



ELEMENTARY FAITH FORMATION NEWS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026



Dear Faith Formation Families,

Welcome 2026 and the return of Ordinary Time! Welcome to the second half of the Elementary Faith Formation year! Liturgically the Church celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany on January 4 the Christmas season continued through January 11th, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, after which we again welcomed Ordinary Time. The solemn season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18th.

ADVENT OUTREACH THANKS

Thanks to the families who practiced Stewardship during Advent! You shared “treasure” in many ways. You purchased toys for the Sacred Heart toy store, supported the parish “giving tree”, adopted a family in need, and brought baby gifts to the Christmas Masses. God bless you all!!

REMINDERS

- Homework is assigned every week; it reinforces the class lesson. Parents should assist with and participate in this.
- Consistent weekly class attendance is important, and although we hope to see students present in class, we encourage families to keep children at home if they display any signs of not feeling well. Please contact the EFF office to report absences.
- Children who did not celebrate 1st Reconciliation in December will receive directives from the Elementary Faith Formation office.

IN CASE OF SNOW

COL EFF classes follow the Cherry Hill public schools policy for class cancellations due to weather. When Cherry Hill cancels we do too. If Cherry Hill cancels after school activities we cancel class then as well.

CALENDAR UPDATE

Monday, Jan. 5 – Monday EFF classes resume, 4:30 – 5:30

Tuesday, Jan. 6 – NO EFF CLASSES – Cherry Hill Schools are closed

Sunday, Jan. 11 – 10:30am Mass – Rite of Welcome for families preparing to celebrate sacraments

Tuesday, Jan. 13 – Tuesday EFF classes resume, 4:30 – 5:30

Sunday, Jan. 18, 8:30 – 10:30am – Sandwich Making in St. Mary room

Monday, Jan. 19 – MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY – NO CLASSES

Thursday Jan. 22, 6:00pm – 1st Eucharist prep event I

Sunday, Jan. 25, 1pm – 1st Eucharist prep event I

Sunday, Jan. 25 – (Complimentary) Parish Pancake Breakfast following morning Masses.

Sunday, Jan. 25 – Begin Catholic Schools Week – NO 10:30am CLOW

Monday & Tuesday, Feb. 9 & 10 – Gr. 2 Mardi Gras presentation with Grandparent Ministry

Monday, Feb. 16 -- PRESIDENT'S DAY – NO CLASSES

Tuesday, Feb. 17 – NO CLASSES

Wednesday, Feb. 18 – ASH WEDNESDAY (see Bulletin for distribution of ashes times)

Thursday, Feb. 19, 6pm – 1st Eucharist prep event II

Monday & Tuesday, Feb. 23 & 24 – Grade 5 Church Tour

Sunday, Feb. 22, 1pm – 1st Eucharist Prep Event II

SANDWICH MAKING MINISTRY

On Sundays, Jan. 18 and Feb. 21 there will be Sandwich Making in the Parish Center, St. Mary Room from 8-10:30am. Sandwiches made at home and supplies can be dropped off there as well.

All parishioners are invited to participate in making sandwiches for Cathedral Kitchen, Joseph's House, and other locations in Camden. Please wear gloves while making the sandwiches and place sandwiches in zip lock bags. Then place the sandwiches in the plastic sleeve that the bread came in. Preferred ingredients are beef bologna, turkey, and cheese. (There are gloves and sandwich bags on the Welcome Desk counter in the Gathering Space of the church.)

Additionally, donations of fruit, bottled water, individual bagged snacks and granola bars will be accepted. **HELP US TO HELP THOSE IN NEED!**

CLOW (Children's Liturgy of the Word)

CLOW is offered during the Sunday 8:30 & 10:30am Mass. Children 5 years old – 5th grade are dismissed to the church Ministry Center to hear the day's readings in "kid friendly" language and are invited to participate in an interactive homily. The children rejoin their families at the Offertory.

SACRAMENT OF FIRST EUCHARIST UPDATE

This year Christ Our Light will prepare 73 children and their families to receive Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for the first time. Families will come together 3 times to participate in the preparation process.

VALENTINE'S DAY – SOME ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO EXPRESS LOVE

Valentine's Day is a great reminder to love those who are often "out of sight, out of mind." Sometimes we fail to "love your neighbor as yourself." Some opportunities to participate in outreach:

- Make Valentin's Day cards and deliver them to a senior citizen or assisted living home.*
- Write a note of encouragement or prayer to friends, or to someone in need of a friend and "snail mail" it to their home!*
- COL Sandwich Making ministry collection on Feb. 25.*
- Prepare casseroles to be delivered to Joseph's House in Camden.*

VBS 2026: This summer's Vacation Bible School "Snowball Mountain Challenge" is scheduled for July 13 – 17, 9am – Noon. Stay tuned for team and participant registration.

Mary Lou, our dedicated volunteer catechists, and I wish you health, happiness, and God's peace in 2026. Your families are in our prayers and I ask that you keep us in your prayers as well.

Blessings,

Ginny

“The Work of Christmas”

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations
To bring peace among brothers and sisters,
To make music in the heart.*

by Howard Thurman

