Hello Holy Spirit PREP Families!

I hope this email finds you all well and in good health.  We have been working hard on preparations for the new PREP year.  The pandemic has presented us with many challenges as we look towards the continued delivery of our religious education program.  Our primary concern is the safety of our students, volunteers, catechists, and staff.  To ensure everyone’s safety we are closely following all CDC, state, and diocesan guidelines. We are taking the following measures:

1. Classroom space will be limited to a certain number of students depending on classroom size to allow for proper social distancing.
2. The entire education wing including, classrooms, social hall, and agape hall (old church) will be cleaned and sanitized prior to student’s arrival on Sunday mornings.
3. Hand sanitizing stations are available in every classroom and common areas.
4. Students, catechists, volunteers, and staff will be required to wear a mask or face shield at all times while in the building.

As a result of implementing these measure certain changes have been made to our program:

1. We will offer an online homeschooling option.  The lessons will be the same as the ones being delivered in the classroom, but students will be able to complete them independently online on their own time with the expectation that they will complete one lesson per week.  Catechists will monitor your students' work and will be available to answer questions and provide help.  The online lessons are engaging and fun and include features like narrated text, music, videos, games, and pre and post assessments.
	* The price for the online/homeschooling option is $35 per student, mostly to cover the price of the license to access the online courses.
	* Based on the nature of 1st Holy Communion, 2nd graders are encouraged more than any other grade to receive their lessons in person.
	* If you want to check out what the online experience will be like please watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM0R-JIJYB4&t=3s>
2. Based on the number of students who registered before the deadline, currently we have enough space in our classrooms to accommodate students from grades K-5.  However, some grades are at capacity so, **if you have not yet registered please do so ASAP and understand that the any  remaining seats will be given on a first come first serve basis**. After all classroom seats are filled, **students registering late will be offered the online option**.
	* If you registered before the deadline there will be a seat in the classroom for you child however**, if you are not comfortable with your child being in a classroom, you may voluntarily choose to move your child to the online/homeschooling option.** If you do, that seat will be made available to another student who perhaps registered late and does not want to do the program online.   You may also request a refund for the difference in tuition. **If you want to switch to the online program, Please let me know by August 17.**
	* Due to the mask requirement**, if your child doesn’t want to or can’t wear a mask they will be offered the online option.**
3. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is limited to 8 students. As a result, preference will be given to K level students as this will be the last year they can participate in the program before they start 1st grade.  Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 students who have registered for CGS will be refunded the registration fee and will have the opportunity to participate in CGS next year.  We apologize to the families affected by this.
4. Middle School grade 6, 7, and 8 will not meet in person this year and will use the online delivery and mentoring platform.   Adult mentors/catechists will be available to assist your students and will monitor their work, lesson completion, and review pre and post assessments.  In addition, there will be a group of adult mentors and each student will be assigned one. The mentors will setup individual appointments to meet with each student at least once a month in person at the church for about 10-15 min to have open mature discussions about our faith,  answer questions, provide feedback, prayer, and mentoring.  While in person is preferred, if requested these can happen over teleconference platforms.
5. The Confirmation program for students in 7th and 8th grade will change from CHOSEN to Ignatius Faith and Life. This change is due to the CHOSEN lesson format not being a good match for online delivery. The Ignatius Faith and Life program lends itself well for online delivery. We found the lessons to succinct, informative, and fun.  We will email 7th and 8th grade families separately with more details and information within the next couple of days.

I will be sending out more information in the coming weeks but for now I need to know the following:

**If have registered and would prefer to have your child participate in the online program rather than being in a classroom, please email me ASAP.**

Let me know if this all makes sense.   Thanks!

Yours in Christ,

Daniel Colón

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