \_\_\_\_ Kitchen/Hospitality
- \_\_\_\_ Baker/Cook
- \_\_\_\_ Set-up/Clean-up



- \_\_\_\_ Photographer
- \_\_\_\_ Arts & Crafts
- \_\_\_\_ Music
- \_\_\_\_ Drama
- \_\_\_\_ Handywoman/man

- \_\_\_\_ Childcare

# Generations of Faith (GOF)

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. *Who participates in GOF?***

**A.** EVERYONE, EVERYONE and EVERYONE! All ages, individuals, families, teenagers, couples, seniors, friends, neighbors, visitors, EVERYONE is invited and encouraged to participate in the Faith Festivals and events.

**Q. *Will GOF replace our regular Christian Formation programs?***

**A.** No. This year we are going to begin this intergenerational approach to formation by adding four Faith Festivals to our programs. The schedule for child, youth and adult programs will now include these Festivals and our school families and anyone who has not been involved in on-going formation is encouraged to join us in this new adventure.

*“Enough” faith formation depends to a much greater extent on the role and place of faith in the home.*

**Q. *What about the sacramental preparation programs?***

**A.** Preparation for the celebration of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation will continue as separate, but connected, programs.

**Q. *This all looks like it’ll be more fun, but will we all really learn something?***

**A.** Talking about “Festival” or event-centered, experiential learning might evoke for some memories of a time when catechesis was entirely focused on providing a positive experience but with little content or understanding of this experience. Although this might describe your own encounter with experiential learning, this learning method has been further developed and improved since that time. In fact, experiential learning, or shared-praxis, is recognized as the best and most appropriate method for achieving the goals of faith formation: to inform, to form, and transform people so that their faith may be living, explicit, and fruitful.

**Q. *Will the children learn the basics?***

**A.** As is the case now, whether a child will or will not learn the basics depends to a great extent on whether faith is a vital part of family home life and the family is engaged in their faith beyond attendance in a Catholic school or religious education program. We will continue to teach the basics in a spiral manner through a variety of medium. The central themes of our faith will be repeated from different perspectives, in greater depth, at age appropriate levels.

**Q. *Is this enough?***

**A.** Our catechetical experience teaches us that “enough” faith formation depends to a much greater extent on the role and place of faith in the home than on just attendance in a Catholic school or religious education program. We want to build on this truth and empower families to weave faith and the practice of faith into their family life. GOF will enable us to do this.

**Q. *Aren’t we doing a good enough job in our current programs?***

**A.** It is not that we haven’t worked hard enough or been doing a good job through our current programs. Rather, it is that the structure of the program, regardless of how hard we work, is not necessarily communicating or supporting what we believe our catechetical ministry is about. We often focus on the content of religious education and forget that the method and structure also teach. Ideally, the method and structure serve to reinforce and support what is taught through the content of the program so that they are working together in communicating one single message.

**Q. *Why is the GOF approach better suited to achieving our catechetical goals?***

**A.** By gathering the community, we communicate that faith formation is a life-long process because people of all ages are engaged in this pursuit, and that we are a community of disciples because we all come together to learn from the Master. By directing our catechetical activity toward preparation for participation in the community’s life and worship, we establish a clear connection between catechesis and liturgy and structurally support such participation. By expecting parental involvement at the sessions and at home, we communicate both the primary role of parents in their children’s faith formation and support the process of integration of faith into family life.

**Q. *But how will we know the children are really learning?***

**A.** Because our previous programs were academic in structure (classes, teacher, and textbook) there is a misconception that it somehow “guaranteed” our children’s learning. Our best measure of success will be an increase in the number of children, youth, families and individuals, who more fully understand and value their Catholic faith. Our hope in shifting to an intergenerational model is that we will know participants are learning and growing in their faith when more people, individuals and families, young, old, and in-between:

- Are praying alone and together more frequently.
- Understand the value of our Sunday Mass and the Sacraments.
- Are actively participating in all areas of parish life.
- Read, share and study Scripture.
- Can speak of a deeper understanding of their Catholic faith.
- Are forming and being Community, supporting one another in living a Christ-filled life.

**Q. *So parents will be expected to do the teaching now?***

**A.** Parents will be asked to do what they are already doing – teaching! We tend not to recognize and value it, but parents are and will always be the primary teachers of their children. Our children learn just about everything from tying a shoe to crossing a street to caring for loved ones from parents and family. Home is also the primary place where our children learn their faith as well. GOF is structured to encourage a partnership between the “home” church and parish church. Besides the Faith Festivals we’ll provide a variety of resources and learning tools (the home kit) to extend our faith learning at home for individuals and families. We often hear concerns from families because they don’t know how to speak about the faith with each other. They want their family members to know more about their Catholic faith, to value and to live it! GOF provides the structure to address these needs and to fully support families and individuals in handing on the Catholic faith. At the same time young adults, seniors and singles will also be participating in a regular structured program that helps nourish their faith growth. No one is ignored. The whole community is here to learn together!

**Q. *What about single parent families or if one of the parents is not Catholic?***

**A.** Non-Catholic parents are equally welcome to participate if they are interested. However, if they are not interested, this does not prevent the rest of the family from doing so. And for single parents, this is a great program. To name but a few benefits: a meal with no cooking or cleaning, all the children together in one place, the opportunity for the parent to speak with other adults, no need to find a baby-sitter, ready to use ideas of meaningful activities to do at home when boredom strikes or the TV watching quota has been reached.

*GOF is structured in such a way that it encourages a partnership between the “home” church and parish church.*

**Q. *Aren’t we expecting too much of parents?***

**A.** When parents want to raise their children in the Catholic faith and they come to the church seeking help and guidance, it is our responsibility to give them the best advice and help that we have learned from Church wisdom and experiences of those who have succeeded in this venture. Both Church teaching and our human experience point to the truth, that raising children in the Catholic faith cannot be a separate extracurricular activity but needs to be an integral piece of family life. We do not expect a family that has not been integrating faith into their life to suddenly do so when we begin the program; but the program is designed to teach such families ways they can begin and provide them with ideas, materials and support to help them to succeed.

**Q. *Do we have to attend with the whole family?***

**A.** GOF is intended to be shared by an entire household. We use the term “family” loosely. We know that families are sometimes 1 person or even 20 people, but the idea is for everyone in each household to learn and share together. We believe that parents want to be kept ‘in the loop’ as to what their children are learning, we believe they want to share in their children’s faith journey, and, more importantly, we believe that children – adolescents included – need their parents and other adults to be involved in their faith journey, providing positive role models and encouragements. For this reason, we expect parents to attend faith formation sessions with their children. However, we realize there may be situations in which this is not possible – parents may have to work -- in which case a responsible adult involved in the child’s life (grandparent or other relative, godparent, or family friend) may attend in the parent’s place.

# Registration Weekend for

 Generations of Faith

 Preschool

 Child Formation

 Families of Faith

 Youth Ministry

 **Adult Formation** (i.e. Women Spirituality, Adult Book Discussion Group,  
Ministry of Moms Sharing, Scripture Study, Men's Spirituality, Date Night, etc.)

## August 19 and 20 after all Masses in the Gathering Space

**St. Matthew Parish**

9329 S. Chicago Road  
Oak Creek, WI 53154

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