

Dear Friends,

The next CHARACTERISTIC OF AN EVANGELIZING PARISH is that **“An Evangelizing Parish provides and encourages ongoing faith formation for all ages.”** This is a characteristic our parish takes seriously. Since we do not have a Catholic school associated with our parish, we have the opportunity to provide a premier religious education for the children of our parish. In the last year, we have changed the curriculum we had been using to one that most of the parishes in DeKalb County are using. It is well written, it follows the teachings of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and it is presented in a way that children can understand, which enables them to better retain what is being taught to them.

It must be said, though, that all any parish can do is to augment what parents teach their children. Parents are, and must be, the primary teachers of their children in the ways of faith. That is the promise they make when they bring their children to be baptized. The Church must honor that promise. We teach important lessons, like how to say prayers, what Catholic and Christian morality is, Sacred Scriptures, and many other teachings. We do the book work. Families, especially parents, teach by setting the examples of faith children need to see on a day to day basis.

Adult catechesis has become more of a priority over the last few years. Catechesis is a big Greek word that really means education. Catechesis is the process of learning about our faith. I have to believe that none of us has learned all we need to know about our faith. We are designed to desire to learn, know, and understand even the deepest mysteries of our lives. For this reason we do offer some adult classes. During Lent we are going to have a series of classes called Catholicism 101. Several topics ranging from The Precepts of the Church, to prayer, to liturgical music, will be covered. All of our Religious Education Teachers are encouraged to attend because they will get credit for certification for being catechists. More importantly, parents and adults need to have that desire to learn fulfilled, if for no other reason than that they will be better able to teach their own children how to live their faith.

We are an evangelizing parish because we offer parishioners of all ages the opportunities they need to form their faith lives. Being Catholic and Christian is not always easy. But if we are willing to learn, then the discipline of our faith becomes one of the greatest gifts we have.

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel