



## **EXPL** **RE FOUR**

**STUDY | PRAY | WORSHIP | LIVE**

I'm sure I'm not the first Director of Faith Formation that has longed to oversee a Faith Formation ministry that meets families where they are, has children excited about coming to church, and offers engaging ways for families to live their faith. You know, a place where there are no scheduling conflicts for families and all sessions have more adult and youth volunteers than is needed?!?

Well, there may not be a dream scenario, but we are super excited about the approach that our parish is taking to faith formation, beginning this school year! We call it **EXPLORE FOUR**. Did we create it? No. The idea was shared with us at a workshop hosted by the Catechetical Department of the Diocese of Dallas. The presenter, Denise Utter, spoke about how her parish in Illinois began incorporating whole families into faith formation, and what an impact it's having on the entire parish! We listened to the stories Denise shared, and immediately felt the stirring of the Holy Spirit to take these ideas back to our parish.

**EXPLORE FOUR** utilizes the parish as its source for Study | Prayer | Worship | Live, and provides families with opportunities to actively live as disciples of Jesus. The Parish is the curriculum! We intentionally collect all the faith formation opportunities that already exist in our parish and allow families to choose to participate in the formation options that work best for them.

We created a chart that is aptly named ‘the Explore Four Chart’. All events on the chart correspond to one of the four areas of faith life: We Believe- Creed – We “Study it”, Christian Prayer - We “Pray it”, Sacraments & Liturgy - We “Worship”, and Christian Living - We “Live it”. Each event offers a wonderful opportunity to be alive in the faith as a family. We have an extremely active and growing parish, and the parish should be the place we come to be filled, renewed, restored, and healed. Then, we will be equipped to take what we learn into our home, our neighborhood, our workplace, our school, and everywhere we go!

We’ve only just begun our school year, but the parish’s reaction to **EXPLORE FOUR** has been AMAZING!! The parish events that we’ve offered as **EXPLORE FOUR** events have had huge attendance, and families seem excited to fill out the reflection form to tell us how each event has impacted their family, and what they enjoyed most and least about each event. We will use these reflection forms to track attendance for each student, but they will also be used to help us tweak events to make them better the next time they are offered! It is a win/win for parish ministries that are hosting events, and for families that are answering the call to community, service, prayer, and worship. I would highly recommend this model of faith formation to parishes of all sizes. I am always up for sharing ideas, struggles and successes, so please reach out to me at [pcl@ourladyrockwall.org](mailto:pcl@ourladyrockwall.org) !

*-Sara Campbell, Director of Ministries, Our Lady of the Lake*

