

St. Joseph of Cupertino Family Letter

Dear Families,

At the beginning of a new venture, we have a can-do attitude. At the beginning of a new year, we think about our hopes and dreams for the future. That's why making resolutions is a popular exercise at this time of year.

During these early days of the New Year, think about gathering as a family—around cups of hot chocolate and a bowl of popcorn—and making a list of Family Faith Resolutions. Instead of trying to think of something “new,” however, think of the good that is already part of your family and resolve to increase that goodness. God's grace flourishes there in your home. Your kindness, patience, generosity, and compassion with one another is the living of your faith every day; it's the core of Jesus' teachings; and it's what your child, the other students, and catechists focus on, in some way, during every session.

Your Family Faith Resolutions are a vital bridge connecting your child's religious education within your household—the domestic church—and the religious education of your child in the classroom.

Our Outreach families in Alviso extend to you a warm wave of gratitude for your generosity during this Christmas season. None of us know when we will need others to reach out to us, so it is a privilege to be in a position to be able to help families in need. The families have made thank you cards and I will have them displayed in the office. Feel free to come by to take a look.

Yours in Christ,

Tam Tran
Director of Catechetical Ministry

Huong Tran
Administrative Assistant

VIRTUS, “Protecting God's Children” Safe Environment Program

The diocese has implemented the “Protecting God's Children” Safe Environment Program three years ago throughout all the parishes. This is a 3-year cyclical program. Children who have attended the class last year will need to do so again this year. We are required to have all enrolled children grades Kinder and up attend this one session unless parents choose to opt-out. The Virtus Safety Program gives children the tools they need to protect themselves from those who might harm them. **Children (along with their parents) in grades Kindergarten through 6th grade will participate in the program on Sunday morning, January 22, in the Parish Hall from 9:30-10:30 a.m. This will replace their class for that Sunday (no 10:50 a.m. class. Three and four year olds still meet in their classroom at 9:20 a.m. Students in grades 7 and 8 will participate in this program on Wednesday, January 25 in the Youth Ministry room.** If you opt-out your child last year from the program and wish to do so again, you will need to fill out a new opt-out form for your child. Feel free to contact the office with any questions or concerns you have about the program.



Sacrament Preparation

Tuesday, January 17, 7:30 pm, in the Community Center

Parents of children who have already celebrated the Sacrament of Eucharist, but are preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation, are expected to attend this Orientation/Catechetical Parent Meeting. We will also be distributing the children's material for home preparation, as well as scheduling family interviews. Please bring along a copy of your child's Baptism and First Eucharist certificates, sacramental preparation application and \$35 fee if you have not already done so. If your child was baptized or received their First Eucharist at St. Joseph of Cupertino, then there is no need to turn in a copy of the certificates.



Tuesday, January 24, 7:30 pm, in the Community Center

Parents of children who have not yet celebrated the Sacrament of Eucharist, so are preparing for both the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist, are expected to attend this Informational/Catechetical Parent Meeting. We will also be distributing the children's material for home preparation.

Family Retreat

All families of children celebrating the sacraments of Confirmation and/or First Eucharist are expected to participate in the family retreat, *Saturday, March 17*. At least one parent/guardian should be in attendance with their child(ren) preparing for the sacraments this year—sponsors and siblings are welcome to attend! **The retreat will be in the morning, from 9:30am—12pm in the Parish Hall.** Further details about the retreat will be sent home in late February.

Children's Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation and Eucharist

In their catechetical sessions, the second graders are beginning to look at the meaning of our Eucharist Celebration and how we come together to celebrate the Mass as a community each Sunday. They will learn about the parts of the Mass, in order to help them participate more fully and meaningfully each week when you go to Mass as a family.

One of the most important gifts you can give your child is your family's attendance at Mass together on a regular basis. During this time of preparation, take the time to answer any of your child's questions. Help them follow along in Breaking Bread so that they may participate in the responses. Help them turn to the songs when appropriate. The focus during the Catechetical sessions is the liturgy and what we do as members of the celebrating community when we gather each week. If the children do not experience this celebration, it is almost impossible for them to follow along. Mass times at St. Joseph are Saturday evening at 5 p.m., Sunday at 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m., and 5 p.m. Of course, families will be able to celebrate any of the mass times except for 11 a.m. because the children are in their class.


Early Childhood Education News

Happy New Year! Three year olds, four year olds and kindergarteners are exploring their senses this month. Because of the limited number of sessions we have in a catechetical year, the children's lessons will be combined so that they will have the opportunity to explore each sense, albeit in condensed lessons. The First graders are finishing their unit on Jesus.



For the Feast of the Epiphany on Jan. 8, the children will join with the other classes for a party at 10 am in the Multi-purpose room. The children will then return to their class to wait for parents to pick up.

This Month's Dates to Remember



Sunday, January 8	Catechetical Classes in Session
Sunday, January 15	Catechetical Classes in Session
Tuesday, January 17	Sacramental Preparation Parent Meeting 7:30 p.m., Parish Community Center (For parents of children who have already celebrated First Eucharist and are preparing for Confirmation ONLY)
Sunday, January 22	Catechetical Classes in session for 3 & 4 year olds. Virtus Training: Grades K—6 along with their parent will meet in the Parish Hall at 9:30 a.m. No 10:50 am classes.
Tuesday, January 24	Sacramental Preparation Parent Meeting 7:30 p.m., Parish Community Center (For parents of children celebrating both Confirmation and First Eucharist)
Wednesday, January 25	Virtus Training—Junior High session
Sunday, January 29	Catechetical Classes in Session

***Junior High will meet every Wednesday night from 7:30pm-8:45pm.**

The Domestic Church

The catechists and I thank you for bringing your children to class every Sunday/Wednesday. Their consistent presence in class tells us how important learning the Catholic faith is to your family. As you know, we are only the “helper” when it comes to teaching your child(ren) about the practice and living of our Catholic faith. What your child learns at home is far more important than anything we could ever teach. That said, here are some things you might want to do at home to reinforce what your child is learning in class.

- Pray together daily and perhaps bless your child (simple sign of the cross on their forehead) each morning and evening. Numbers 6:24-26 has a wonderful blessing your family can use. The Junior High group has been using this blessing at the end of each meeting.
- Read and discuss the gospel for the coming Sunday as a way of preparing for Mass. (Readings are listed in our Sunday bulletin. Can also view the readings online at <http://www.usccb.org/calendar/index.cfm?showLit=1&action=month>)
- Go over the textbook lesson each week to be sure your child understands the material.
- Share your own faith with your child and talk together often about God, Jesus, the Mass, and prayer.

Working together, we'll be helping your child(ren) to have a happy—and holy—New Year! Visit domestic-church.com to find fun family-centered activities to bring the liturgical life of the Church into the home.

Upcoming Events at St. Joseph of Cupertino

Jan. 7	Christmas Concert, 7 p.m. in the church followed by reception
Jan. 14	Consolation after the Holidays, 10am-12pm in the community center, presented by Fr. Chris Bennett
Jan. 18, 25 Feb. 1, 8	Vatican II, 7 p.m. in the community center, presented by Br. Bill Bolts, SM