



Introducing “Destined,” this year’s new Religious Formation Program.

“I wish it need not have happened in my time,” said Frodo. “So do I,” said Gandalf, “and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to do is decide what to do with the time that is given us.” - J.R.R. Tolkien, “The Fellowship of the Ring”

Dear Religious Formation Families,

This quote from the Lord of the Rings has been floating around a lot as of late. Perhaps it is due to a lack of originality on the part of those quoting it, or perhaps it truly speaks to the times in which we find ourselves. Perhaps both are true. Either way, it has certainly been on my mind as I have been thinking and praying about what is best for this year’s Religious Formation Program.

Every time has its unique challenges, and it is undeniable our present times are uniquely challenging. That does not mean; however, that God has abandoned us. He is with us and has a plan for us more wonderful than anything we could imagine. As strange as it seems, as bleak as things can appear, our faith tells us God is using these present challenges to work something good.

On that note, it has been decided this year’s formation program will take place almost entirely online. One exception will be 10th grade Confirmation which will meet outside, in a socially-distanced manner, weather-permitting.

While we will miss the community of in-person faith formation, we are choosing to see this year’s online program not as something we are being subjected to, but rather as an opportunity willed for us by the Holy Spirit. Embracing this model of catechesis will allow us to better respond to the needs of our parish families, better nourish their spiritual lives, and better protect everyone’s health for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic.

We ask you to please register your children for the following programs: a whole-family program for grades 1, and 3-8; a first reconciliation and first communion program for grade 2; and 9th and 10th grade confirmation programs. We are particularly excited for the whole family program. Rather than being divided by grades, it will be a joint program that we all take part in together. It will allow us to get back to basics and approach topics we never could in the past. Resources will be made available to families that will equip parents to truly lead their children’s faith formation, while growing in their own spiritual lives.

Furthermore, by moving online, we are able to offer this year's program at a significant discount. There will be a \$100/family registration fee that will enable us to provide high-quality resources to you throughout the year. This will cover the entire family regardless of how many children are in the program. Families who only have children in the 10th grade program will only need to pay for the Confirmation retreat. If you have children in 10th grade and other grades, you will only need to pay the family registration fee. If you have already registered your children for this year's program and have paid more than the new \$100 fee, a refund will be issued to you for the difference. Registration is open at the parish office Monday through Thursday from 9AM-12PM, and from 1:30-4:00PM.

Our program will begin Sunday, September 13th. With the exception of 10th grade, there will be no classes either in-person or virtual to attend. Rather, families will be able to complete each week's lesson on their own time, provided they are finished before the next lesson is made available. We are hoping to offer resources that will be fun to complete as a whole family and non-stressful. We understand a lot is being asked of parents and students right now, and it is our hope that rather than adding to the stress, this year's program can serve as a source of relief.

Please know of our continued prayers for your families and please keep us in yours. We look forward to when we can return to in-person faith formation, but for now we are eager to see what the Lord plans to bless us with this year. This year's program is called "Destined" because we are convinced that for whatever reason, these are the times the Lord has destined for us. This will entail plenty of challenges, but we firmly believe those challenges can also be a blessing. May God bless all of you abundantly!

Yours in Christ,



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