

ST. JOSEPH PARISH, BELMONT

2023-2024

LIFELONG FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another dynamic year of Youth Ministry. We have a strong team of volunteers and staff, excited to serve in our monthly *G.I.F.T.* program for families, as well as to provide evening studies and excellent online resources for adults, Sacramental prep retreats for our Year 1 and 2 children, middle school and high school youth groups, beautiful liturgies and fun-filled and festive community events. See the rest of this packet for more information. Included here are the necessary registration forms for the upcoming year, as well as a brief overview of our Youth and Family Faith Formation ministry on the reverse side of this letter.

For those of you with children preparing to receive Sacraments, simply follow the directions on the registration form and **mark your calendar** with the *G.I.F.T.* and retreat dates. (*New parents: there is a mandatory orientation meeting on 9/19 at 7:00pm.*) **Please return Registration forms to the parish office by September 22nd, 2023. Detailed schedule information and all necessary forms/handouts/etc. are available through the website.** Let us know if you have questions. Our goal is to work with every family's individual needs in every way possible.

Finally, this summer we said goodbye to Wesley Becklo as he discerned the Lord's call to High School teaching in Dover, NH. We are so grateful for his work and ask you to continue to keep Wes and his family in your prayers as they begin this new phase of their life. We also welcome Christa Watson, a longtime parishioner, as the new K-12 Coordinator. Christa has been an assistant Youth Minister with us in the past, serving children at GIFT and VBS, as well as teens at the same Youth Group she grew up attending. Please keep her in your prayers as well.

We can't wait to see everyone soon! May the peace of Christ be with you and abide in your families always.

Yours in Christ,

The Pastoral Staff

ST. JOSEPH PARISH, BELMONT

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Pastor
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Saints Zelig and Louis Martin, Pray for Us!

K-5 and Middle School

G.I.F.T. – Growing in Faith Together (Kindergarten – 8th Grade)

Our multi-faceted approach to family catechesis is intentionally designed to equip and empower parents with all the necessary resources they need to pass the gift of faith on to their children, with confidence and prayerful enthusiasm. *(All children must be accompanied by at least one parent/guardian during each session in order to participate.)* This year's *G.I.F.T.* theme is *Morality: Life in Christ*. Our monthly gatherings as a parish community consist of a shared meal and dynamic, age-appropriate breakout sessions. Parents leave our monthly sessions with a simple, easy-to-use lesson plan by *Sophia Press* to help foster dialogue, understanding, and enrichment regarding our monthly topic. Check the website for further details and dates.

NOTE: Consider inviting a new family to *G.I.F.T.* this year – a personal invitation can make all the difference!

Year 1 Sacramental Prep: First Reconciliation *(typically 2nd Grade)*

In addition to their participation in G.I.F.T., families with children preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation will attend two Saturday retreats (Fall and Spring) in Laconia. This is a similar format to *G.I.F.T.*, in which at least one parent must be in attendance and an easy-to-use lesson plan will be provided for the at-home, parent-child portion of the program. Visit the website for more information: www.stjosephparishbelmont.org

***PARENT MEETING:** Parents with children entering Year 1 Sacramental Prep begin the year with a mandatory meeting on Tuesday, September 22nd from 7:00pm-7:45pm in the Pastoral Center, 271 Union Avenue, Laconia.

Year 2 Sacramental Prep: Confirmation and First Eucharist *(typically 3rd Grade)*

In addition to their participation in G.I.F.T., families with Year 2 children preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation will attend two Saturday retreats (Fall and Spring) in Laconia. Just as in Year 1, at least one parent must be in attendance and an easy-to-use lesson plan will be provided for the at-home, parent-child portion of the program. Visit the website for more information: www.stjosephparishbelmont.org

Vacation Bible School!

All K-5 children won't want to miss this very worthwhile experience! Junior High and High School Youth are invited to serve as leaders during this week of faith-filled fun. This year's dates **TBA: mid-July, 2024**.

Junior Youth Group

Every Third Thursday from 5:30pm-8:00pm, children from around the Lakes Region (ages 9-12) are invited to the JP II Youth Lounge (271 Union Avenue, Laconia) for food, fellowship, activities, and reflection. We are looking for parent volunteers to help monitor the external doors; let us know if you can help!

High School Youth Nights

Growing in Discipleship

Every Wednesday evening of the year from 6:00pm-9:00pm, all teens from around the Lakes Region (age 13+) are invited to the JP II Youth Lounge (271 Union Avenue, Laconia) for food, fellowship, activities, and reflection. In addition, our high school youth are invited to participate as leaders in our *G.I.F.T.* and Sacramental Prep program, as well as in other parish and community ministries.

2023-2024 Schedule

Please add the following dates to your calendar.

SEPTEMBER 19: 7:00pm-7:45pm in the Pastoral Center, 277 Union Avenue

Mandatory Year 1 Sacramental Prep Parent Meeting: *Overview of Program, Schedule, and Materials*

* Year 1 parents are welcome to submit your registration forms at this meeting. Not necessary for children to be present.

Monthly G.I.F.T. Sessions -----

**Sundays from 10:30am-12:45pm*

OCTOBER 15

Parent Talk/K-5 Break-out sessions

NOVEMBER 12

Parent Talk/K-5 Break-out sessions

DECEMBER 10

Parent Talk/K-5 Break-out sessions

JANUARY 14

Parent Talk/K-5 Break-out sessions

FEBRUARY 11

Parent Talk/K-5 Break-out sessions

MARCH 10

Parent Talk/K-5 Break-out sessions

APRIL 14

Parent Talk/K-5 Break-out sessions

MAY 5

End of Year Celebration!

12:00pm – 2:00pm in the SAB Gym

Sacramental Prep Schedule -----

RETREATS

Year 1

Year 2

11/11

11/18

3/9

TBA

**Sacramental Prep retreats held in Laconia at the SAB Pastoral Center from 8:45am-12:30pm*

SACRAMENTS

1st Reconciliation

Confirmation & Eucharist

3/16 at 10:00am

TBA by the Bishop

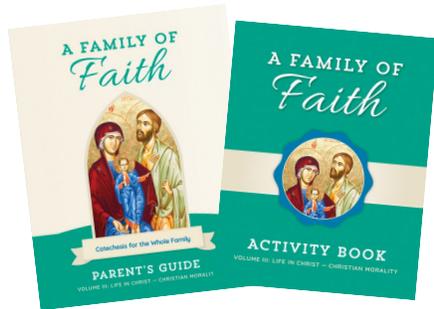
(SH Church, Laconia)

If, for any reason, you or your child would like to meet with us, we are always available to schedule in-person meetings and/or instruction. Phone: (603) 524-9609

Email: sethevangelho@gmail.com or Christa at sabyouthministry@gmail.com

What to expect at *G.I.F.T.* this year?

Our core program will explore the third pillar of the Catechism: *Life in Christ*. All children, grades K-5 will be using the at-home, family based curriculum from Sophia Press titled, “Family of Faith.” This includes hard copy guides and activities, as well as online resources.

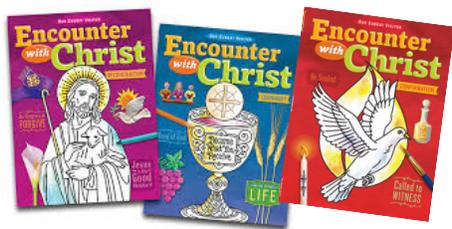


SOPHIA INSTITUTE PRESS

- Each month, beginning in September and ending in April, families will attend one in-person session that covers the topic for the month and walks them through the suggested at-home dialogue and activities.
- Throughout the month, parents will engage their child(ren) with three to four multi-age guided activities that take 5-15 minutes each. Child(ren) will also complete age-appropriate activities in the Activity Book.
- The *G.I.F.T.* Team will provide complementary age-appropriate sessions for children and parents each month to support the mission and to maintain a personal connection with the wider parish community.

Has your child received the Sacraments?

Sacramental Prep is a two-year program (*typically, grades 2-3*) in which every child prepares for three Sacraments, receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the end of Year 1, followed by the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Communion at the end of Year 2.



- In addition to the monthly activities on the Sacraments via the *G.I.F.T.* program, children in Sacramental Prep will receive take-home materials relevant to the Sacrament(s) they are preparing to receive.
- Each prep year, the children will also participate in *two* on-campus retreats (with at least one parent present).

*Visit the parish website for more details about these programs: www.stjosephparishbelmont.org

Belmont G.I.F.T. Registration

2023-2024

This year's program includes monthly on-campus sessions as well as at-home dialogue and activities with parents.

All families will receive a parent guide.

Number of children, grades Kindergarten – 8th Grade _____

Number of children in Sacramental Prep: Year 1 _____ Year 2 _____

Please return the following information for each child to be enrolled by **September 22nd**, 2023.

****2^d Grade children will automatically be enrolled in First Reconciliation Prep.
Please specify if you have a child enrolling in Sacramental Prep who does not fall into the normal
Year 1 (2^d Grade) and Year 2 (3^d Grade) categories.***

1. Child's Full Name: _____ D.O.B. _____ Grade _____

Parents: _____

Address _____

Parent Email: _____ Phone _____

Special Needs/Allergies: _____

*If your child is preparing to receive a Sacrament this year, we will need to verify his/her baptismal record. If your child was baptized in Belmont or Laconia, please mark the appropriate church and include year of baptism so that we can verify:

_____ Belmont _____ Laconia _____ Year _____

If your child was baptized elsewhere, please send us a copy of the original baptismal certificate, no later than **December 20, 2023**.

2. Child's Full Name: _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____

Special Needs/Allergies: _____

*Baptized: _____ Belmont _____ Laconia _____ Year _____

****If you need to register additional children, please use an additional form.***

Registration Fee: \$90 (One Child, One Adult) \$110 (Whole Family)

****Scholarships Available****

Please make checks payable to St. Joseph Parish and return with this form to the Belmont
Office: P.O. Box 285 Belmont, NH 03220 (Attn. Wanda Gilson)