

OUR STRATEGY

Keeping to the idea that the parish is the curriculum, with the mission of the parish and committee to guide us, aware of adult learning styles, we hope to engage adults and challenge them to deepen their faith. Every time adults gather in this community, formation happens. Aware that varied initiatives are better than one, the parish provides many ways for one to deepen faith through:

Liturgy: Sunday mass is the heart of all we do.
Morning mass and *Liturgy of the Hours*
Seasonal prayer services
Eucharistic Adoration

Family or Home-Centered Activities:

Weekly reflections on the Sunday Gospel (bulletin)
Seasonal newsletter or inserts
Seasonal reading, reflection materials, blessings
Home study/Generations of Faith

Small Groups: Faith sharing groups
Small groups, such as, Adventures In Parenting

Large Groups: Adult faith enrichment opportunities
Sacramental Preparation

Individual: Parish Library
Spiritual Direction

LEADERSHIP

Necessary to keep adult faith formation efforts and initiatives going in such a way they remain central to parish life, the constant of leadership, in collaboration among different groups of the parish is vital. The support from the pastor, and parish leaders are essential to the success of all adult faith formation efforts (see *OHBW*, pp 39-52).

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The parish web site will include an icon, "Adult Faith Formation."

THE FAITH DEVELOPMENT CENTER LIBRARY

The new library — with its books, CDs, videos, and other materials, is an invaluable resource to assist parishioners to deepen their faith.

WHY MAKING ADULT FAITH FORMATION CENTRAL IS SO IMPORTANT TODAY

We stand in a critical moment of our history. We are witnessing the death of the Modern Age and the birth of a "new age" in a post-modern world. The philosophical and sociological foundations that once stood in place of culture are dying—and no longer engaging the human imagination. There is a lack of certainty about us. We don't know where this "new age" is leading, but we can identify some distinctive marks:

Rugged individualism

Individual freedom without boundaries
A moral vacuum where morals are relative
A sense of fear and mistrust about people
and institutions
An indifference to organized religion
An attraction to “spirituality”
A thirst for the transcendent
A greater disparity between the
rich and poor
A search for meaning and purpose
A pervading feeling of loneliness among many
A culture of death filled with violence, pessimism, and nihilism
Change is the only constant
Technology and information are exploding (with the misconception that information = “knowledge”)

Within the Church, 40 years after the Vatican Council, there is search for an authentic “Catholic Identity,” Church teaching and doctrine is a source of controversy among Christians and within the Catholic Church, Christian faith is now seen by many as an “enemy” to liberal Western European values, church participation and attendance is on the decline, Church leadership is struggling to regain credibility after Church scandals, the largest religious group in the US is “fallen away Catholics,” while there is a growing number of un-churched young adults. Through adult faith formation efforts we hope to engage parishioners and provide a new hope, making the credibility of the Gospel and the power and beauty of Roman Catholicism a real influence in the lives of Catholics, and a continual source of guidance in everyday life.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide for, in cooperation with the Diocese of Trenton, ongoing adult enrichment opportunities throughout the year.
- To provide, through our parish library, seasonal newsletter, *Baptized In Christ*, bulletin inserts and updates, information aimed at updating adults on Catholic thought and life, Church teaching and timely issues related to faith and Christian living.
- To create a unique space and a language that fosters a community of adult learners of faith in dialogue with one another about things that matter.
- To evangelize all adult members of the parish, helping adults keep their baptismal promise as a Roman Catholic at the forefront of their Christian journey.

MEMBERSHIP

Members are willing (“whose hearts are burning”), and registered parishioners of Saint Ann Church who want to grow in their relationship with Christ and the Church. Service on the **Adult Faith Formation Committee** shall be for a three-year term renewable once. All members are asked to read and reflect on the U.S. Bishop’s document, *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us*. It is strongly recommended that the committee regularly seek out and invite new members who support the mission.

MEETINGS

The **Adult Faith Formation Committee** will meet on the last Thursday of the month with the following exceptions: the month of August or if the last Thursday falls within Holy Week, the St. Ann Parish Novena, or at the call of the parish AFF leader. The parish AFF leader, with input from the committee, will set the agenda for each meeting, facilitate the meeting, and keep all members informed and updated. The recorder is responsible to send out minutes to all members following

each meeting. Contact Gary Maccaroni for more information, 359-9966.

CHURCH OF SAINT ANN ADULT FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

VISION

The Church of Saint Ann enthusiastically embraces the U. S. Catholics Bishops' call to a renewed commitment to adult faith formation. Positioning adult growth in faith at the heart of our catechetical vision and practice, the **Adult Faith Formation Committee** was formed in the spring of 2002 after coming together to read and reflect on the U.S. Bishop's document, *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* (see USCCB, the U.S. Bishops website for the complete text). We believe that every baptized adult Catholic shares in the mission of Jesus. To do their part, Catholics must be mature in faith—seeking to deepen their understanding of Catholic thought and life, strengthen their Catholic identity, deliberately living out their baptism—spreading the Gospel, promoting it in every family circle, every church gathering, in every place of work, and in every public forum.

MISSION

The **Adult Faith Formation Committee** of the Church of Saint Ann in Lawrenceville, NJ works to foster a parish community that is vitally alive in faith. We hope to create and sustain a community of adult learners. We support parish activities, ministries, and parish committees/groups that help adults more fully and continuously live out their faith as a Roman Catholic among the challenges of today's world. [The **Adult Faith Formation Committee** is an oversight group within the parish, inviting the parish and its leadership, through ideas and new initiatives, to make adult faith formation central to parish life. The **Adult Faith Formation Committee** recognizes and supports other groups and activities/programs in the parish that are aimed at deepening adult faith].

MAJOR GOALS

Invite and Enable Ongoing Conversion to Jesus in Holiness of Life (*OHWB 67*).

Promote and Support Active Membership in the Parish Community (*OHWB 70*).

Call and Prepare Adults to Act as Disciples in Mission to the World (*OHWB 72*).