May, 2009

Santa Maria
Catholic Church

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Dear Parents and Friends,

The community of Orinda and, especially, the community of Santa Maria have recently experienced a deep awareness for the requirement of our collaborative involvement together in the formation of our youth. In our demanding schedules, we need to ensure a mutual development in faith, parents and children alike. Formation into the life of a Christian disciple certainly begins first in the home through the witness of parents and siblings. However, the parish family is also committed to supplement this formation through a variety of age appropriate faith formation programming and experiences, as well as through a dynamic and engaging Youth Ministry process.

For the past twenty-five years, Dorothy Harrington has shared her faith, talents, and catechetical leadership in developing our parish programs. The people of the parish have acknowledged and expressed its gratitude for her gifts. Building upon these, I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Sr. Mary Margaret Phan, LHC, to assume the responsibilities of Coordinator - Headstart to Grade 5. She will be assisted by and is responsible to Jeffrey Sloan who is Director of Catechetical Ministries. With the assistance of our volunteer catechists and aides, we will provide an outstanding formation program. However, the program requires you to be personally involved. Your participation isn't an option. It is an expectation. Participation isn't something that parents and children choose to do. It is something they must do together. No parent would say to their child: "you decide if you will go to school this year!" That would make no sense. Similarly, it makes no sense in whether to participate in faith formation or not. Faith formation is a life-long process. As we know things can change quickly and suddenly. In addition to our formation of children, we will present parenting-faith training programs this Fall. Parents need appropriate tools to engage their children in practical conversations and involvements about their life experiences. The parish bulletin will contain additional information about these parenting sessions which will be facilitated by Jeffrey Sloan.

Read through the attached materials, complete and return the registration forms, as soon as possible. Retain a copy of the schedule and be sure to obtain a weekly parish bulletin that will update these current materials. Questions and comments can be directed to Sr. Mary Margaret at 925-254-2426, x 303, or Jeffrey Sloan at x 305. Thank you for supporting our formation commitments.

Sincerely,

Msgr. Ted Kraus