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St. Nicholas Catholic Church

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Dear families,

As you may know in early May we invited all of the current families in our program to fill out an evaluation and participate in a facilitated discussion regarding our program. We are most grateful to all of you who took the time to give us your feedback. If you were not able to participate and would still like to do so, you can download the survey from our website (www.stnicholascarver.org) or obtain a copy from the parish office. We would love to hear from you.

The information obtained so far has been very helpful as we make plans for the 2011-2012 school year. The majority of respondents were satisfied with our program and liked that it is parish sponsored in a convenient location with small class sizes.

Respondents also provided us with several ideas on what we can do to improve the program which we are already implementing. For example, once a month we will have music. Rita Poppitz, our organist, will be here the second Wednesday of the month to teach music to the kids. Grades 1-5 will have from 6 – 6:20 pm and grades 6-9 will have from 6:20 – 6:40. Then at 6:45 all will be present for Mass in the church. We highly encourage your family to join us for Mass. We are also working on scheduling more service projects like Feed My Starving Children and Magnifying Abilities. We are also working on some fun social events like a day trip to St. John's in Collegeville, a ski trip, family bingo and attending a Lifeline Mass.

New this year will be the Faith Formation Family Weekend Masses. In the past we have tried to have a particular grade take responsibility for a weekend Mass. The intent of this is for our students to practice and share what they are learning with the entire congregation. However we realize that this may not be convenient for all families and can be difficult for those with several kids in the program. Therefore we have preset two Masses each month from October through April to designate as Faith Formation Family Masses. We ask that each family choose two of the 14 Masses to participate in. Our regular lectors, servers, & ushers will not be scheduled so that the students and their families can participate in these roles. Please note on your registration form which Masses you would like to help with and what roles each member of your family would like to participate in.

We have two Girl Scouts who are planning to do some work here over the summer to earn their Silver Awards. One is going to create a lending library with books, music and movies that you can check out for your use at home. The other is going to create a centralized supply station to organize all of the materials we currently have and help us determine what we will need. Watch the bulletin and your email for updates this fall when you are doing your back to school shopping for items you can purchase to enrich the program. This core organization should help the teachers better prepare a variety of learning opportunities. We will also need volunteers who are willing to come and help clean, paint and set up the class rooms.

We are also looking into a new curriculum. We want the lessons to be fun as well as educational for the kids. We also hope to be able to keep the families more informed about what the students are learning each week.

We will continue to modify the journal process to make this a coordinated part of the program. We will again gather in the church at the close of each session for shared learning and prayer.

Communication seems to be a major area we need to address. It is imperative that at least one adult from your family attend the parent meeting on the first night of class. We will go over everything in the handbook so you know what to expect and where to find the information you need. You can also access the parent handbook, our annual program calendar as well as several other forms and documents from the "**Faith Formation grades 1-9**" page on our website. If you ever have question or want to give us some feedback, please contact the coordinator, your child's teacher or the parish office. We are here to help and support you! We will be sending the weekly update out on Friday prior to class so that will give you more time to plan and prepare for any special things coming up the following week. It is your responsibility to check your email each week. If email communication will not work for your family, please let us know what would work better for you. We also understand that several of you would like more communication with your child's teacher so we will address that with the teachers this fall.

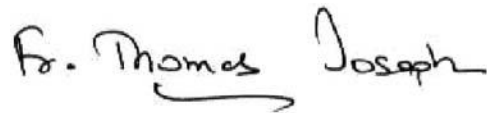
In order to make our program the best it can be we need your help! We need volunteers who are willing to help with the service projects and social events. We need more parent involvement and help in the classrooms. Many commented that there seems to be a lack of discipline and respect. We must all take responsibility for teaching our kids not only the Catholic faith but to practice being Jesus to one another. The kids have had a busy day by the time they arrive here, and additional adult presence should make it easier for all of us to provide the support necessary to create a respectful learning environment for all of us.

We are currently seeking a part time temporary Faith Formation Coordinator for the upcoming school year. We are also in need of volunteer teachers. Please spread the word and encourage anyone interested to contact the parish office for more information.

Please complete the registration form as soon as possible and submit it to the parish office. We need to be able to order materials and supplies as well as get things organized to be ready for the first night of class on September 14th!

Thank you for your continued support of our program. We look forward to a fun year of learning about our rich Catholic faith and opportunities to practicing what we are learning.

In Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Thomas Joseph". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Fr. Thomas Joseph