

Question: What would you say to encourage a current 7th grader to be a part of Edge in 8th grade?

Below are the answers from former Edge 8th graders:

"As an Edge student, I would 100% recommend and encourage the upcoming 8th graders to take Edge. Edge taught me a lot and changed the way I saw church and Jesus. The Edge sessions are very moving and helpful for when you are faced with real-life situations. Edge made me feel very comfortable with expressing my thoughts and feelings by making me feel holy, valuable, and loved as a child of God."

"I would say to the 7th graders - don't be worried about the time commitment or who is doing it. Through this year, I have grown so much closer to God in such a fun way. This class has been such a fun experience with such a good balance between fun and learning about God."

"I would tell a 7th grader about how supportive and open every Edge Core member is and how they make an effort to get to know every student and have a relationship with them to make them feel more connected and encourage them to want to have a good relationship with God."

"At the end of the class, you will really feel closer to God. Though it may not be what you want to do on your Sunday night, you will be happy you did it."

"I would tell them not only is it a great way to find your faith, but it's an efficient way to connect with your community. You become in touch with your friends, leaders in your community, and God. There's a plethora of helpful lessons that will help to connect you with your Church, and also how to navigate throughout every day.

"At first, I was hesitant to join Edge, but after a few weeks I became very comfortable around the people and there was no judgment. I learned so much about my faith."

"The stories and videos we watch and listen to impact everyone in small or massive ways. Being with your friends makes the experience even more impactful because everyone that goes believes in God, the Holy Spirit and Jesus. It can make someone who struggles to believe truly understand the gifts and blessings from God."

"I would say to seventh graders that they should come to Edge because it has definitely been the most impactful program. The way the whole Core is so open and how they share their own experiences rather than just following a script is more meaningful."

“Edge is a fun experience that brings all of us together. It gives us a lot of memories and attention that other faith programs don't have.”

“You should go to Edge, pay attention and use these lessons in real life —and say no to distractions.”

“I really appreciated being able to come to the Edge sessions every week. It was a nice way to end a stressful or good week, and have a nice start to a new one. It really helped me create a better relationship with the Lord and really uplifted my spirits. It overall created a better life for me and opened up a side of me I didn't know I had. I really enjoyed being close to people who had the same feelings to the Lord like I did. I really appreciate all the well thought out lessons that we learned as they help me create a great relationship with the Lord.”

“Edge is not like a traditional CCD, it brings it all into a new light. It introduces it in different ways making memorable moments with God and with the whole Edge team.”

“This year at Edge has been incredible. Not only have I greatly improved my faith, but I really enjoyed going to Edge every Sunday. The first time that I came to Edge, I didn't know what to expect. Luckily, the Edge Core was friendly and welcoming. 8th grade Edge is quite different from seventh grade. The biggest change is that it is more personal. Multiple times each session, we break off into our small groups. These people are a mix of eighth graders, high school core members, and adult core members. Throughout the year, we get to know everyone in our group, which makes for very enjoyable, thoughtful, and impactful conversations. Another change is the fact that it takes place on a Sunday. This might affect schedules a little bit, but I believe that it is truly worth it. This year, we have built a strong community with everyone in Edge. This community has strengthened me in many ways, and I am sad that the year is almost over.”

“I would tell a 7th grader that the Edge program is completely worth it. Before Edge, I really was not as religious as I should have been. Now I put all my faith in God, and I have experienced some moments that have proven that nothing is impossible with him. I get so much out of all of the lessons because the Core are so engaging, and Edge is such a welcoming community. This program has completely changed me.”



PARENT TESTIMONIAL: "WHY I SEND MY CHILD TO

SEASIDE EDGE FOR 8TH GRADE FAITH FORMATION

"Hi Parents! I am a regular Hingham mom with 3 regular teens. Like you, my husband and I want to provide our kids with the best opportunities for success and happiness in their future. We prioritize their education, give them opportunities for travel, sports and lots of extracurriculars. One area that I think many of us forget to prioritize is making sure that our kids know Jesus. We have sent them to CCD since they were in 1st grade and they have heard all of the traditional CCD stories, Edge is NOT that.

Edge is an opportunity for your teen to dig a little deeper and get a little more personal and be a little more thoughtful in their relationship with Jesus and their faith. It's a wonderful opportunity for them to meet other teens just like them who have chosen to make their faith an important part of their life.

I have seen personally the benefits of this in my 3 children! My kids have made great friends, and mentors here, and it's given their faith a foundation that I know they can rely on for the rest of their life. We all want to give our children the tools for success and happiness, Edge is an awesome opportunity to give them an "edge" in their spiritual development!"

- Jenn Bastis

HERE'S MORE ABOUT WHAT FORMER 8TH GRADERS GENERALLY SAY ABOUT SEASIDE EDGE FAITH FORMATION

"8th grade Edge was a very personal experience. I learned a lot about God while also being able to relate it to life."

"Edge feels more personal. It's not, "Oh, I have to go to Edge class." It's more like a community."

"Before Edge, I had no faith in God. Now I see Him in everything and everyone."

"I have been really enjoying the sessions. I find the words and ideas of the Edge Core team so inspiring and powerful."

"Since I started coming to Edge, I go to Adoration and Confession much more and I really enjoy time with God."

"Seeing how faithful my friends and everyone here is, it has inspired me to pray more and become closer to God."

"I realize how God fills that empty hole in your heart. My faith has grown so much."

"I learned the importance of praying daily. God can help with any challenges. I have learned so much about how God works in my life."

"My experience at Edge has been super uplifting. It has definitely built my relationship with God stronger."



FORMER 8TH GRADERS' QUOTES ON EDGE
FAITH FORMATION SESSION TOPICS

- Student Quotes are in bullets

Life is Choices: *To remind teens that they make hundreds of choices every day and that every choice has consequences. To help teens become better decision makers, and demonstrate that God's way and the way of the world are very different, and invite teens to choose to walk with God.*

What's Holding You Back? *To demonstrate that all paths are not equal and that there is such a thing as objective truth, and to help teens to recognize who and what is holding them back from living the incredible life God invites them to.*

The Jesus Question: *To teach teens that Jesus and his teachings are the answer to the problems we face in our lives and in the world, and to help them recognize the power and importance of having a personal relationship with Jesus.*

The Prayer Process: *To teach the teens how to pray, that it helps us discover God's will for our lives, and to encourage a daily routine of prayer.*

- “Before I came to Edge, I didn’t look at prayer the way I do now.”
 - “This program has taught me how to pray.”
 - “I now pray before meals and before bed.”
 - “I used to tell people I pray just to please them, but now I actually do it.” ●
- “Tonight in prayer gave me time to slow down and reflect on my relationship with my family and who I want to be with them.”

The Bible: *To demonstrate that the Word of God is a practical and powerful source of inspiration and direction in our lives and to encourage teens to develop the habit of reading the Bible regularly.*

- “In the past, I just heard a bible reading, but I never really thought about it.” ●
- “The part of the passage that stuck out to me was, “Do not worry”. I shouldn't worry. I should put my trust in God and know that He will take care of me.” ●
- “Since we started Edge, I have started praying and now reading the Bible a lot more.”

Relationships: *To establish the purpose of relationships and that the most important relationship in our lives is with God, and demonstrate that developing healthy relationships is essential to the life God is calling us to live.*

- “The purpose of relationships is to help each other be our best selves and to get into heaven.”
- “Be careful with relationships. Who you surround yourself with can affect your faith.”
- “I can always turn to God and he is always there for me.”
- “I'm definitely more connected than last year because I pray more. Having to talk to God is amazing and joyful.”
- “The closer we are to God, the more we will want to stay with Him.”

The Eucharist: *To establish that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist and that it is an incredible gift to each of us through the Church. To teach teens how to enter into a eucharistic relationship with God, and explain the transformational power the Eucharist can have in their lives.*

- “I didn’t know until now that Jesus is really present in the Eucharist. It’s not just a symbol.”
- “I realize that the longer you are away from the Eucharist, the more anxious you will feel.”
- “The Miracle of Buenos Aires video helped me to understand that we are truly consuming the Body of Christ.”

The Holy Spirit: *To demonstrate the practical power of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, and to teach teens to allow the Holy Spirit to guide them in their decisions.* ● “I think the gifts of the Holy Spirit can help strengthen my relationship with God.”

- “I will pray for the Holy Spirit’s gift of Fortitude to help me push through challenges.”
- “I think the gifts of the Holy Spirit can help me to be more forgiving of others.”

The Church: *To teach teens that the Church is part of God’s plan for humanity and to help recognize that the Church can play a powerful role in their lives, and that they play a unique and vital role in the mission of the Church.*

- “My favorite thing about being Catholic is the sense of community.”
- “Be grateful for the opportunities we are given in our Church.”
- “I see how Mass around the world brings community together.”

Made for Mission: *To teach teens that God created them on purpose and for a purpose, and to help them discover the mission God is calling them to.*

- “We are all connected. I learned how one small change (action) can make a big difference.”
- “Love your neighbor, and your neighbor isn't just the person who lives next-door to you.”
- The world becomes a mess when you don’t follow God’s plan for you, which is apparent in aspects of my own life.”
- “God made me for a purpose.”
- “I realize that the goal in this life is to help others and to try to get to heaven.”

Holiness is Possible: *To help teens recognize that there is a connection between happiness and holiness, and to teach teens how to say yes to God and that their yes can make a huge difference.*

- “Holiness is one small act.”
- “God works in our lives every day.”
- “Say yes to God and no to bad decisions.”
- “I’ve learned how God is present in my life and how he always knows what’s best for me.”

Three “Special Sessions” (Parents encouraged to attend): *To experience*

Eucharistic Adoration with Guided Meditations and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. To experience walking the Stations of the Cross with Jesus during Holy Week.

- "After going to Confession, I felt a weight lifted off of my shoulders and much lighter."
- "I just love how relaxing Adoration was and how I got to reflect, and I want to go to Adoration this Thursday."
- "If I spent one hour at Adoration each week, I think I'd feel less stress and anxiety and more peace."
- "Even though going to Confession can be intimidating, it really feels amazing."
- "God can help me no matter how big the problem."
- "I felt like I grew most during confession."
- "I really loved the Stations of the Cross."
- "Jesus suffered and we can use our suffering to help others."
- "We carry small crosses every day and we can ask Jesus for help."

Additional Quotes Illustrating Practical Applications of their Deepening Faith

- "I would be more confident in my decisions with the Holy Spirit." ● "I have never asked God about what I should do, but now, I will." ● "I've learned to turn to God when I feel alone."
- "The Edge Core are amazing and very connected to God which makes me want to be more like that."
- "Since being at Edge, I have started praying more."
- "I fight with my siblings, so I went upstairs and prayed in my room to help me to understand one of my siblings more, and that gave me a lot of peace." ● "I am turning to God now for help instead of handling it on my own." ● "Praying now 10 minutes a day really helps with daily life."
- "I've learned to always involve God in your life decisions."
- "I should pray for the gift of counsel to help me break a bad habit and to improve in my life."
- "I am now appreciating having God to turn to in my everyday life."

