

Nurturing  
Faith for a  
Lifetime

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Maturing in Faith for a Lifetime

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*Lifelong & Lifewide  
Person-Centered*

Children 0-10	Teens 11-19	Young Adults 20s-30s	Midlife Adults 40s-50s	Mature Adults 60s-70s	Older Adults 80+
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## Maturing in Faith - Goals

### Jesus

- Developing and sustaining a personal relationship and commitment to Jesus Christ

### Discipleship

- Living as a disciple of Jesus Christ and making the Christian faith a way of life

### Bible

- Reading and studying the Bible—its message, meaning, and application to life today

### Teachings

- Learning the Christian story and foundational teachings of the Catholic faith and integrating its meaning into one's life

### Praying

- Praying—together and by ourselves—and seeking spiritual growth through spiritual disciplines

## Maturing in Faith - Goals

### Morality

- Living with moral integrity guided by Christian ethics and values

### Serve, Justice

- Living the Christian mission in the world—serving those in need, caring for God's creation, and acting and advocating for justice and peace.

### Worship

- Worshipping God with the community at Sunday worship, ritual celebrations, and the seasons of the church year

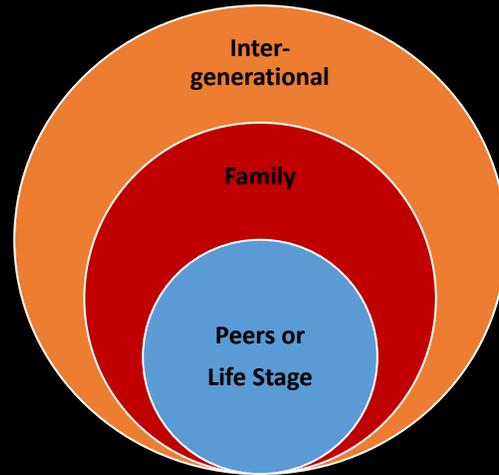
### Engaged

- Being actively engaged in the life, ministries, and activities of the faith community

### Gifts

- Practicing faith in Jesus Christ by using one's gifts and talents within the Christian community and in the world

# Maturing in Faith – Holistic Formation



## Intergenerational

### *Becoming Intentionally Intergenerational in Church Life and Ministries*



**Young people today are experiencing epidemic levels of loneliness.**

Our data in *Belonging* indicate that one in three of our young people feel completely alone much of the time. Nearly 40% have no one to talk to and feel left out, and 45% feel as if no-one understands them.

**One in three** of our young people feel completely alone much of the time.

**Nearly 40%** have no one to talk to and feel left out.



**Young people need more trusted adult relationships in their lives.**

Connecting young people to even just one additional trusted adult can reduce their feelings of loneliness, isolation, and stress. But the benefits of connecting young people to five or more trusted adults is a game-changing prospect—and ought to be our goal.

## Intergenerational

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### *Becoming Intentionally Intergenerational in Church Life and Ministries*

1. Create intergenerational connection, relationships, nurture, mentoring.
2. Transform multigenerational into intergenerational
3. Transform age-specific into intergenerational
4. Design new intergenerational initiatives
5. Make intergenerational learning central to church life

## Family

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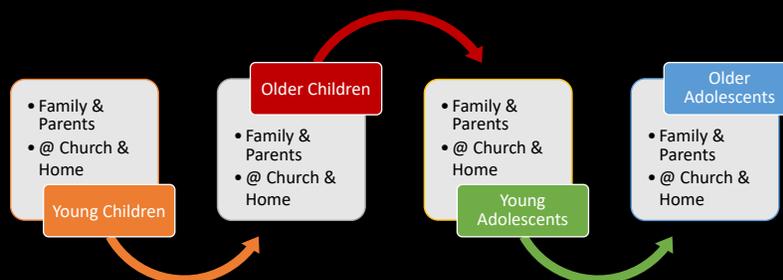
1. **Focus on parents** – the most significant influence on the religious and spiritual outcomes of young people – their faith and practice, the parent-child relationship, modeling and teaching, family conversations, family faith practices.
2. **Focus on home life** – the primary way by which Catholic identity becomes rooted in children's lives are the day-to-day religious practices of the family and the ways parents model their faith and share it.
3. **Focus on faith practices** – that make a significant difference in nurturing the faith of children and teens at home. Raising religious children should primarily be a practice-centered process, not a didactic teaching program.
4. **Focus on parent's relationship with child and parenting style** – warmth and love, balancing religious firmness with flexibility and continuity with agency, talking about religious matters during the week, listening more and preaching less.

## Family Faith Practices

1. Reading the Bible as a family and encouraging young people to read the Bible regularly
2. Praying together as a family and encouraging the young to pray
3. Serving people in need as a family and supporting service by young people
4. Eating together as a family
5. Having family conversations about faith
6. Talking about faith, religious issues, questions, doubts
7. Ritualizing family moments and milestone experiences
8. Celebrating holidays and church year seasons at home
9. Providing moral instruction
10. Being involved in a faith community and participating regularly in Sunday worship as a family

## Family

- ✓ **Encourage** parents to grow in faith and become faith formers
- ✓ **Equip** parents to incorporate faith practices into family life at home
- ✓ **Engage** parents in education and formation, as well as the **whole family** in faith forming experiences and program



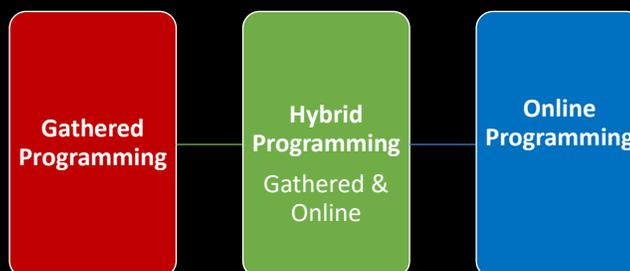
## Life Stages



- Personalized around the lives of people
- Variety of content, programs, activities, and resources
- Multiple formats for learning—on your own, with a mentor, at home, in small groups, in large groups, in the church, in the community
- Variety of methods for learning, ways to learn, and styles of learning
- Digital platforms and tools/methods connect content and people, available anytime, anywhere.

## Programming

### *Synchronous and Asynchronous*



# Programming

## Gathered

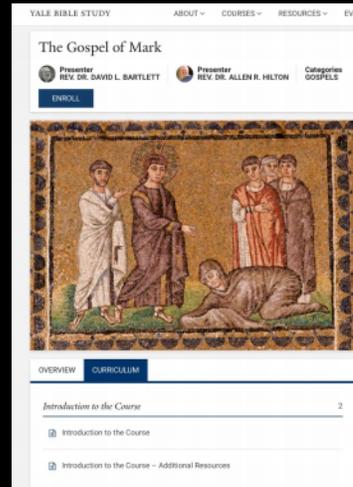
- Large group
- Small group

## Online

- Independent learning
- Small group meeting online

## Hybrid

- Complete the online session on your own + meet in small group



# Personalize

*Fashioning faith formation around the faith journeys of families and individuals at every stage of life*

*Guiding each person in his or her growth toward greater maturity in faith*



## Personalize

- Discern religious and spiritual needs using a faith growth pathways guide.
- Create a faith growth plan with the experiences, programs, activities, and resources that best match with their faith growth needs.
- Create a faith formation catalog with all of the faith formation experiences, programs, activities, and resources that people can access to create their growth plan.
- Incorporate discernment and faith growth plans yearly with families or age groups and into milestones and sacramental moments, such as marriage, baptism, first communion, confirmation, graduations, etc.
- Provide mentoring (one-on-one or in small groups) to discern their faith growth needs and create a plan.

## Personalize

Goals or Themes	1 = I'm a beginner in this aspect of my faith.	2 = I'm growing in this aspect of my faith	3 = I'm maturing and going deeper in this aspect of my faith.	4 = I'm sharing my faith and gifts with others.
Relationship with Jesus				
Living as a disciple				
Bible				
Prayer				
Moral Living				
Service / Justice				
Tradition/Teachings				
Worship				
Gifts & Talents				

# Personalize

## Scripture Enrichment

*Choose the path that helps you to grow*



### Getting Started

Try the following activities to launch your study of Scripture. . . .

1. Watch the video overview of the Old Testament and New Testament
2. Participate in the three-session "Gospel Presentation Series" at church
3. Participate in the 30-Day Bible Experience: Read one book of the Bible



### Growing with Scripture

Try the following activities to grow in your study of Scripture. . . .

1. Learn how to read the Bible in a small group
2. Develop a daily plan for reading the Bible
3. Learn how to pray with the Bible: Lectio Divina
4. Develop a daily devotions practices using the Bible



### Going Deeper

Try the following activities to go deeper in your study of Scripture. . . .

1. Join a Gospels Bible study group
2. Take an online course: Hebrew Scriptures, Gospels, Letters of Paul
3. Study and pray the Psalms as a spiritual practice
4. Develop a personal Bible study plan

## Playlists

- A Playlist is a sequence of activities and resources on a topic designed for individual and/or small group learning, usually available on a digital form.
- A Playlist personalize faiths formation around the needs and interests of each life stage and the diversity of people's spiritual and religious needs.
- Playlists can use a *menu approach* of faith forming activities where people select activities.
- Playlists can use a *sequenced approach* with a learning process to guide the learning.
- Playlists can include synchronous and asynchronous activities.



**JANUARY 6, 2020**  
**EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD**

**taking+  
faith  
home**

*God's light shines through Jesus.*

**EPIPHANY BIBLE READINGS**

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Epiphany celebration.

**Monday**    **Matthew 2:1-12**    **The wise men worship Jesus**  
                  **Isaiah 60:1-6**        **The glory of God shines on the people**

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR EPIPHANY**

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. **Isaiah 60:1 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for Epiphany:**  
Dear God, in Jesus you show your glory to the nations. Come, Holy Spirit, bless all the nations of the world with peace, joy, and love. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**  
Lord God, as the star shone over Bethlehem to reveal the presence of your Son, may this meal remind us that this food is a gift of your love. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**  
May the light of Christ bring you peace and joy.

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**JANUARY 6, 2020**  
**HYMN FOR EPIPHANY**  
*Rise, Shine, You People!*

**taking+  
faith  
home**

**EPIPHANY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Why do some people fear other people they don't know?
- How does the light of Christ help us to conquer our fears?
- A star led the wise men to Jesus. What leads you to Jesus?

**DEVOTIONS**

**Read:** Matthew 2:1-12.

People of another religion and another part of the ancient world used astrology to guide them to Jesus, and it worked. God wants the world to be blessed by the light of Christ that shines from Bethlehem to Jerusalem and on to the ends of the earth. It is God's powerful light that has entered the darkness of fear. Not only is King Herod frightened by the message that a king has been born to the Jews, so are all the people of Jerusalem (v. 3). That is, even the people faithful to God's reign are fearful. A new day that brings astonishing news is feared by all. We easily fear change, even if it has come to benefit us. The moment something new happens to us, we lose a sense of control. It is no longer about us. In this instance, the change is about God's rule, God's ways, and God's love that shines brightly into a darkened world. Thanks be to God for the light that breaks into the dark corners of our world and of our lives. It is the only light and only hope that really matters. Is change easy or difficult for you? How do you ask God for help?

**Pray:** Dear Jesus, bless us to see in you the one who takes our fears and worries and turns them into joy and gladness. Amen.

**SERVICE**

Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day, is a time when an age-old Christian tradition of blessing homes takes place around the world. It is a custom to inscribe the 20-C-M-B-20 with chalk on the door. C, M, and B between the year 2020 are the initials of the Magi but also stand for a Latin phrase meaning bless this house. The + symbolizes the cross. Our homes are places where daily spiritual practices take place (i.e., reading scripture, praying, or blessing others). Visit a person today who is homebound and pray with them. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

The wise men followed a star to find Jesus. We still need something to guide us to Jesus. Take a moment to stand with your legs spread slightly and your arms stretched out. Just as a star has five points, imagine your head, hands, and feet being the points of a star. When you think about the awesome role you have as a star, leading others to Jesus, imagine how you can do that. Talk about, draw a picture, or make a list of ways you can lead others to Jesus through your actions and words.

In addition to Taking Faith Home, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)



Sunday  
Playlist  
for  
Families  
with  
Children

February 10, 2019: Call of the Disciples - Luke 5:1-11



**The Gospel Reading Luke 5:1-11:** [www.usccb.org/bible/readings/021019.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/021019.cfm)

Take a few moments as a parent to reflect on the Gospel of Jesus calling the disciples: [www.americabible.org/resources/lectio-divina](http://www.americabible.org/resources/lectio-divina)

For background on Luke's Gospel, watch the video of Luke 3 - 9. Focus on Luke 5 which is around 2 minutes into the video: [Gospel of Luke Video](#)

Read the Gospel together: [Luke 5:1-11](#)

Do a coloring page together of Jesus calling the disciples.

 [Download File](#)

**The Call of the Disciples**



**Children's Storybook**



**Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun: Having the Courage to be Who You Are**  
by **Maria Dismundy** (Written for ages 4-11)

Likely after a long night of work, the fishermen were washing their nets and preparing to return to their homes when Jesus comes along and asks Simon to take him out in his boat. Jesus tells Simon to put his net back out into the water, and Simon hesitates for he'd already tried to catch fish all night long and caught nothing. But Simon does as Jesus says, trusting that

# Creation Playlist

## Creation

This playlist is from the first chapter of Genesis and contains one of the stories of Creation (the second is in Genesis 2:4-25). For children, the important part of the creation story is learning that God created the world and everything in it and called it good! If you want to learn more about the book of Genesis visit the [Bible Project](#).



## Bible Story

- Read Genesis 1:1-2:3 in your Bible or the Creation story in your favorite StoryBible.
- Wonder about the story together:
  - I wonder what it would have been like to create the world from the beginning.
  - I wonder what you would have created differently.
  - I wonder what your favorite part of creation is.
  - I wonder how you take time to rest.



## Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for creation! Thank you for the light and dark, for the sun and moons, for the water and sky, for the big and small animals, and for all the people. Help us to take care of creation. Help us to remember to rest. Bless our family celebrations and requests here if desired. Amen.

## Activities

- Play charades or "Pictionary" as a family taking turns acting out or drawing different parts of creation.
- Take a walk with your family (in your neighborhood, at a park, or local school) and pick up trash. Be careful of sharp or dangerous items.
- Make a list of ways that your family can help care for creation. Choose 1 or 2 to do this week.
- Use materials from around your house to re-tell the story of Creation. You might use Legos, paper and crayons, play-doh or clay, action figures, etc. Take pictures of each "day."
- Write a poem or a story about creation.
- Create a "Word Cloud" - write down all the words you can think of that relate to Creation. Then write your words in a variety of sizes that look like a picture. Or use a "word cloud" generator like [www.wordart.com](#).
- Go on a creation scavenger hunt.

## Books

When God Made the World by Matthew Paul Turner



Let There Be Light by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Nancy Thurman



## Music Videos



<https://michiganumc.org/faith-family-playlists>

# Adult Thematic Playlist

## September - A Month of Gratitude

The spiritual practice of gratitude has been called a state of mind and a way of life. But we prefer to think of it as a grammar — an underlying structure that helps us construct and make sense out of our lives. The rules of this grammar come from our activities. Its syntax reveals a system of relationships (asking us to be done and to enjoy other parts of the creation).

To learn the grammar of gratitude, practice saying "thank you" for happy and challenging experiences, for people, animals, things, art, memories, dreams. Count your blessings, and praise God. Offer blessings, and express your appreciation to something and someone you treasure. Be blessing, and be blessed.

Frederic and Mary Ann Brussal (@brussal) and @wrestles.com

## Learn



### Want to be Happy? Be Grateful.

The one thing all humans have in common is that each of us wants to be happy. Now, doctor David Dornstaler, a neuro and speech scholar, and happiness, he suggests, is born from gratitude. An inspiring lesson in why things always look better going, and above all, being grateful. Go to [this](#) to learn more and read the transcript.

For a podcast of Dr. David's interview with Krista Tippett about Gratitude, go to [this](#) link with Krista Tippett.



### Gratitude: Living Life as a Gift

Dr. Carlos Olmos of the Society of St. John the Evangelist describes the gift of gratitude and how to practice gratitude. Go to [this](#) link to learn more.



## Pray



### Gratitude Prayer for the Month

Gratitude that, in the busyness of my day, I sometimes forget to stop to thank You for all that You provide in this life through my very presence and my heart. Thank You for the gift of being, for the ability to love and be loved, for the opportunity to see the marvelous wonders of creation, for sleep and water, for a mind that thinks and a body that feels. I thank you, God, for those things in my life that can make me feel like I'm on top. Things that seem challenging, unfair, or difficult. When my heart has been softened and empty and yours is full, there is no enemy here. And I thank that you are at work in me as you never cease just that in the midst of submission, I am growing and learning. In the name of the Holy Spirit, I thank you most of all for your unconditional and eternal love. Amen.

### Psalms on Gratitude

Read and Reflect on the Psalm each week. Good luck on the Way for the Path(s).

- Week 1 - Psalm 101 and Psalm 103
- Week 2 - Psalm 102
- Week 3 - Psalm 104
- Week 4 - Psalm 105

## Read, Listen, & Watch



### Articles

- Read "How Words That We Change Year Old" by Eric Deacon to learn how gratitude begins learning which begins God's grace.

### Book



This moving book tells gratitude for the blessing of life and the mystery, wonder and awe of nature. It was inspired by the short film, *Gratitude*, a real-life creation by acclaimed filmmaker Luke Schwab, recently featured on Oprah's Super Soul Sunday. The book and film just one of today's most uplifting, powerful and inspiring phenomena. "A Grateful Day" written by renowned spiritual leader Brother David Daniel, with stunning images by Schwab. This inspirational package includes:

## Live



### Basic, Daily Gratefulness Practice

If, each day, we could engage in a "basic daily gratefulness practice," it would be enough to positively impact our lives and the world around us, just because a practice is simple does not mean it has simple results. Love through you might choose to do this practice in a more formal way at the same time each day, it can be done anytime, anywhere, and on often as you want. Go to [Gratefulness.org](#) for to experience the practice.

### Gratitude through the Day

Gratitude, the very other spiritual practice, is something we do not just something we have had to something we need a practice. To practice gratitude, we don't need a special cushion on which to sit, nor a special ring to help, nor a special time on which to go, nor special incense to smelt, nor special prayer beads to finger, nor a special prayer or mantra to recite. None of that is any way better or inspiration. It may well help. It is simply not enough.

What is enough is here and now. The Psalmist reminds us, "This is the day that we call God's mercy on us, rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118: 24). Gratitude consecrates our life and makes us real. Because it makes us really available to the real presence of Christ, who is at work within us and around us... now. We hope you'll try out these four simple practices and see how they change your day.

- 6am - Praise Your Gratitude
- 8am - Keep Your Eyes Open
- 9am - Repeat Your Gratitude
- 9pm - Save Your Life

Go to [Gratitude through the Day](#) website.

## Elements of Faith Formation

- A Vision of Maturing in Faith
- Intergenerational Relationships and Faith Forming Experiences
- Family Faith and Practice
- Life Stage Formation
- Pathways to Faith Growth
- Playlists of Faith Forming Experiences



## Where do you want to innovate?

- Stop doing something
- Redesign something
- Sustain something
- Initiate something new

### For Whom?

- \* Age Group
- \* Families
- \* All Generations
- \* Target Audience

### With What?

- \* New Approach or Program
- \* New Methods & Media
- \* New Technology
- \* New Space or Location