



# ST. GERTRUDE CHURCH

## CHILDREN & YOUTH FAITH FORMATION

PROGRAM OFFERINGS 2021-2022

6543 Miami Ave Cincinnati, Ohio 45243

[stgertrude.org](http://stgertrude.org)

A photograph of two people walking away from the camera in a wooded area. The ground is covered in snow, and the trees are bare, suggesting a winter or late autumn setting. The image is slightly blurred, creating a sense of movement and depth. A dark, semi-transparent rectangular box is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing the text for the table of contents.

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# A Word From Our Team

Dear Parents,

Giovanni "Francesco" di Bernadone, restless and dejected after returning home from a disastrous time away at war, stumbled upon the little church of San Damiano on the hillside of Assisi. Here, while gazing upon a crucifix, Francesco asked the Lord what He wanted for his life. He heard a response: "Francesco, go and rebuild my church which, as you see, is falling down." Francesco took the Lord at his word, and repaired the rundown church, before realizing the call was bigger than bricks and mortar. He went on to found the Franciscan order and to become one of the great saints in the history of the Church - St. Francis of Assisi.

Last year, amid all the confusion and strife caused by COVID, our team also heard a call. In fact, we think a lot of families were hearing it too. "Go! Rebuild my domestic church." The "domestic church" is the family, the home, which is to be a school of life and of love. COVID caused most people to slow down and to take account of the most important things, however joyful or difficult that has been. We heard that call too - first for our own families, and second, for yours.

In response to this call, we made some daring moves with our 2020-2021 programming, adding in a distinct parent/child component for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd's sacramental formation for 1st Reconciliation and 1st Holy Communion, and launching our Family Faith program. While the results were astounding and the efforts clearly bore some good fruit, none of the team members were willing to let go of that call: "Go! Rebuild my domestic church." We want to stay with this, and even lean into it more. We want to know our families and we want to help parents in their roles as the primary formators of their children.

This document contains next year's roadmap for this ongoing rebuilding process that we're all part of. You'll find a host of program offerings for children and youth with that same emphasis on a "child-centered" and "family-based" approach.

There's plenty more rebuilding to do, so, let's not shy away from the call that continues to resound through these strange times: "Go! Rebuild my domestic church." At the end of his life, Francesco told his brothers who had left everything in order to follow the Gospel call, "Let us begin again, brothers, for up until now, we have done little or nothing." We, too, have done a little and God surely has more for us and for our children.

In Christ,

The Evangelization Team at St. Gertrude

## CHILDREN & YOUTH FAITH FORMATION OVERVIEW

St. Gertrude Church is committed to supporting parents in the Christian formation of their children. This year, we are happy to offer various child-centered and family-based faith formation programs for children age 3 to grade 6. We've also developed a dynamic, two-year, youth ministry-based Confirmation formation program for 7th and 8th graders, inspired by the life of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati and designed to lead into a child's completion of the Sacraments of Initiation at the end of the 8th grade year. And, we're excited to make available High School youth ministry offerings that are rooted in real life experiences in order to cultivate mature Christian men and women.



*“Young people, do not be afraid to be holy! Fly high, be among those whose goals are worthy of sons and daughters of God. Glorify God in your lives!”*

*- St. John Paul II*

# Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

3-Year-Olds - Grade 3

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

St. Gertrude's offers Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Level 1 (ages 3-6) and Level 2 (1st-3rd grades). The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a Montessori influenced faith formation experience that is three fold - the child, the adult catechist, and the prepared environment called the atrium. While in the atrium, children are invited into prayer, given a presentation that is based on scripture or liturgy, and allotted time for personal work. Beautifully handmade child-sized materials fill the room. The catechist guides the need for the child to "help me come closer to God by myself."

## SESSION TIMES

Children will meet for 75mins 2x/month in one of the Atria at St. Gertrude.

Parents who wish to bring a child forward to receive 1st Reconciliation and 1st Communion in the 2nd grade should be sure to enroll their child in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd as a 1st grader (if not before).

### Level 1 offerings (3 year olds through Kindergarten)

- Sundays 9:00-10:15am (1st & 3rd/2nd & 4th weeks) - in conjunction with Family Faith
- Sundays 10:30-11:45am (1st & 3rd/2nd & 4th weeks) - in conjunction with Family Faith
- Tuesdays 3:30-4:45pm (1st & 3rd weeks)
- Tuesdays 6:00-7:15pm (2nd & 4th weeks) - in conjunction with Family Faith

### Level 2 offerings (1st through 3rd grades)

- Sundays 9:00-10:15am (1st & 3rd/2nd & 4th weeks) - in conjunction with Family Faith
- Sundays 10:30-11:45 am (1st & 3rd/2nd & 4th weeks) - in conjunction with Family Faith
- Tuesdays 5:00-6:15 pm (1st & 3rd weeks)
- Tuesdays 6:00-7:15 pm (2nd & 4th weeks) - in conjunction with Family Faith

## COST

\$80/child

# Parent/Child CGS

## Sacramental Formation

Generally for 2nd Graders

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

With parents being the primary educators of their children, we are thrilled to now offer monthly parent and child sessions in the atrium. With this collaboration, CGS presentations will help the family spiritually prepare for the gifts of Jesus given in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. Therefore, families who desire for their child to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion will need to register for the Parent/Child Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) Sacramental Formation Process.

### PROGRAM ELEMENTS & SESSION TIMES

If your child attends a public or private school that does not teach CGS, you need to register for Level 2 CGS & the PARENT/CHILD sessions. If your primary form of education is home schooling, you need to register for the PARENT/CHILD sessions, and participation in CGS is also encouraged!

Parents and child will come together in small groups once a month October-April.

Days/Times the session will be offered:

- 2nd Sunday 1:30-2:30
- 2nd Tuesday 4:30-5:30
- 3rd Sunday 1:30-2:30
- 3rd Tuesday 6:30-7:30

Additionally, before each sacrament, we will host a half-day retreat for the students. The retreat dates are as follows:

- January 22nd from 8:30-Noon - First Reconciliation Retreat
- April 30th from 8:30-Noon - First Communion Retreat

First Reconciliation Date:

Tuesday, January 25th 7:00 pm

First Communion Date:

May 7th 2:00 pm (rehearsal Thursday, May 5th at 6:30 pm)

Alternative date: May 1st at the Noon Mass (rehearsal, Friday April 29th at 5:30 pm)

### COST

- \$25/student



# Family Faith

## 4th-6th Graders

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

We all know it to be true: The influence of parents in the faith journeys of their children is paramount, irreplaceable even. This past year, during COVID, we sensed this call to engage the whole family, together, in the faith formation process. So, we developed Family Faith, our new family-based, child-centered program.

Once per month, families gather to engage in competitions, hands-on activities, breaking open and discussing Scripture, learning together, and praying together as a family. The response has been overwhelmingly positive.



We're responding to two key insights from the end-of-year survey by adding a second session each month just for the children and by limiting the "target audience" of the content to 4-6th grade. COVID precluded the possibility of having all of the children together this year, and we were basically "boxed" into a situation where we were trying to meet the needs of 3-8th graders. We knew that would be a challenge. So, we're adjusting for next year.

### SESSION TIMES

Family Faith will meet 2x per month, once with parents and their 4th-6th grade children together, and a second time with the 4th-6th grade children only. We have several offerings available for your family:

- Sunday Morning Sessions (either 1st/3rd or 2nd/4th) from 9:00-10:15am or 10:30-11:45am
- Tuesday Evening Sessions (2nd and 4th Tuesdays) at 6:00-7:15pm

Please note:

- This program happens simultaneously with Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. So, younger children in families will be in the Atrium at the same time parents and 4-6th graders are in the School Cafeteria for Family Faith.
- We encourage Jr. High and High School students to attend Family Faith as well at no cost. Even if the content is ultimately geared towards 4th-6th grade siblings, there is always something to learn and an opportunity to teach younger siblings.

**COST:** \$80/student

[stgertrude.org/familyfaith](https://stgertrude.org/familyfaith)

# L'alto Confirmation

## 7th-8th Graders

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Inspired by the life of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, L'alto Confirmation aims to help participants grow in knowledge of the faith, to deepen their relationship with Christ, and to give them the confidence they need to be light in their homes, schools, and social settings. L'alto Confirmation consists of two elements. The first is a two-year formation process for all parish 7th and 8th graders who wish to be fully initiated into the Catholic Church by receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation at the end of their 8th grade year.\* Those who intend to receive the sacrament will commit to participate in monthly formation meetings consisting of activities, talks, small group discussions, and prayer experiences, along with several other events. The second element of L'alto Confirmation consists of the classic Jr. High outings and excursions your children look forward to.

### PROGRAM ELEMENTS & SESSION TIMES

The L'alto Confirmation program consists of both required elements and optional outings and excursions for 7th and 8th graders.

Required elements consist of:

- Parent Kickoff, an opening retreat for 7th graders, and a Confirmation Retreat for 8th graders the month before Confirmation
- 90 minute 1x/month Formation Nights (Sept. - April) during the 7th and 8th grade years. Participants will commit to either the session on the 1st Friday of the month at 7pm, or the 2nd Sunday of the month at 7pm.
- An annual Parent/Child event and a Candidate/Sponsor event for 8th graders

### COST

- \$80/student for the required formation program; cost for optional outings and excursions varies based upon the event.



\*St. Gertrude School students are welcome and encouraged to participate L'alto Confirmation, either by committing to the formation program as a youth ministry supplement to in class instruction, or by engaging in the optional events. St. Gertrude School students are not required to participate in L'alto Confirmation.

# L'alto High School

9th-12th Graders

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

For teens looking to live fully, our L'alto High School program provides high school students with a powerful experience of Christian community. Inspired by the adventurous life of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati L'alto cultivates time and space for encountering Christ through prayer, the sacraments, and formation in living the Christian life. This year, we are moving towards a more active expression of youth ministry, through outings (e.g. hiking) and service within our local community. We have fun taking life seriously.

## FREQUENCY

- Weekly meetings (generally 7-9pm on Sundays)
- The program also features other retreats and outings

## COST

- FREE – no cost for regular, weekly meetings; cost for events varies based upon the event

# Program Offering Recap

## AGE 3 – GRADE 3: CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

- 1st/3rd Sunday CGS Options
  - 9:00-10:15am (in conjunction with Family Faith)
  - 10:30-11:45am (in conjunction with Family Faith)
- 2nd/4th Sunday CGS Options
  - 9:00-10:15am (in conjunction with Family Faith)
  - 10:30-11:45am (in conjunction with Family Faith)
- 1st/3rd Tuesdays CGS
  - 3:30-4:45pm (Level I - Ages 3-6)
  - 5:00-6:15pm (Level II - Ages 6-9)
- 2nd/4th Tuesdays CGS
  - 6:00-7:15pm (in conjunction with Family Faith)

## GRADE 2: PARENT/CHILD CGS SACRAMENTAL FORMATION

- Monthly Parent/Child sessions from Oct.-April
- Sacramental Retreats on Jan. 22 (Reconciliation) and Apr. 30 (1st Communion)

## GRADES 4-6: FAMILY FAITH

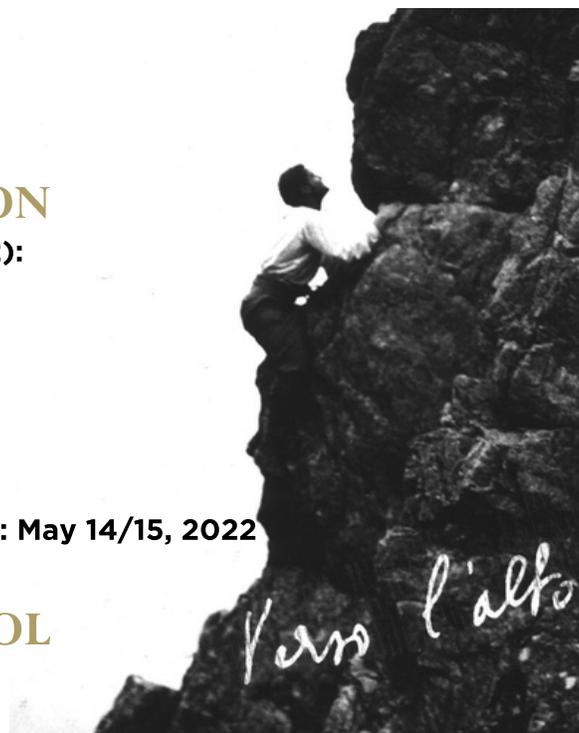
- 1st/3rd Sunday Family Faith Options
  - 9:00-10:15am (in conjunction with CGS)
  - 10:30-11:45am (in conjunction with CGS)
- 2nd/4th Sunday Family Faith Options
  - 9:00-10:15am (in conjunction with CGS)
  - 10:30-11:45am (in conjunction with CGS)
- 2nd/4th Family Faith Tuesdays
  - 6:00-7:15pm (in conjunction with CGS)

## GRADES 7-8: L'ALTO CONFIRMATION

- Required Formation Nights (Sept. 2021 - April 2022):
  - 1st Friday Cohort from 7-8:30pm\*
  - 2nd Sundays Cohort from 7-8:30pm\*
- Required Events
  - 7th Grade Retreat - Aug. 28, 2021 - TBD
  - 8th Grade Candidate Sponsor Event - TBD
  - 8th Grade Retreat - Apr. 23, 2022
  - 8th Grade Confirmation Rehearsal/Confirmation: May 14/15, 2022
- Optional outings and excursions - TBD

## GRADES 9-12: L'ALTO HIGH SCHOOL

- Summer offerings - TBD
- Fall Calendar - Coming Soon!



# How to Register

To register for Faith Formation, you will need to log into your MySt.Gertrude account. Please note that we are no longer using the FACTS payment platform for Faith Formation tuition payments.

- Log into your MySt.Gertrude account at <https://my.stgertrude.org/>
  - Email [kristen@stgertrude.org](mailto:kristen@stgertrude.org), if you have not set up your MySt.Gertrude account yet. Kristen will then send you an email with a personalized link to set up your MySt.Gertrude account. This link expires after 24 hours.
- Once logged in, please review your account information by clicking the drop down arrow next to your name in the top right corner. Select “MyProfile” and review your phone number, address, email information, etc. Update any outdated information.
  - If there are members listed in your household who no longer reside with you, please **DO NOT DELETE** their information. Contact Kristen at [kristen@stgertrude.org](mailto:kristen@stgertrude.org).
- On May 25, 2021, you will receive an email with the link to register for Faith Formation via the MySt.Gertrude platform.
- The registration window will remain open from May 25, 2021 – June 10, 2021.

**My** ST. GERTRUDE

# Health and Safety Guidelines

We continue to remain committed to the health and safety of all participants in Faith Formation at St. Gertrude - health and safety in the fullest sense possible. We have also been, and will continue to be diligent in following orders issued by the state of Ohio. Recently, Stephanie McCloud, director of the Ohio Department of Health, issued the following statement: "Other than the Facial Coverings (Masks) requirements of this Order [dated April 8, 2021], the Social Distancing, Congregating and capacity requirements of the Order do not apply to religious observances." Accordingly, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati is allowing pastors to increase seating capacity in church buildings. Additionally, on June 2, 2021, the vast majority of existing health orders will expire and the Bishops of Ohio recently announced that the obligation to attend holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days will be reinstated on June 5-6, 2021.

Given this news, coupled with general trends regarding the pandemic and what we know about children and remote learning, the evangelization team at St. Gertrude plans to move forward with exclusively in person formation as it always was prior to the pandemic. This said, our team will continue to monitor the situation and remain attentive to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and the Ohio Department of Health throughout the summer, and will adjust accordingly in August and beyond.

The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason the family home is rightly called "the domestic church," a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity.

-Catechism of the Catholic Church, §1666



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