

Dear families of the Parish,

You might've heard at Masses last weekend when Monsignor Royal introduced the new Office of Youth & Families, which has replaced the Religious Education Office. He shared how what we've been doing in classrooms with textbooks isolated from a Catholic family culture is no longer sufficient for the times—what we offer our children in the way of catechesis much be richer, deeper, and address the mounting pressures families face to conform to the world. Teams of parishoners have been hard at work for the past year working to *re-imagine faith formation*-- and we are excited about the results. As you know, this current year we had some success with virtual meetings; we've had a handful of really nice family events; and many parents have appreciated the boost to their faith they've received by having to sit down and give their faith some attention together at home. Going forward, we will maintain that virtual/at-home option, but will also bring back in-person gatherings!

We have a calendar of programs slated for the new year, that extend from the youngest child just baptized, up through our graduating seniors in high school. You'll hear more details about what the programming will look like in coming weeks—for now we just want to get on your radar that we are re-building!

If you've been disconnected, we hope you'll think about plugging back in.

If you've got the slightest inclination God may be calling you to serve young people in the parish, *I would love to hear from you*. We're building teams to serve our children, our middle schoolers, and our teenagers. We're looking for people who can share faith; who can share resources; who can help with events or help in the office. It has been a long year—but we can see the light at the end of the tunnel! Hope you'll join us!

Laura

Laura Danner / *Pastoral Associate*
ldanner@smcr.org / 203-438-7335 ext 218

St Mary Parish / Office for Youth & Families
www.smcr.org/youth-family