

“Meet You at the Altar” Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the “Meet You at the Altar” program?

A: “Meet You at the Altar” is our new Faith Formation program for the 2020-2021 Faith Formation program year. The program will focus on the weekend Mass and encourages students and families to participate in the worship life of the Church. “Meet You at the Altar” will take the place of our traditional classroom program for the year.

Each week, students and families will attend a Mass of their choice here in the Collaborative, or participate online via livestream if they are not comfortable returning to church at this time. After participating at a Mass, students are asked to fill out a very simple, age appropriate “journal entry” regarding the Mass that they attended, answering several questions that focus on the message of the Gospel, the homily and other aspects of the Mass. One or two catechists will be assigned to a particular grade that will be able to check in and provide occasional feedback on each child’s journal entry each week.

For students who are preparing to receive either 1st Reconciliation/1st Communion (Grade 2) or Confirmation (Grade 9), students will also participate in a once a month session that will be designed to help in their preparation for the reception of these sacraments.

Parents will also meet several times throughout the year for informational meetings that will help you better engage with your child in talking about our faith at home.

Q: Who is this program for?

A: This program is for any student from our Collaborative entering into Grade 1 through Grade 9. If you are from out of town and wish to participate in this program, please contact Jonathan Galo (jgalo@falmouthcatholic.org) for more information.

Q: How do I register for the program?

A: You can register in a few different ways:

- a. Online: visit our website at www.falmouthcatholic.org/faithformationregistration to register online
- b. Downloaded from our website and emailed/mailed in
- c. Paper copy: a paper copy has been provided to all returning families via the mailing that was sent out. A paper copy can also be requested by contacting Jonathan Galo (jgalo@falmouthcatholic.org)

Q: Is there a fee for the program?

A: The recommended fee for the program year is \$25/student. This is reduced from what we have charged previously. The fee will go to covering materials and operational costs for our program. If you are unable to pay the registration fee at this time, please contact Jonathan Galo to make arrangements. Payments can be made in two ways

- a. Via check (made payable to your parish (St. Anthony, St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Patrick; please include “Faith Formation” in the memo line) or cash dropped off to the Faith Formation Office or included with your registration form
- b. Online at <https://stanthonyscapecod.weshareonline.org>. Any questions, please contact Dan Cunha, Director of Business Operations, at dcunha@falmouthcatholic.org

Q: When and where can we attend Mass?

A: Mass can be attended in any of our 3 parishes here in the town of Falmouth (St. Anthony, St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Patrick). A copy of the Mass schedule for Fall 2020 can be found on the “Meet You at the Altar” program calendar or on our website at www.falmouthcatholic.org/faithformation

If you are still concerned about attending Mass in church at this time, you can participate in one of our livestream Masses from St. Anthony’s via our website at www.falmouthcatholic.org/live-stream or listen via the radio by tuning in to 87.9FM from the parking lot of either St. Anthony or St. Elizabeth Seton church.

Q: What if we cannot attend Mass in town one weekend?

A: You can attend any Mass at any Catholic parish, just indicate that you attended a different parish on the weekly journal entry.

Q: How can my child complete their weekly journal entry?

A: Journals can be completed in the following ways

- a. Online via Canvas- more information about creating an account and gaining access will be given out during the first family meeting of the year.
- b. Downloaded from our website and emailed back or handed in
- c. Hard copies which can be obtained at the first parent meetings or at a designated area in each of our churches.

Q: When do the journal entries begin?

A: Journal entries will begin on Sunday, October 4, 2020. Please see the program calendar for a full list of dates of when journals are due.

Q: When are journals to be completed by?

A: Journals should be completed by the following Tuesday after attending a Mass.

Q: Does my child need to complete a journal entry each week?

A: It is strongly encouraged for each student to participate each week in this program. At minimum we are asking students to miss no more than 20% of all journal entries for the program year. If a student falls behind on journal entries, Jonathan will reach out to the family to discuss the student’s status in the program.

Q: What are your safety protocols while attending Mass?

A: Per state regulations, gatherings cannot exceed 40% of its occupancy and must take into account social distancing of 6 feet between people (or households). A special team of ushers will assist you in finding a seat when you arrive at church. For safety and order, a person will not be able to choose a specific seat. Everyone entering the church will be required to wear a mask or other face covering. Please provide your own masks. While there will be hand sanitizer available, please consider providing your own, if you can, as supply is limited. The sign of peace will continue to be eliminated as well as other forms of prayer where participants hold hands (Our Father). The holy water fonts at the doors of the church will remain empty. Missals/hymnals have been removed as it will be difficult to sanitize them. After each Mass, the tops of the benches, door handles and other high traffic areas will be sanitized.

Holy Communion will be distributed at the conclusion of the Mass. Those receiving communion will approach row by row (keeping 6 feet safe distancing protocol) and section by section and then immediately, reverently and quietly, leave the church by the door in which they entered. The priest/deacon/Eucharistic minister distributing the hosts will wear a mask. Communicants may remove their mask just prior to receiving communion. It is preferred that Communion be received in the hand. Please place your hand out very straight and flat to allow the minister to place the Eucharist safely in your hand in order to avoid contact with your hand. If your preference is to receive on the tongue, please wait and approach the minister at the end of the line.

Q: We are still uncomfortable attending church in person at this time, are there any other options to participate in the program?

A: We recognize that not everyone is ready to attend Mass in person at this time, so you may watch the Mass via livestream on our website at www.falmouthcatholic.org/live-stream. You will also be able to complete journal entries online via Canvas, or downloaded from our website and emailed back to either Jonathan or your child's catechist.

Q: My child is preparing to receive their 1st Communion/Confirmation this year but does not feel comfortable in attending the in person meetings, are there any other options for them?

A: Please contact Jonathan to discuss all possibilities for preparing to receive the sacraments.

Q: Why are parent meetings/sacramental sessions held at St. Anthony's and not in the other parishes?

A: St. Anthony's is currently the only parish in our Collaborative with livestreaming capabilities in addition to having the most space available to hold larger groups of people. As restrictions ease over time, we hope to make the other parishes available for use for these meetings.

Q: My child did not participate in the program last year, but would like to receive his/her 1st Communion/Confirmation this year, how do we go about doing this?

A: Please contact Jonathan for more information and to set up an appointment. Per diocesan and parish guidelines, sacramental preparation is typically a two-year process beginning in gr. 1 (1st Communion preparation) or gr. 8 (Confirmation preparation) with the sacraments being celebrated in the second year of preparation (gr. 2 1st Communion; gr. 9 Confirmation)

Q: My child is not baptized, what is the process for getting them baptized?

A: Please indicate on your registration form that your child is not baptized. Afterwards, please follow up with an email to Jonathan letting him know that you wish to have your child baptized. He will then set you up with all the information that you will need to begin the process of having your child baptized.

Q: Are there any additional Faith Formation resources for us to use at home with our child to help further expand our discussions?

A: We will make a number of resources available at the beginning of the year for those families who wish to go into deeper discussions about our faith at home. Some of these resources will also be posted on our website, on each Canvas class page, and included in our weekly FlockNote newsletters. These supplemental resources will help us if we are able to transition back into a traditional classroom setting later in the year.

Q: Are you bringing back youth/contemporary music Masses for the program year?

A: At this time there are no definitive plans for these masses to return due to the restrictions that have been set in place by the state, local and diocesan guidelines. We are currently talking with our contemporary music ministry as to possibility for future Masses once restrictions have been eased. Please keep an eye out on your emails for future updates regarding youth/contemporary Masses.

Q: We have not been receiving the weekly newsletters, why?

A: If you have not been receiving the weekly newsletters, some emails may accidentally be sent to your spam folder, so please be sure to check that any emails from the Catholic Community of Falmouth Office of Faith Formation (via Flocknote) or directly from Jonathan (jgalo@falmouthcatholic.org) are marked as safe. Please be sure to provide an accurate email address at the beginning of the year to ensure that emails are being sent to you.

Q: Who designed the “Meet You at the Altar” logo?

A: Our logo was designed by John Garabedian, a seminarian in the Diocese of Fall River, who was the seminarian in residence here in our Collaborative for summer 2020.

Q: What if I have any additional questions?

A: Please contact Jonathan Galo, Director of Faith Formation, at jgalo@falmouthcatholic.org or at 508-548-3515. Faith Formation office hours are typically from Monday-Thursday from 9:30am until 5:00pm or by appointment.

