

D E C E M B E R 2 0 0 8

newsletter
FAITH *formation*

SISTER JANET M. ABBACCHI, SSND, COORDINATOR | OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION

Dates to Remember:

Information about the adult confirmation was sent to the pastors in November, 2008. Please be aware that the diocesan retreat for the adults to be confirmed will be held at the DeFalco Retreat Center on Saturday, April 18, 2009, beginning at 10:00 am and closing with Holy Mass at 4:00 p.m. celebrated by Bishop Patrick Zurek. (Lunch will be \$8.50 per person) The Confirmation for these Adults will be at St. Lawrence Cathedral on Saturday, April 25, 2009 at 10:00 am.



Sister Janet is preparing to visit all the parishes in the Diocese. If you have a particular time that you want Sister to visit with your teachers, please call and schedule a time and place. Let's share the good news!

✘ **August 8, 2009** ✘

SAVE THE DATE!

Faith Formation Conference Day! 9:30a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The Office of Faith Formation invites all catechists to a day of information, renewal and community building as we gather at St. Thomas, The Apostle Parish Center. Please, mark this important date on your calendar and invite all those teaching in the catechetical programs in your parish. The keynote speaker for this day will be the Most Rev. Patrick Zurek. Bishop Zurek's presentation is entitled, "The Sacraments: Encounters With the Risen Lord."

There will be breakout sessions in the afternoon. More information is forthcoming in the next newsletter.

DEAR FRIENDS IN PARISH LEADERSHIP,

Soon, we will begin our Advent Journey in all the parishes of the Diocese. What a wonderful opportunity to share this special, grace-filled time



with the children and adults who are in faith formation programs. The Church teaches that Advent is a special time in salvation history.

"In the four weeks of Advent the Church recalls the unfortunate condition of humanity from shortly after creation until the coming of Jesus into the world. Advent is a time of longing for the light of Christ which will enlighten all of us. It is also a time of joy for us because we know we are blessed to live in the time after the Incarnation. We no longer need to walk in the darkness of sin".

(Life in Christ: A Catholic Catechism for Adults, p. 136—published by ACTA)

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Catechists Gather in Dimmitt, TX

Mary Helen Flores, Director of Religion Education, invited Sister Janet M. Abbacchi, SSND, Coordinator of Faith Formation to meet with Catechists on November 8, 2008 in Dimmitt, Tx. The faith filled catechists were representatives from Hart, Nazareth, and Dimmitt. The goal of the meeting was threefold in nature, primarily, it gave Sister Janet the opportunity to meet dedicated catechists from the parishes mentioned above. Secondly, Sister Janet address the group on the importance of the catechist's role in the formation of children, youth, and adults as they move on in their journey of continued faith development. Thirdly, the catechists shared their ideas and motivational skills in reaching children on different levels of learning. It was a great exchange of proven ideas that work in the classroom.



Committee Working

on the Basic Level Foundational courses for catechists' certification continues. The Committee hopes to complete their work in the year 2009. Once the courses are approved the catechists will be informed when and where the Faith Formation courses will be presented. Let us continue to remember the committee in your prayers. Their gift of time and service is appreciated.

RCIA Workshop

Teachers who are interested in attending a workshop, specifically designed for RCIA training in English or Spanish, kindly inform Sister Janet by e-mail. There is a possibility of having a knowledgeable speaker come to the Diocese of Amarillo for the training and to answer questions pertaining to RCIA. The time and date for the presentation has not been established but there will be enough time for placing the date on your calendars. Please do not forget to e-mail or call, if you are interested!

Begin with Advent

For Family Prayer, Begin with Advent, the four weeks before Christmas. It is a time of preparation, waiting and hope. The Advent liturgy resounds with the longing cries of the Hebrew prophets, the voice of Jesus, and John the Baptist's preaching that the Lord is near. Hear their message still ringing through today's dark winters. Listen to the Gospels for the Sundays of Advent.

Among the customs of Advent, the Advent wreath is probably the most important. Lighting the Advent candles each day with a prayer can prepare your family for Christmas.

