

SAID ED September 21, 2014

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This weekend we recognize the men and women from our parish who have committed their time and talent to the faith formation of our children for the next year—our religion teachers. Fifty six of our friends and neighbors will be sharing the faith that we all love with the young people of our parish during the 2014/15 school year. We will be commissioning them and asking the Holy Spirit's guidance for them at each of the Masses this weekend.

At the 11:00 Mass on Sunday, we will also celebrate the official opening of our Fr. Kelly School of Religion. Classes for grades one through Confirmation prep will begin on Monday, September 22. Classes for our littlest ones, our Kindergartners, will begin on Sunday, October 19th during the 11:00 a.m. Mass. Students in Deacon Ron's high school service group will meet on Wednesday, October 1st.

When Fr. Leonard Kelly founded Assumption's School of Religion in our parish (first of its kind), he planted the seeds of excellence in faith formation that would take root and grow strong. His decision to build a parish school that would teach only religion, not a traditional parish school, became the prototype for religious education models throughout the country. Those of you who have been around for a while will remember the Saturday Evening Post & Sign magazine articles calling attention to this achievement and the exuberant praise Fr. Kelly's decision brought forth from Bishop Fulton J. Sheen who said that Fr. Kelly's vision would result in a religious education option for public school kids that was "not a stop gate, or a substitute, but a viable way to teach our young people about their faith".

Fr. Kelly's decision to catechize not only children, but the men and women who would teach them, ensured that our young people would receive the finest instruction in the ways of faith. I remember fondly the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart who led the volunteer faculty in the early years. They recruited me over 40 years ago, helped me to grow in my own faith, and instilled in me a love for this ministry that just keeps growing. The teachers we honor this weekend have that same love for our God, that same fervor for our faith, and that same commitment to our children.

The beginning of each School of Religion year brings new joys and new challenges to our volunteer faculty as they assist parents with the faith formation of their children --to help them learn their first prayers, prepare for sacraments, and come to know Jesus through stories and scripture. Helping our children recognize Jesus in their lives- to truly believe that he is with them always - is the mission of the Fr. Kelly School of Religion. It is one that we accept willingly and gladly...one that we promise to carry out with the support of your prayers and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Please pray for our teachers, our staff, and our young people as we begin this new year of faith sharing with each other....and please join Fr. Ed and our parish staff in a heartfelt thank you to all of our faith and spirit filled volunteer faculty.

Cathy Tocci, COTA Director of Religious Education
