



To learn more about working with children at St. Joseph Parish, contact Amy Buttarazzi, Director of Family Ministry, at abuttarazzi@sjpmd.org

Generations

Tanya and Sarah Salloom

When you are new to teaching faith formation, a good teaching partner can make the work a pleasure. Last year, Tanya Salloom learned that, when the teaching partner is your 14-year-old daughter, it's magic.

"I don't think either of us had any idea how much fun we would have working together like that," says Tanya.

Her daughter Sarah had volunteered at Vacation Bible School that summer and when Amy Buttarazzi, Director of Family Ministry, witnessed that she was a natural leader, she encouraged Sarah to keep working with children during the school year. Tanya was inspired to volunteer as well, though she admits to being "the nervous one" about teaching kindergarten.

"It was nice to work as a team with my mom, and not be in our mother/daughter roles," says Sarah. "We'd discuss different ideas, talk about things we thought might work with the kids. And the program is so much fun, all the changes they have made make it so interactive. The kids have so much fun learning without realizing how much they are

learning. They are all just so happy learning about God. Mom and I were honestly sad when the school year ended."

Watching her daughter dive into the role so adeptly and maturely impressed Tanya.

"It was neat seeing her in this new light, in a different role than sister or daughter," she says. "And the kids--they adored Sarah; some of them made her little cards they had worked on during the week; and when they would see her at church, they would get really excited. It was just so sweet."

For Tanya, taking on a volunteer position like teaching each week, when you are part of a busy family of five, was intimidating.

"Honestly, the biggest obstacle was changing the family routine from going to 10:30 am Mass to 9 am. And there were times when Sarah was teaching in her soccer uniform because that's where she was heading the moment class ended. But it was so rewarding for both of us. We all have something to give and I think we learned how important it is to be engaged in our church community. It makes your community stronger and your faith stronger."