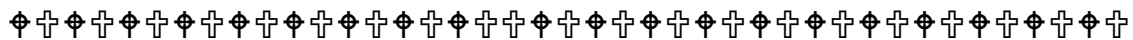


**St. Mary's Catholic Church Elementary
Religious Education**

&

Middle & High School Youth Ministry

Handbook 2016-2017



Welcome to St. Mary's Religious Education & Youth Ministry Programs. This year's Catechetical Sunday is on **September 25th** and the Theme is "**Prayer: The Faith Prayed.**" This is our 1st Sunday of Religious Ed classes as well as Youth Ministry classes. As we continue to welcome and get to know our new pastor, Fr. John Asare, may we all grow in the knowledge and love of Christ!

Sue Ellerbrock
Director of Religious Education/Youth Ministry & Adult Faith Formation

Overview of our Program
Pre-K – 5th Grade

Kindergarten—5th Grade children meet from 10am – 11:15am, between the two Sunday morning Masses of 8:45am and 11:30am. Their classrooms are at the end of the office complex.

All classes begin this year on Sunday, September 25th. We are always in need of parents to be helpers in the classroom as well as catechists. Please let Sue know if you are interested in helping in any way.

Classrooms are marked with the names of all registered children outside their doors.

Please Note: Because our catechists cannot be responsible for your child before 9:55am, do not drop off your child in their classroom until 9:55am to allow the catechist to arrive and set up for class. Also, please pick up your child promptly at 11:15am, allowing the catechists to attend 11:30am mass if desired.

For safety, children will be dismissed only to a parent at the end of class.

We use the classroom model for Religious Education classes for our elementary classes. Our elementary families sponsor the **Caring Closet**, a

cupboard of food and paper goods for those in need, located in the parish office. We collect items for the closet year round. Please place items in the marked basket located in the narthex.

We use one of the top ranked elementary curriculum in our diocese, the ***Pflaum Gospel Weeklies***, centered on the Sunday Gospel. Each child will receive a handout to bring home every Sunday that they have worked on and discussed in class. Please ask your child to see it and discuss it with them.

In addition to this curriculum, we encourage all elementary children to take a copy of ***Magnifikid***, a weekly booklet based on the Sunday readings, to mass with them. These pamphlets are located on the table in the center of the narthex from September thru May. Anyone may pick one up to use during Mass. You are welcome to take it home as well.

Fees

The materials fee for our elementary program is \$35 per child, maximum of \$105 per family. We have an additional fee of \$35 for 2nd grade, the 1st Sacraments year. This price includes the costs of textbooks as well as other supplies. The book fee for middle and high school is \$25. Please contact Sue Ellerbrock if you have any questions about our fees.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

CLOW – Children's Liturgy of the Word is for 4 year olds thru 2nd grade children. We offer this ministry at the both the **8:45am and 11:30am** Sunday morning Masses **IF WE HAVE ENOUGH VOLUNTEERS.**

For CLOW, the children begin at Mass with their families and are dismissed with the CLOW leader to go to the Library after the opening prayer. After hearing the readings of the day, there is a brief reflection time with prayer. They return to Mass at the offertory. We are always in need of more CLOW leaders. Please contact Sue if you would like to be a leader in this powerful ministry to our children.

1st Sacrament Preparation

Our children prepare for the Sacraments of 1st Reconciliation and 1st Eucharist in the 2nd grade. This class is specifically for sacramental preparation. We use the Pflaum 1st Sacraments preparation materials and there are several parent meetings during the year between the Sunday Masses in the Library.

Catechists

Below is the list of our elementary catechists for this year. We thank them as they so generously share their faith with the next generation.

Kindergarten

Eric Jordan
ericmj@vt.edu

John Gogal
igogal96@vt.edu

Abby Bradley
Abbybradley0911@gmail.com

1st Grade

Marie Castillo
Mariemcastillo11@gmail.com

Allison Hase-Tucker
allisonhase@hotmail.com

2nd Grade

Megan Dickhans
megan.dickhans@gmail.com

Monica Cheon
mocha17@vt.edu

Michelle Magnini
magnini@verizon.net

3rd Grade

Myra Blanco
alejandro.i.perez.blanco@gmail.com

Mark Golusky
mgolusky@vti.vt.edu

Michelle Seref
mmh.seref@gmail.com (sub)

4th Grade

Candice Ferrell
cferrell@shentel.net

5th Grade

Mark Owczarski
maowczar@vt.edu

Nicole Kutyn
kutynn@vt.edu

Alexandra Lucas
Alvcas6@vt.edu

Substitute Catechists

Mona Semtner
mgsemtner@yahoo.com

Heather Huxtable
hevans11@yahoo.com

Sunday Morning Coordinator

Kim Keesee continues to be our Sunday Morning Coordinator when I am not on site. She is the coordinator of St. Mary's Little Angels Preschool. She is

available to help catechists, parents, and students on alternating Sunday mornings with me. We are thankful for all she does in our parish!

Middle & High School Youth Ministry

St. Mary's middle and high school youth ministry runs on the same calendar as our elementary religious ed. classes, but with 1st Sunday of the month social and/or service activities. Be watching the bulletin and your email for upcoming events!

Our middle school program uses St. Mary's press curriculum, *The Catholic Connections Handbook* and High School uses *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*. Both are approved books from our diocesan office to help our youth learn and grow in their faith.

Our middle and high school programs meet from 1 – 2:30pm on Sundays, preceded by lunch following the 11:30am mass. Parents are asked to consider volunteering for one of the ongoing ministries that help to keep this program running smoothly.

Youth Ministry Team

This year, we have a large Youth Ministry Team to work with our middle and high school students. We encourage all parents to partner with us in our program.

6th Grade

Erica Van Doren--Ericav96@vt.edu

Cyndi Nguyen--tcnguyen@vt.edu

Leah Bianchi--leah.bianchi.15@gmail.com

7th Grade

Zach Scandalis--Scandalis.zachary@gmail.com

Teri Wysocki--teriwyssocki@alumni.nd.edu

Kerry Maguschak--kerry55055@gmail.com

8th Grade

Robyn Czar--mjczar@netzero.net

Clarissa Traub--clarissatraub@gmail.com

Bryan Cotellese--bryan.cotellese@gmail.com

9th Grade

Katherine Burke--ksb2017@vt.edu

Candido Makuni--candymukuni@gmail.com

10th Grade

Jill Sible--siblej@vt.edu Also **High School Leader**

Will Rone--wsrone@gmail.com

Andrew Moyer--amoyer9@gmail.com

Large Group Catechists

Deacon Mike Ellerbrock--mebrock@vt.edu

Fr. John Asare—pastor@stmarysblacksburg.org

Middle School Leader

Bob Canfield--bob.canfield@alumni.duke.edu

Classroom Helper/Float

Diane Agud—dagud@math.vt.edu

High School Leader

Jill Sible—siblej@vt.edu

Theology of the Body

Jean Duetsch--jrduetsch@hotmail.com

Confirmation

Confirmation in the Diocese of Richmond is offered for high school sophomores (10th grade) - seniors (12th grade).

We participate in the New River Valley program including:

St. Mary's-Blacksburg, St. Jude- Radford, Holy Spirit-Christiansburg, and Holy Family-Pearisburg Parishes.

The program meets once a month beginning on Sept. 22nd with a parent and candidate orientation meeting at St. Mary's. The classes meet at the different churches in the NRV. This is a separate program from the Youth Ministry program, but all candidates are required to attend the High School Youth Ministry program at their church the year they are preparing to receive this sacrament. There is no charge for the program except the fee to attend the Confirmation retreat, on November 12th at Our Lady of Nazareth Church in Roanoke.

Elementary Religious Ed Calendar (Youth Ministry will be forthcoming)

SEPTEMBER

25 CATECHITICAL SUNDAY—1ST DAY OF CLASS!

OCTOBER

2 Class

9 Class

16 Class

23 Class

30 Class

NOVEMBER

6 Class

13 Class

20 Class
27 **No Class--Happy Thanksgiving! 1st Sunday of Advent**

DECEMBER

4 Class
10 1st Reconciliation
11 Class
18 **No Class**
25 **No Class—Merry Christmas!**

JANUARY 2017

1 **No Class**
8 Class
15 Class
22 Class
29 Class

FEBRUARY

5 Class
12 Class
19 Class
26 Class

MARCH

1 **Ash Wednesday**
5 Class
12 Class
19 Class
26 Class

APRIL

2 Class
9 Class
16 **No Class—Happy Easter!**
23 Class
30 Last Class

May 6th at the 5pm Mass is our 1st Holy Communion Liturgy

Discipline policy

St. Mary's Catholic Community believes in promoting an atmosphere where children and young adults can mature and develop in a spiritual manner through love and mutual respect. Teachers and adult leaders can best fulfill their roles through methods that increase self-esteem, a sense of responsibility, and independence. Teachers are expected to understand the developmental tasks of the children with whom they are working.

Guiding methods will vary according to the child's age and development, but may include open communication of values and expectations, positive reinforcement, and time-out. If a student is disruptive in class on an occasional basis, the student may be asked to leave the classroom and spend the rest of the class with another adult leader or the Director of Religious Education. If the disruptions continue to occur, the parents will be contacted, informed of the problem, and asked for their assistance.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Incident Weather Cancellations

During the school year we will cancel Religious Ed. Classes if the roads become dangerous due to snow and/or ice. Class cancellations will be posted on the WSLC Channel 10 TV station by 8:30am for the elementary classes. It is often difficult to call early in the morning, but if there is snow or ice on your road, you can assume that classes are cancelled.

We want to thank you for your continued support and we hope to get to know all the children, youth, and families in our programs. If you have any ideas and/or skills to make this year's Religious Ed. program a better experience, please let us know! You can email me, **Sue Ellerbrock, anytime at formation@stmarysblacksburg.org or call 552-1091**. Everyone's gifts and talents are needed and appreciated.

Sue Ellerbrock, Director of Religious Education, Youth Ministry & Adult Faith Formation

Christian Formation Mission Statement

- We are committed to helping all people of all ages develop a personal, passionate, and lasting relationship with Jesus Christ.
- We are committed to developing a community of believers that are life-long learners who walk in the Spirit of the Lord.
- We are committed to helping all people become dedicated to furthering their love and understanding of Word, Worship, and Service and Community.
- We are committed to helping all people in their process of discernment and mission as they go forth to follow in the footsteps of Christ.