

Saints Philip and James School

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September 5, 2018

Dear Parents,

There's a line that's always intrigued me, "I pointed out the moon and all you saw was my finger". Obviously, we are not pointing to the moon, but to the Son; and not trying to create either obstacles or difficulties for already busy families. The truth of who we are called to be as a Catholic people is to be formed as a *Eucharistic* people – to let ourselves be **taken** and **blessed** and have new possibilities **broken** open for us.

Last year we began asking for our young people to provide reflections on the Sunday readings they heard when attending Mass. Attendance at our liturgies increased significantly and our SSPJ parish community was greatly enriched!

The overall response to this process was positive. Almost all our catechists, many parents and other parishioners agreed the idea was a good one – but that there were areas that could use some "tweaking". We held an open session last June to address needs and concerns. This letter outlines how the process will proceed this year.

The children will continue to attend Mass weekly and will be given age appropriate materials.

- We encourage grades 1, 2, and 3 to attend Children's Liturgy of the Word at either the **Saturday 5pm Mass** or the **Sunday 10am Mass**. For those unable to attend either of these two Masses, a reflection sheet for them may be found on our website and in the bulletin.
- For grades 4, 5, and 6, prepared materials will be on our website and, in the bulletin, to bring to any of the weekend Masses.
- Grades 7 and 8 will also have prepared materials on our website and in the bulletin to bring to any of the weekend Masses.

Each month will follow the same pattern:

- Week 1 - will focus on what the **Family Prayer Intention** is for the month. These intentions will be part of the offertory procession and mentioned in the Prayer of the Faithful.
- Week 2 - will involve an age appropriate **Reflection**, inviting the children to use their imaginations as they place themselves in the gospel story.
- Week 3 - will feature a **Puzzle** based on the gospel for the children to complete.
- Week 4 - will involve another **Reflection** question related to the readings.
- Week 5 (*when there is a fifth week*) - will include a word jumble or prayer completion to facilitate learning on an age appropriate level.

The reflection activities will begin September 29/30 and continue through the school year.

Parents, though you are the primary faith educators of your children, SSPJ parish continues to pray with you and your families, and we look forward to sharing faith with you. Together we will grow as Apostles of Hope!

Peace,

Father Tom Haggerty