Faith Formation Files: Vol. 1, Issue 7 November 4, 2018

Every Spring I get bitten by the bug. With the change of season, the warming of the air, and the budding of spring flowers, I become excited to plant my garden, and I succumb to the temptation of colorful seed packets and verdant seedlings. I have learned to till the garden and get things prepped before I buy my multiple flats of baby veggies, but that was an expensive lesson taking more than one year to learn. I begin by digging holes for plants, creating furrows for seeds, and constructing mounds for the sprouting vines. I put down weed guard. I arrange the tomato cages, and I stake the bean plants. I prepare the sprinklers so I’m ready for periods of high heat and/or drought. But then every year, every single year, it seems like life happens and all my hard work gets undermined. I am no longer able to commit time to the garden so weeds take over. My priorities are forced to change and potato bugs purge on my plants. Blight attacks my tomatoes and what few crops do produce get harvested by the local wildlife. All the time and effort that went into planning and preparing gets wasted.

And that is how Baptism can be. Much work goes into the preparation for the sacrament. Parents (and godparents are welcome!) attend a class to make sure they understand many things. They learn about the sacrament, what it is for and what it provides. They realize the immensity of their responsibility. They discern if this is truly right for them and their child because it involves a vow that commits them for life. A significant amount of money can be used to purchase just the right Baptismal gown. A candle and certificate are prepared. And then the special day comes. In the presence of the church family, the child is brought into Christ’s own. A character is bestowed on the child’s soul, an indelible mark that can neither be repeated nor undone. God’s own life, his Divine Grace, penetrates every cell of the newly baptized. Through our baptism, we are grafted onto Christ. We must have his sap of the vine flowing through us to live and bear fruit. In order for a sacrament to bear fruit, to be efficacious, to actually have an effect on us, we must eagerly seek after God with the hope and expectation that He will show up. We have to be prepared to change. To participate perfectly in this life requires actively receiving AND yielding to the work of the grace in us. If we don’t nurture that grace, if we fail to replenish that grace, if we don’t prune our withered and infected parts, if we don’t curb our actions and desires that are not in alignment with God’s commands, then the grace is wasted.

So join us for Faith Formation on Sundays from 4-6 pm in Fellowship Hall. We will help you better comprehend this complex faith of ours. We will provide support and time for you to examine your life in light of the creed that we profess. We will facilitate a process that will aid in the development of your relationship with Christ. We will walk beside you in your faith journey.

Blessings,

 Julie Gould

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This Week:

 Sunday, Nov. 4, 4-6 pm at Fellowship Hall: Faith Formation for the whole family. Come one, come all!

 Monday, Nov. 5, 7-8:30 pm at Fellowship Hall in Howard City: Adult Enrichment class

 Wednesday, Nov. 7, 5:30 pm at Fellowship Hall: A Family of Faith potluck and follow-up Meeting

7:30 pm at Fellowship Hall: Video Presentation- St. Clare and St. Francis (part 1)