

Faith Formation Process

**We believe that the Church is a valuable, meaningful place for young people.
We need young people... and they need the Church.**

But young people are not responding. Fewer than 20% of young adults post-confirmation remain in the Church. The way that we have connected as Church over the last several years has not resonated with them.

The faith formation process outlined below consists of proven strategies from local and national ministry efforts. They have been successful in helping young people grow to lifelong disciples of Christ, integrated into the Catholic Church. In this approach, Confirmation is not graduation from faith formation. It is one step in the context of our lifelong journey with Christ in his body, the Church.

What will my child experience?

6-8th grade: Edge.

"Edge is a Catholic middle school youth ministry program. It provides a safe fun place for youth to find solid Catholic community, to get answers to their questions about faith, and, most importantly, to experience Jesus in a profound and personal way." In a three-year cycle, Edge addresses all sections of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in a way that fosters integration into the life and experience of middle school youth. You can learn more at <https://lifeteen.com/edge-ministry/>.

9th Grade: Confirmation

Young people prepare directly for the sacrament of Confirmation, engage in facilitated sessions that follow a format similar to Edge sessions, and address topics particular to Confirmation preparation. In the spring of their 9th grade year, students become a part of a small group, celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation, and begin living out their life as a confirmed Catholic.

10th Grade: Small Groups

Young people continue their faith journey in small groups of 5-8 students and 2 adult mentors. Their small groups are a place where young people form strong friendship, ask authentic questions about their faith, play together and pray together.

11th Grade: Spiritual Mentors

Young people participate in a season of spiritual mentorship through monthly meetings that include group prayer, the opportunity for adoration and confession, and individual meetings with mentors who help them relate to God in an increasingly personal way and see God's action in their daily lives.

12th Grade: Made for Mission

Events and opportunities for 12 graders focus on developing leadership skills, helping them use their talents to give back, and fostering a sense of belonging in their parish family. Topical nights are offered at least quarterly and can address topics like discerning a major and remaining faithful after high school.

We know that faith is something that is caught more than it is taught. Parents are invited to ongoing formation nights designed to provide a community of other faith-filled parents who are equipped to accompany their children in their middle school and high school journeys. Parent ministry sessions focus on the way that faith intersects and informs our response to the real challenges and joys of our children in middle and high school.

Who is able to participate?

Faith Formation students:

Fulfill faith formation requirements by participating in this formation process

Catholic School students:

Are invited to experience a form of instruction, connection, and discipleship that is different than what is available in a school setting

It takes a village

Faithful adult volunteers are the heart of a faith formation process that teaches discipleship by walking with young people. The Faith Formation team is supporting parish-level leaders and their volunteers to implement the entire process over the next five to six years. You can learn more by talking to the faith formation leader at your parish and visiting our website.

<https://www.eriecd.org/faithformation/ffprocess.html>