

Summary of Faith Formation Survey

November 17, 2022

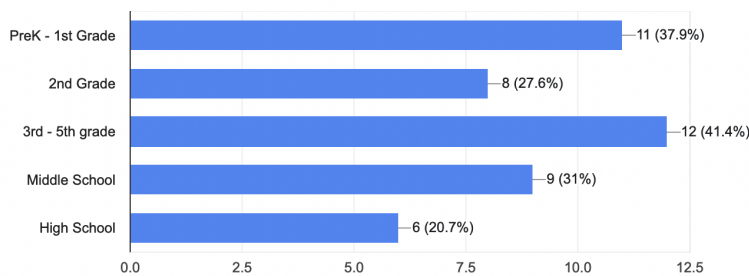
1. Survey respondents

child(ren) enrolled 27
not enrolled 2

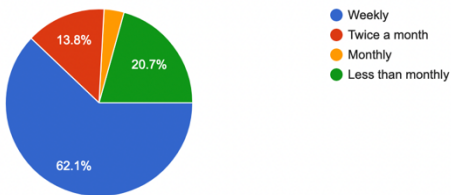
Comments

- Daughter currently attends a Catholic school. She will likely enroll in public school next year and will need faith formation through Newman.
- We like the program! 9am is a great time.
- We love the CGS program at Newman
- We have 3 children enrolled in faith formation - 2nd, middle, high school
- Both my children are in CGS (2nd grade) and classroom (4th grade)
- 8th, 6th, 2nd grades
- Youth Ministry

2. Grade levels



3. Mass Attendance



Comments

- It's very difficult to attend catechesis followed by church. I do feel like we have to pick, attend church as a family or have kids attend class.
- The CGS faith formation program at Newman has been absolutely fantastic for our family over the last 8 years
- We were extremely Covid conscious so we only did virtual mass this past year (sporadically) and have always had catechesis on Thursdays as part of planning for our return to Sunday mass - but with catechesis on Sundays we have found it challenging to go either from catechesis straight to mass or vice versa so we are now considering if Sat night mass might be our next option. We'd really like a weekday catechesis option again.
- Hard with work and sports schedule with three kids

- We tend to go to Immaculate Conception with my mom after my dad passed earlier this year
- Twice a month at least, we sometimes go with family to a different parish.
- Yes, I know we need to be better at Mass attendance. I VERY much appreciate the lack of pressure or judgement on the part of Newman, over the past few months, in regard to our very irregular Mass attendance (which has yet to recover from the pandemic). I don't think all church leaders understand that judging or shaming parishioners doesn't change their behavior and simply drives them away faster.

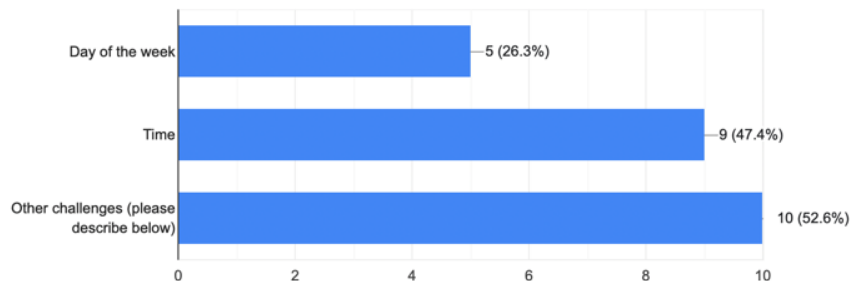
4. Regular attendance at Faith Formation

Yes	26	89.70%
No	3	10.30%

Comments

- Daughter currently attends a Catholic school. She will likely enroll in public school next year and will need faith formation through Newman.
- The survey only allows you to check one grade level even though we have children multiple grade levels (NB: corrected after this comment)
- We have been enrolled previous several years but loss of Thursday class caused us to have to opt out this year
- Mainly catechesis
- My 2nd grader attends at 11am, but my 11 and 13 year-old children do not attend any more this year because we'd have to come to church twice on Sundays
- They hate to miss a single week
- We have missed 2x due to flu, out town, and other sickness
- We've only missed due to sickness or travel
- They enjoy the sessions.

5. Challenges to participation



Comments

- There is a full hour between mass ending at 10 and catechesis beginning at 11.
- It is really hard for the little kids to go to mass at 9 and then go to catechesis at 11 or vice versa. That is A LOT to ask if a 4-6yo. Growing up, the littlest kids would process out before communion and start catechesis, and it was not 1.5 hours. For the older kids, it would nice to have a week day option or to start immediately following Mass.
- Sunday at 9 is awesome
- We prioritize the kids attending class over attending church as a family.

- We currently do the 11am catechesis time- it's a bit of a break between Masses but we don't mind. We like to pack a lunch and see other families
- Some challenge with waiting for catechesis to start after Mass
- It would be great to have catechesis for teens on Sundays at 11am in the morning as well
- The class session time is long, and especially for our youngest, it is a difficult to expect her to attend mass + 1.5 hours of faith formation, so she often goes to class while we attend mass, but I still want her to attend mass regularly, so it is a dilemma.
- The time feels very long for little kids- 1.5 hours is a long time for them to attend- especially my older son who has sensory processing disorder.
- Sunday night is challenging
- have always had catechesis on Thursdays as part of planning for our return to Sunday mass - but with catechesis on Sundays we have found it challenging to go either from catechesis straight to mass or vice versa so we are now considering if Saturday night mass might be our next option. We'd really like a weekday catechesis option again.
- Not sure I understand the question. I wouldn't say we have challenges in having our kids participate in faith formation.
- We go as much as we can, we make it a priority, unless we are sick or away.
- Out of town on weekends for college sports
- My household is at Newman at 9 and 5:30 on Sundays. It is a very big challenge.
- No challenges, we like the 9am class time.
- My son's lack of enthusiasm.
- We attend regularly, but it's challenging with the evening session for the middle school age
- Family travel
- Doing Mass and catechesis all in one day/weekend is a very big time commitment. Taking preparation and driving into account, it easily eats up 3-4 hours, which is a whole weekend morning. As a family with two working parents (both with long commutes) weekends are precious to us. We take quiet time together and rest seriously as a family. All the church commitments on weekends were making us frazzled.

6. Do you feel that your child(ren)/youth are growing in faith

Yes	28	96.60%
No	1	3.40%

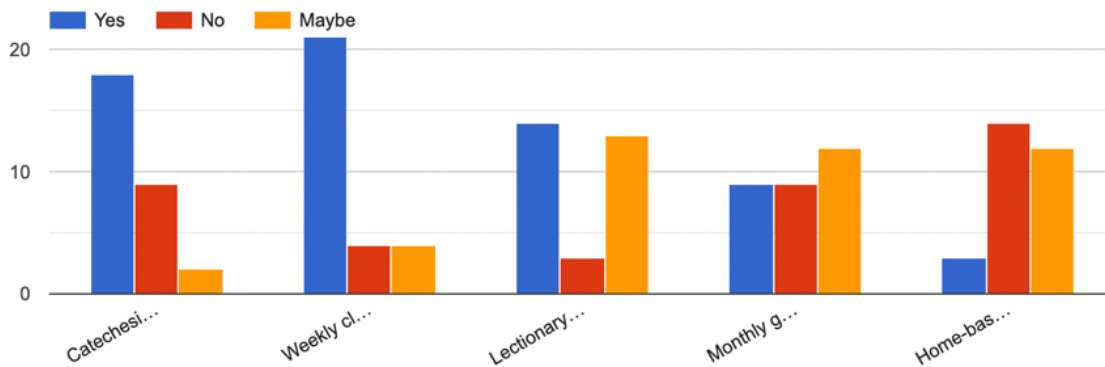
Comments

- My third grader is learning about her faith. I don't think she got much out of the catechesis until she was preparing for first communion.
- A big factor in our decision to be part of this faith community was catechesis of good shepherd for our little one and the small faith communities
- Not my teenagers as they stopped coming to catechesis since it's only available in the afternoons
- For our teens, we really like the involvement of the college kids as catechists
- This has been a beautiful thing to witness. Just last week, our daughter's school had a scheduled "lock down drill". She was scared about it, but told us that her plan was to go in the closet a pray. I am so happy she has that tool, and that she can access it on her own.
- Having trained college students as catechists renders this program unique and appealing to us. I do miss regular updates from the teachers about what the kids are learning, so we

can have conversations at home. You know that teenagers don't tell their parents anything!

7. What models of formation might best support your family:

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Weekly Classroom Instruction, Lectionary Based Catechesis, Monthly Parish-wide Faith Formation, Home -based instruction



Comments

- Home based would have been ideal during 2020/early 2021. I requested this but it wasn't an option so I paid for and picked up materials through STM in Chapel Hill in 2020.
- The crown jewel of the catechesis is the Good Shepherd program. It is very rare and unique, without it, we would likely leave the parish for STM. Like most families of middle school age and high school age, we have our kids at St. Thomas More as they have more families. We had heard the same from most families with young children- The Good Shepherd program is what keeps most at Newman. Given cuts will have to be made, we would recommend joining STM for middle school/high school youth group. College catechists interested in that population would do well to partner with STM. Not many families will be interested in the monthly or home based programs.
- I like the concept of following the weekly scripture readings. Then when we attend mass, my son will have some familiarity with it. Or if he discusses after mass, he would be able to contribute in his group.
- I like the current model; any chance for moving catechesis to a weekday evening (so we don't end up choosing between that and Mass)? That is what our old parish used to have.

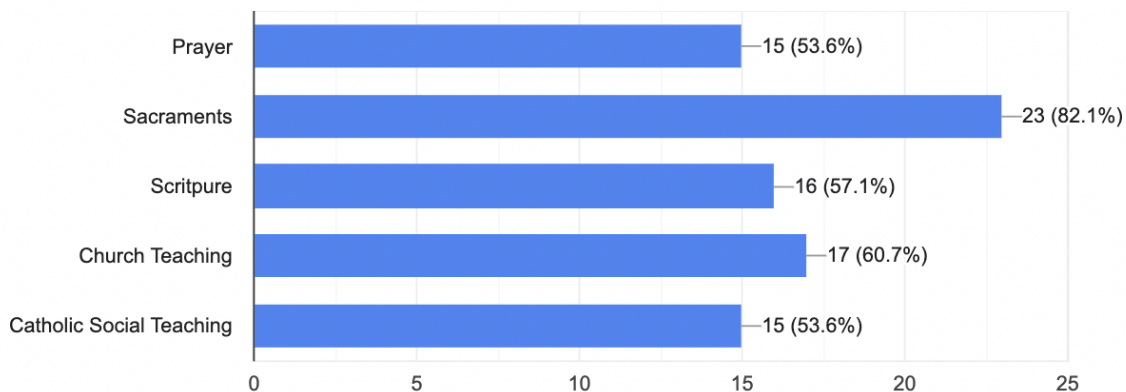
8. Other resources for faith formation that your family uses:

- Everything at Immaculata Catholic School
- Matthew was so great in sending home materials to be used at home. The weekly parent group also allowed parents to share ideas on traditions and
- We try to provide daily prayer models and have faith books at home. We love the acts of service at Newman as a way to participate as a family
- I meet weekly with an adult group
- Our teen has been involved with the YoungLife/WyldLife program
- We have a kids version of Catholic Bible stories we read most evenings. We teach our kids prayers, and do our best to make prayer a regular part of our day. Right now, we

pray before every meal and before bed. We discuss what we have learned at Mass and Catechesis as a family on Sunday nights at dinner, and we talk about God.

- Children’s bible (we have 2 versions at home, previously used the worksheets from STM, also have a kids book about the components of the mass but it needs to be updated)
- Prayer at meals and nightly prayer.
- Daily prayer, and many dinner table discussions.
- daily readings
- Bible in a Year Podcast
- We use many different books, blogs, Saint celebrations, and family traditions
- Children’s Bible, reading/discovery of saints, advent and lent programs at home, daily family prayer

9. What do you most want to learn about to nurture your family’s faith?

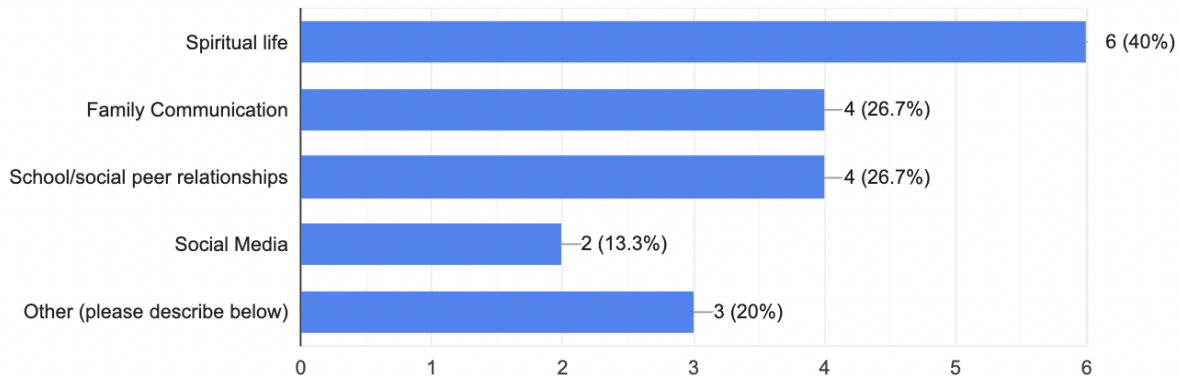


Comments

- I am not a cradle Catholic, so more information on the culture and history of the church would be helpful
- I was always interested in why is Catholicism different from other sects of Christianity. What makes Catholicism unique. I also hope everything is taught from a "the Catholic church believes..." rather than being presented as THE ONLY belief that exists.
- Hey Father Tim, as stated above-I'm not catholic, my husband, is. We are choosing to raise our kids in the Catholic faith. I really appreciate that your homilies are often easy for the kids and I to understand and relate to, no matter how well versed we are in the scripture. I often leave church feeling inspired and reconnected with my family and my beliefs on how to live life. We are not a family that agrees with the catholic social teachings as it relates to LGBTQ+, Pro-life, contraception, and equal opportunity for female leadership within the church. We would not like these topics to be a part of catechesis. I would be interested to know how the topics are approached at the Newman center.
- Just keep the CGS- middle school or high school can join with STM.
- A better understanding of what makes Catholics so awesome.
- The better educated parents are the better educated children will be in turn! Educational resources for parents are greatly appreciated!
- We are registered Democrats and Vatican II Catholics and think that Pope Francis and Joe Biden are cool. We would like to see more focus on aspects of the faith that help our

children be ethical, responsible, kind, joyful and tolerant human beings. Focusing on Catholic trivia (like I had to in Catholic school) like color of vestments or saints days or very specialized forms of prayer seem increasingly insular and self-indulgent when there is so much suffering in the world (including an epidemic of mental health issues in young people) and climate disaster.

10. Are there needs for pastoral support in your family with:



Comments

- Having a neuro-diverse child in the Church
- None at this time
- none

11. Are you willing to serve as a catechist?

Yes – 3; Maybe - 5; No - 11

Comments

- Did 2022-23, that’s likely. I’m currently the middle school religion teacher at Immaculata but will likely start something new next year. If that happens I could be a catechist.
- Yes
- No. I work many Sundays
- Maybe. I don't feel that I have a strong enough foundation of the Catholic church or the bible to lead a class. I also have to decide to volunteer with my kids school, sport, our community, or church. There are needs everywhere.
- Yes. I'm a substitute during the 11am time
- Potentially, open to different roles as schedule permits
- Yes - I have been partially trained in CGS level 1/2
- Teaching is not one of my talents, but I would be happy to help on the organizational side.
- I might be willing to help out on an as needed basis for catechesis. Unfortunately, it's not a commitment I can make every Sunday at this time.
- Potentially. I would need a set curriculum provided to me and support from others - maybe college student support
- No
- Not at this time
- Not at this time.

- Yes
- No- it is too big of a commitment. I am taking this year off of heavy volunteering as I just wrapped up a four-year stint on the PTA boards as Treasurer.
- No, I am not Catholic, my husband is. However, if there is a way I can be of service, I would be happy to participate.
- potentially
- I would be happy to help support the program by organizing events, family gatherings, paperwork, snack/meals, service projects, etc.
- This does not seem to be where I am called in this season.
- I don't think I'd make a good catechist at this point in my life.

12. Final Comments

- Please keep Catechesis of the Good Shepherd- it is such a treasure for the children.
- Flexible day of week vs weekend opportunities
- I hope catechesis of good shepherd remains a stable program. I'd love to see a small group focused on marriages and would be open to facilitating!
- We very much value the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program. Strongly support having a full time paid minister to support these programs.
- "For the middle school and high school aged kids, I would love to see a focus on 'faith in action' and an emphasis on service. I think it would help to keep them engaged and active. We should try to incorporate multiple opportunities throughout the year for them to engage in service activities in our community. Also, spending time looking at some social justice issues with those age groups so they can start to understand how their faith can be a part of their daily life in an active way. Kids at this age (and especially in this era and community) are being exposed to so much of what is happening in the world and this can help them have a framework through which to digest all this information.
- One more thought: I loved arriving to pick up last week and seeing them playing in the parking lot. I think when they have opportunities to have fun together, they will make friends and be more willing and excited to come to faith formation each week. "
- We are so grateful for the hard work of many Newman staff and volunteers over the years that our children have participated in Catechesis. My comment is that, while CGS is a warm and fun environment, our kids have learned very little doctrine. This is true of sacrament prep too, they seem to know little about sacraments, the mass, or the words to any prayers. I do realize much of this education is on us parents, but it is hard to know what the balance between faith formation and home education is supposed to be. At the moment, I am finding that the vast majority of doctrine comes from home. CSG is great for instilling larger themes (e..g, the Good Shepherd is Jesus and we are the sheep), but these themes are often lost on my small kids. Again, I do want to emphasize how appreciative I am, the CSG teachers have made it an enjoyable experience for our kids.
- I love the involvement of college students in Newman's faith formation programs. I think it is especially valuable for middle and high schoolers who might listen to them more than they listen to older adults. I also think retreats are really important for high schoolers and should be prioritized.
- My children really like CGS and coming every week to catechesis which is fantastic so I'm hesitant to suggest any changes to format- the only thing as parents we'd appreciate

is something that lets us know what they are learning about each week or month so we can help support / mirror and ask appropriate questions to further their interest and learning / curiosity at home.

- "Thank you so much for offering this program. We asked our kids what they thought could be improved about it, and our daughter's response was to have the lessons outside! I really liked her answer, and can see how this is could be helpful. I know I feel closer to God when outdoors. Just a thought;)
- Maybe I am just not in the loop here, but I wonder about any community service projects. I know this is tough for younger kids, and maybe this is an option for the older kids. Again, this probably exists- but I just don't know about it.
- Thanks so much for sending out this questionnaire. Hope our input is helpful.
- Essential to retain CGS-without it most families with young ones will depart 2. Combine with St Thomas More for middle/high school 3. adjust the times to avoid 1hr break between sessions. CGS allows families with young kids to enter religious education very early 3yo and keeps a family atmosphere.
- While I believe the group discussions on faith formation are vital, as a mother of 3 boys, I would like to see more faith-in-action opportunities with their peers. I want him to associate active participation in mass and social outreach as something he and his peers drive and not something that he only does with his family. My older sons got so much from their experience on ASP trips. It would be great for the younger kids to have or design their own service project - actively living their faith along the way.
- Our children attend faith formation/catechesis regularly. We have 2 children in the morning session and 1 in the evening session. It makes for a challenging Sunday for us as we're trying to get kids to the two different catechesis times. It also makes it hard for us to all attend Mass together as catechesis is 1.5 hours in the mornings. I suggest having catechesis class time shorter in length (maybe 45 minutes-1 hour) and have it after the 9 am mass and a second offering after the 11am Mass. Then families can attend Mass together and children can go to catechesis after or before Mass.
- For the middle school and high school students, I suggest meeting once a month in the evening. Maybe for 2 hours or so.
- I also suggest having parents signing up to help with class or assist. This could take pressure off the students or parents who regularly teach these classes.
- I also like the idea of starting a youth group for the middle school and high school students."
- My children love CGS but I have no sense for what they're actually learning. I like that CGS allows for children to explore and learn in a hands on manner but there is no feedback loop or mechanism to include parents in faith education. I don't know what my children are learning about or what topics/knowledge I should be following up with at home. The feedback loop and connection with parents is important to enable parents to partner with faith formation in educating children in their faith.
- Thank you for all of your great work with the kids. I'm speaking candidly here, but I want you to know we deeply appreciate your efforts, and those of all the student catechists. You are doing hard work, and fighting a good fight.

Note: names and emails have been removed from the comments.