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OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the new school year!

Pope Francis, in his book *The Joy of Love* says, "The family is the first school of human values, where we learn the wise use of freedom." He also said in May 2014 "a family enlightened by the Gospel provides a school for Christian living! There one learns faithfulness, patience and sacrifice."

"We all want our children to have faith, but sharing our faith requires both words and actions - and a living faith of our own," states Tom Rinkowski in the Catholic Update. (August 2013)

In his first encyclical, *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis addresses catechists. As parents you are the primary catechist and educator of your children.

"On the lips of catechists...must ring over and over Jesus Christ loves you; He gave his life to save you; and now He is living at your side everyday to enlighten and strengthen you..."

We encounter Christ each day through our Church. As parents and primary educators of your children, you have the privilege and responsibility to help them to know, love, and serve God. "Be living examples of love, forgiveness and care. Be sanctuaries of respect for life, proclaiming the sacredness of every human life...rise with Jesus and Mary and set out on the path the Lord traces for each of you." (Quote from *The Blessings of Family: Inspiring Words from Pope Francis*.) By attending Mass and teaching your children how to pray, read Scripture, and learn about the Sacraments, you enable them to appreciate the richness of our Catholic Faith.

What a privilege it is for our teachers and their assistants to support you in sharing with your children the joy of experiencing a loving God. We, too, desire to teach them that by following Jesus' example they will come to know, love and serve God.

As we begin this new year of Faith Formation, let us be grateful to God for the many gifts we have received, especially the gift of your children.

Sincerely,

Sr. Rosalie Callen

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