**Adult Faith Formation 2018**

Adult *Journey with Christ* Sessions: (formerly GOF) The focus this year will be on helping parishioners reflect on their personal faith journey, provide practical suggestions on how to pass your faith onto others, and share your faith story. We also hope to provide opportunities for parishioners to visit with each other about their struggles and successes in helping others come to know Jesus and the Catholic faith.

 **Dates:** Sunday 12:30-2:00 PM at OLMC in Lawler: Aug. 26, Sept. 23, Oct. 7 & 28, Nov. 11 and Dec. 2

Bible Study: The FFC would like to once again offer bible study sessions. If you would be interested in being a part of a bible study, please contact the Light of Christ office and let them know what would be a good time for you to have this group meet.

Daily Devotionals and Prayer: Sometimes the best thing we can do for ourselves is to take 10-15 minutes a day to quiet ourselves and pray. There are many daily devotionals on the market, as well as apps and websites you can subscribe to for free that will send you daily prayer, scripture readings, and/or inspirational writings. Some will read the prayers to you, or offer guided liturgy of the hours. Some people find praying a rosary daily to be the quiet they need. See the cluster website for links to some of these apps/websites.

Small Groups: In 2017 the cluster started some small faith sharing groups. These are very informal gatherings of adults to visit about their faith, their struggles and successes in life and how they are living out their faith. Currently there is a men’s group lead by Deacon Zajicek & Pat Sheridan and a women’s group. Please contact Mr. Ahrndt for more information.

Adoration: When we think about the people we love, oftentimes it is in the quiet moments where we are just looking at them that we realize the depth of love present. Adoration is the Church’s way of helping us experience that with God. The Eucharist is placed on the altar and we are invited to simply be with Jesus and look at Him and let Him look at us. At first that can sound very boring, so of course there are materials to help us pray and guide the conversation. Ultimately, God just wants to be with us, and Adoration is a great way to experience that. Adoration is offered at various times in the Cluster that will be published in the bulletin and on the website. Consider coming for 20 minutes each month as a family and just being with the Lord.

Reconciliation: Going to confession can feel a bit like going to the dentist or to the doctor for a check-up, which means it’s really easy for all of us to put it off. However, this flows from a misunderstanding of the Sacrament as a place of punishment or judgment. In fact, it is a place of judgment- but the judgment is *always* on the side of mercy when we come and experience God’s mercy there. The Church desires us to experience this at least once a year, or as often as we need it when there is serious sin present. Christ our Hope offers regular times for Reconciliation and will be providing easy guides for the Sacrament at the back of the church buildings. Take the risk, take some time and use the guide to examine your conscience and commit to going to Reconciliation as a family, perhaps as a monthly practice- not as punishment but as a new way, a necessary way, to experience the mercy of God concretely.

Mission Speakers: Several area parishes have already indicated they plan to host mission speakers during the 2018/19 school year. Please watch the bulletin and website for more information as it is available.

Book Study: The cluster is tentatively planning to once again give out a book to families at during the Christmas season. This will again be followed up by a book study during Lent.

**More Opportunities on Page 2**

Volunteer: The faith formation office is always happy to have volunteers to help as classroom aids in our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Journey with Christ, and Totus Tuus programs. They also need volunteers to be in the office during classes to welcome visitors and answer phones. Contact Mr. Ahrndt at 563-238-5004 or m.ahrndt@dbqarch.org if you are interested in more information or volunteering.

Pilgrimages

Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi: Join Fr. Kyle on a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi, February 17- 27, 2019. You will spend 7 nights in Rome and 2 nights in Assisi. You will visit the major basilicas, attend the Papal audience, and the Vatican museum. Participants will also have tickets for the Scavi tour, which is difficult to get! Participants will see the Colosseum & the Roman Forum, plus many other sites. Fr. Kyle studied in Rome and is am looking forward to showing you places he enjoyed. Cost from Cedar Rapids is $4,299 based on double occupancy, airfare, breakfast & dinner daily, wine and mineral water with dinner, private bus, professional local Catholic guides, admission fees per itinerary, daily Mass and spiritual activities. For more information or flyer with complete information contact Mary Johnston at 319-560-5138 or email at blessu45@gmail.com or Natasha@206tours.com or 800-206-8687. This is a great opportunity to encounter Christ through the rich history and beauty of our Catholic faith.

Personal Pilgrimage: Though I am sure we would all like to join Fr. Kyle on the pilgrimage to Italy, for many, especially those with school age kids, this is likely not possible this year. However, there are many great destinations within an easy drive that your family can head to for a pilgrimage. Possible destinations include: Cathedral of St. Raphael in Dubuque; Basilica of St. Francis Xavier in Dyersville; Our Lady of Guadeloupe Shrine in LaCross, WI; Queen of the Holy Rosary Mediatrix Between God and Man Shrine, Necedah, WI; The Shrine of the Grotto of the Redemption, West Bend, IA. These are a few, though there are many more through the United States. Any of these would be great opportunities to learn more about our Catholic faith and take time to pray.

Attend a Retreat: There are several great retreat/conference opportunities in Iowa this year. Watch the cluster website for more information as it is available for all these retreats:

***Christ Our Life*** is a family retreat for all four dioceses in Iowa and will be held at the Wells Fargo Center in Des Moines. There are many great speakers at this two day event September 29 and 30, 2018. One of the keynote speakers and homilist will be Bishop Robert Barron from *Word on Fire Ministries*, which includes the “Catholicism Series” we have used in the cluster. The cost is only $25 per adult.

***Archdiocese Women’s Conference***: This will be the third year for this fantastic one day conference. Sorry men, women only. Consider renewing your spiritual life through the witness and message of fantastic national speakers by attending this conference on Saturday, January 26, 2019 at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Cedar Rapids. Women within the cluster hope to provide a bus to take participants to the conference at a low cost to you. This event includes Mass with Archbishop Jackels.

***Men’s Conference*** sponsored by Catholic Men Fellowship of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. This is a one day conference at Xavier High School in Cedar Rapids on Saturday, April 13, 2019. This conference features a national keynote speaker, and break-out sessions all related to how to strengthen your faith as a man, and the faith of those around you. This event is concluded with Mass with Archbishop Jackels.

There will also be several marriage renewal retreats, a grand parenting retreat and more. You can learn about more area retreats by checking out the website for the American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls at: <https://americanmartyrsretreathouse.com/>