

#### **Mission and Catholic Identity Standard 4**

An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities for adult faith formation and action in service of social justice.

#### **Narrative Summary:**

One of the pillars of Catholic education is that parents are the primary educators of their children and parents work in partnership with Catholic school faculty to educate their children. Teachers of children, both parents and faculty, must remain spiritually fed in order to fully and adequately educate the children they are teaching. Service to others is a powerful teacher and therefore an important part of adult faith formation. Additionally, professional development is one of the strategies used by effective schools to train and energize faculty. St. George Catholic School recognizes the importance of adult faith formation.

#### **Commendations:**

St. George Catholic School faculty and staff have many opportunities for spiritual growth and faith formation throughout the year. Each school year begins with a St. George faculty Mass and a Diocesan gathering that includes mass. Every school morning, a St. George faculty member leads faculty prayer for those who can attend and all school meetings are opened with prayer. St. George Catholic School faculty members are considered catechist and therefore are expected to visibly support the faith life of the school community. All Faculty members attend weekly school mass and are given the opportunity to serve as Extraordinary Ministers. Teachers also participate in grade level Masses as well as celebrations, retreats and Reconciliation with their students. All faculty members are strongly encouraged to attend the St. George Parish Mission every year to promote personal faith development and enrichment. Principals and Assistant Principals are offered the opportunity to attend an annual retreat organized by the Diocese. The Diocese also provides continuous education of our faith through the Ministry and Theology courses offered and required of all Catholic school teachers. According to the AdvancEd Program Effectiveness survey, 87% of staff believes that St. George Catholic School provides faith formation for faculty and staff.

Parents are recognized by St. George Catholic School as the primary educators of their children and opportunities are provided to assist parents in this role as faith educators. Each week Mr. Nelson, the school principal, pens an article for the weekly newsletter, Dragon Tales. Parents and faculty alike look for this article which contains a purposeful and encouraging faith-based message. Parent meetings are held to inform parents of the importance and steps for sacramental preparation and in preparation for sexual morality classes. Each January, St. George Catholic Church offers a Parish Mission and families are invited and encouraged to attend. This past year, parents were given the opportunity to pray the rosary during Lent during the time they would usually be waiting in carpool line. The Education Commission, a St. George Catholic Church Parish committee was formed as a means to provide opportunities for spiritual growth and education for church members with school-aged children. A member of the administrative team sits on the Education Commission. In the AdvancEd Program Effectiveness survey of 2013, 79% of parents state that St. George Catholic School provides

opportunities for faith formation for parents/guardians and other adult members of the school community. This leaves room for improvement in this area.

As noted previously, service is a cornerstone of St. George Catholic School and families are provided opportunities for service as well. The Giving Tree and St. Vincent DePaul food drive are ways that families provide for others in the community.

**Recommendations:**

The April 2013 AdvancEd Catholic Identity and Program Effectiveness Survey shows a disconnect between the perceptions of the faculty and families in the areas of Christian social service programs and the visible support they offer within the faith life of the school community with faculty indicating strong support at over 90 percent and families at approximately 75%. Therefore, St. George Catholic school plans to increase faith formation opportunities for students and faculty as well as provide more service opportunities for our St. George Catholic School families.

**Rating of Standard:**

Based upon the evidence and recommendations for Mission and Catholic Identity, Standard 4, St. George Catholic School awards ourselves a score 2.