

## FAMILY FORMATION AND COVID-19

While the sudden effects of the COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on religious education programs all across the country, *Family Formation* was able to respond quickly and seamlessly by making a few minor adjustments allowing education and formation to continue as usual. Since the bulk of the program is completed by families at home, parents were well-equipped to continue as usual with the lessons. By adapting some of the Classroom Lesson components for use at home and providing a video of the adult formation presentation to parents digitally, the main aspects of the monthly gathering were covered despite not being able to meet communally. The *Family Formation* team is committed to providing adapted resources to registered parishes so long as the CDC mandates restricted community gatherings that prohibit families meeting monthly on site.

**Home Lessons:** Below are two avenues for getting the Home Lessons in the hands of parents if your parish will not be able to host monthly *Family Formation* gatherings.

A. Consider these or other creative ways to distribute the Home Lesson packets to your families:

- Have them available for pick up following Sunday Mass (indoor or outdoor) or at specified hours during the week. This can be done in a way that limits interpersonal contact if needed.
- Host a monthly drive by or "pick-up parade" - make it fun by having the person distributing the lessons dress up as a saint; broadcast praise and worship music; include a fun faith-themed gift or treat each month; have children wave flags or streamers out the car windows, etc.
- Have the catechists hand-deliver the lessons to each family's doorstep (for families with more than one child, catechists could share the responsibility); or have your pastor deliver the lessons to each home, taking time to bless each family and their home.
- Mail the lessons. (Media mail offers an affordable rate, but delivery time is longer.)

B. If none of the above are viable options, each family in your parish could register as an individual family directly at [familyformation.net](http://familyformation.net) starting [here](#):

- The cost is \$94.95 per family for the year, including shipping, Cycle A and B Liturgical Calendars, and W.O.G. Logs for each child. Home Lessons would be shipped monthly directly to each family's home for the entire 2020-2021 year.
- Families should complete this registration by July 20 to begin with the September Home Lesson, or August 20 to begin with the October Home Lessons.
- If your parish chooses this option, please contact the *Family Formation* Office to discuss the details.
- Upon request, the *Family Formation* office could provide you with a list of families registered from your parish (provided families indicate name and city of parish as requested.)

As always, *Family Formation* will continue to provide additional support to registered families and parish leaders via our monthly newsletter which includes many resources for the topics being covered. The Home Lesson overview videos and weekly related blog posts as well as "Java With Jess and Sippin' With Sue" could easily be provided to your families if you choose.

**Monthly Gathering: Classroom Lessons / Adult Formation:** If monthly on-site gatherings are limited or not allowed, *Family Formation* is providing the following adaptations for use at home:

- Abbreviated adult formation presentation on the monthly topic (video)
- Video teaching on the main focus of the Classroom Lesson - presented by a catechist
- Activity from the Classroom Lessons

**Sacramental Preparation Classroom Lessons: First Reconciliation and First Communion**

If monthly on-site gatherings are limited or not allowed, *Family Formation* is providing the following adaptations for use at home:

- Video teaching on the main focus of the Classroom Lesson
- Activity from the Classroom Lesson

Parents everywhere are reporting virtual fatigue due to the many online resources and responsibilities being directed to them as a result of the pandemic guidelines. Alternatively, with *Family Formation*, families are provided everything they need, printed and prepared and ready for use, allowing them to easily continue their faith formation. Many parishes who have expressed a desire to eventually move in the direction of family catechesis are viewing the current situation as an opportune time to make the switch. Having a family faith discussion is not only essential to the mission, it is life-giving for all involved. The answer to many of the current cultural issues is found in our Faith and in strong families. Now is the time to strengthen families and help parents realize and embrace their God-given role as the primary educators of their children in the Faith.