



ST. JOHN XXIII PARISH · 89 BULL HILL LN · WEST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06516-3925

ST. LOUIS CHURCH
89 BULL HILL LN

ST. JOHN VIANNEY CHURCH
300 CAPTAIN THOMAS BLVD

ST. LAWRENCE SCHOOL
231 MAIN STREET

A CATHOLIC PARISH OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

July 15, 2024

Dear Parishioners,

Last year, the priests of the Archdiocese of Hartford received a letter from Archbishop Emeritus Leonard P. Blair asking us to re-examine our religious education programs moving from a child-centered model of religious education toward a family-centered faith formation model in accordance with the Church's latest Directory for Catechesis (2020) which "stresses the importance of engaging entire families in the faith formation process." As noted in the letter, dioceses throughout the country as well as parishes in our Archdiocese have already experienced the benefits of family models of faith formation. These include a deeper relationship to God for children and adults, a tangible connection to our parish community, and better Mass attendance.

Last year, in light of this letter, I reached out to Kelly Henderschedt, the Archdiocesan Director of Faith Formation, for guidance and both Directors of Religious Education in our parish met with her and myself to begin incorporating this vision of having a full-time Director of Lifelong Faith Formation for the parish. I recently informed the staff of our religious education programs that the time to move toward that vision has come and therefore we have posted a job description on the Archdiocesan website, our parish website, and on Indeed.

This person will be entrusted with developing and implementing a parish-wide, family-centered model of faith formation and sacramental preparation for our children and youth, and develop a short- and long-term plan to grow faith formation opportunities and ministries for our children, youth, young adults and adults of all ages. Once that position has been filled, I will work with that person to hire a part-time executive assistant to assist them in this most important ministry.

We will eventually announce a meeting with families/guardians of our children and youth with the Archdiocesan Director of Faith Formation, the new Director of Lifelong Faith Formation, and myself to explain the benefits of this new model for our parish, and how it will be implemented. Please note that all registrations already made with our religious education programs will be honored. Our plan is to begin our Faith Formation Program later in October 2024 to allow families/guardians to settle into the rhythm of a new academic school year with their children/youth.

I kindly ask for your prayers and patience as we seek to hire the best person possible to help us develop and implement this new model for our parish with the help of volunteer catechists and other volunteers.

Sincerely, yours in Christ,

Fr. José A. Mercado,
Pastor