

St. Matthew the Evangelist Faith Formation

Minister Title: Family Small Group (Village) Leader

Objective: Lead prayer, model prayer, and teach children and families how to pray.

Description/Responsibilities: Founded on your own personal prayer life, you will be leading prayer for parents and their children. In doing so, you will be modeling prayer and teaching prayer to the adults and children whom you serve. Growth in prayer leads to growth in relationships with Jesus Christ and His Church.

You will meet *monthly* with each Family Small Group (Village) you are leading. Each family is expected to use the resources provided to pray *weekly* within their family. The location, day, and time of each Family Small Group (Village) meeting will be mutually agreed upon by the Leader and all the families. Possible locations for meeting include online, on-campus, at the home of one of the participants, or another mutually agreed upon location.

You, the Family Small Group (Village) Leader, will use materials provided by St. Matthew the Evangelist parish to lead each monthly session of the Family Small Group (Village). We plan to use *Project Nazareth*, the Sacred Mysteries Lectionary-based series, created by the Archdiocese of Boston. In addition, we anticipate that there will naturally be conversations about topics of faith and sharing faith within a family. We empower you to respond based on your own informed faith experiences. We also expect that you will receive an update from each family regarding their weekly family prayer expectation, and that you will encourage each family to grow in their prayer and faith life.

We envision each Family Small Group (Village) to have 3-4 families (adults and their children), and each monthly meeting to be 20-30 minutes in length. However, you may find that you are able to engage the adults longer than 30 minutes if the children are dismissed from the Small Group (Village) meeting with their parents' permission (based on the experience of other parishes who have used this model, sessions lasting longer than 30 minutes may result in a loss of attention for younger children).

We encourage each you to meet with multiple Family Small Groups (Villages) if possible. Leaders may request certain families to meet with and may assist in the formation of the Family Small Groups (Villages). Families may also request other Faith Formation families to be in their Small Group.

The 2021-2022 school year will be an experiment with this model. We expect you to commit to your Family Small Groups for the entire year, to provide us feedback about how the model is working, to suggest modifications and improvements to be made, and to seek our help to work through struggles that may occur.

Qualifications: All St. Matthew the Evangelist parish ministers (volunteers) are expected to

- have an annual CORI (background check) on file
- complete the *Protecting God's Children* (Virtus) program
- abide by the 2021 Archdiocesan Code of Conduct (available at <https://billeriacatholic.org/code/>)

Family Small Group (Village) Leaders need to have a basic understanding of Catholic doctrine, Scripture, and Catholic Tradition; a desire to pursue honest and caring relationships with young people and their families; and effective communication abilities with young people and their families.

Family Small Group (Village) Leaders are expected to be Catholics in good standing with the Church, including regular Mass attendance and reception of the Eucharist, having received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, and is an authentic witness to their Catholic faith.

Time Commitment: Prepare for and attend each Family Small Group (Village) to which you have committed. The Leader should facilitate and ensure the schedule arrangement of the Family Small Group (Village) gathering (or this could be delegated to one or more of the families). Family Small Group (Village) Leaders will also meet with Faith Formation Coordinators for support and guidance (time, location, and regularity to be determined by Leaders and Coordinators).

Given the experimental nature of this model in the 2021-2022 year, we anticipate needing two or more gatherings of the Family Small Group (Village) Leaders during the school year (these may be done online) to learn how things are going, share wisdom, and possibly make program adjustments.

Supervision: All Family Small Group (Village) Leaders report to the Faith Formation Staff.

Communication: Primarily through e-mail, phone use as needed.

A Family Small Group (Village) Leader:

- ✓ Gets to know their families and individual members well - names, personalities, interests - and gains a sense of their spiritual maturity and experience
- ✓ Is aware of the many challenges facing families today and seeks to encourage the families to include the practice of our faith as much as possible, without judgment, to accompany growth in faith
- ✓ Models prayer for the parents and children by comfortably leading prayer, finding ways to share the leading of prayer with the adults and children as they are ready, and facilitates the prayer experience for all participants
- ✓ Reports anything concerning to a Staff member.
- ✓ If you become aware of any pastoral needs of the families, please also report these to a Staff member.
- ✓ Provides feedback about how the Family Small Group (Village) experience is going for the families in their Family Small Groups (Villages) and how useful the materials are for this ministry, when requested by the Faith Formation Staff