

ST. MICHAEL PARISH



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FAMILY HANDBOOK PRESCHOOL - GRADE 5 2016-2017

ST. MICHAEL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE
~ Faith Center ~
317 W. Willow Ave.
Wheaton, IL 60187
630-682-3650 (phone)
630-690-3324 (fax)

Welcome Parents!

We are pleased that you have chosen to enroll your child in Religious Education.

Religious Education classes alone cannot instill faith in your child, nor is it the purpose of this program to do so. A program of this nature is meant to SUPPORT and NURTURE the faith that you share with your child in the home. When your child was baptized, the Church community promised to assist you in the responsibility of being the vital link between your child and our God. We can assist you in bringing your child to faith by providing formal catechetical instruction, by modeling a Christian lifestyle, and by leading your child to experiences of faith in Sacramental celebrations and stewardship. But the values and attitudes established in your home actually define the faith of your child. Your child is being formed by YOUR FAITH, the faith which you live in your home.

St. Michael's Religious Education staff and catechists take the commitment to work with you seriously. We will pray with you and for you, as together we share responsibility for the spiritual development of each child. We rely on your support in our effort to pass on Catholic tradition and values to your children.

May God guide and bless all of us on our journey of faith,
St. Michael's Religious Education Staff
Fr. Dan Hoehn, Pastor

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE HOURS



September through May

Monday - Thursday	9:30 - 4:00
Friday	9:30 - 1:00
Saturday	CLOSED
Sunday	8:00 - 12:00 (when class is in session)

The office will also be open Mondays until 6 p.m. & Wednesday evenings from 7-8:15 p.m.
when classes are in session.

June

Monday - Friday	1 st - 17 th	9:00 - 3:00
Tuesday and Thursday	21 th - 30 th	9:00 - 3:00

July

Building closed for maintenance. Registration can be mailed or brought to the Parish Office.
Any questions please call 630-682-3650, leave a message and your call will be returned.

August

Tuesday and Thursday	2 nd - 11 th	9:00 - 3:00	Please call ahead for additional hours.
Monday -Friday	15 th - 31 st	9:00 - 3:00	

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF

The Religious Education Office is located in the Faith Center at 317 W. Willow Avenue. Please call ahead to schedule an appointment if you need to talk with someone specifically.

Preschool/Kindergarten has its own Coordinator to address the special needs of this age group. Catechists teach lessons that revolve around the fundamentals of our faith stated in terms the children can understand and remember. Songs, games and crafts are used creatively to reinforce God's goodness and love and to introduce the children to our great Catholic traditions.

Jen Hickey, Preschool Coordinator

E-Mail: jenhickey@stmichaelcommunity.org

Phone: 630-462-5046

Grades 1-5 are under the guidance of the Director of Religious Education. Catechists teach an appreciation and understanding of Catholic faith, traditions and practices. There is a strong emphasis on liturgy and the ways in which we are enriched by Scripture. Catechists also offer students a variety of prayer experiences and opportunities for Christian service to others. Although Reconciliation and Eucharist are first celebrated in the 2nd grade, there is a focus on understanding and celebrating the fullness of the Sacraments in all the grades.

Tammy Croll, Director of Religious Education

E-mail: tcroll@stmichaelcommunity.org

Phone: 630-462-5043

Middle School strives to support the sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. Catechists and Shepherds walk this journey of continued faith formation culminating in the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation in 8th grade. The many components of these classes provide time for catechesis, social gatherings, liturgy, and service.

Cathy Swanson, Middle School Coordinator

E-mail: cathyswanson5044@gmail.com

Phone: 630-462-5044

Youth Ministry for Grades 9-12: Our goal at Youth Ministry is to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today, drawing them to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community. It is our hope that this will support and companion them into their Catholic adulthood.

Theresa Simeo, Director of Youth Ministry

E-mail: tsimeo@stmichaelcommunity.org

Phone: 630-462-5047

College and Adult: Our outreach is focused on bringing converts into the Catholic Church through the RCIA process. We also focus on formation of adults within the Parish through our Catholicism 101 class, our various adult education classes, and our speaker series. We provide training to the parish in the form of baptismal preparation and training for volunteers. Finally, we facilitate a young adult group for college and post college age young adults who are looking for a Catholic community and want to grow in their faith.

Landon DePasquale, Director of New Evangelization

E-mail: ldepasquale@stmichaelcommunity.org

Phone: 630-462-5045

CLASS SESSIONS

(Please refer to the Religious Education Calendar for specific dates.)

Preschool through Grade 5		
<u>SESSION A</u> Sunday Morning 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	<u>SESSION B</u> Sunday Morning 10:20 a.m. - 11:50 a.m.	<u>SESSION C</u> Monday Afternoon 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Junior High	
Wednesday	
6th & 7th grade 4:30 to 6 pm or 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.	8th grade 6:30 to 8:15 p.m.

High School Youth Ministry	
Sunday nights	Tuesday nights
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Evening 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., Noon

As Catholics, students are expected to attend Mass and Religious Education classes every week. Even though our Preschool thru 6th grade classes are taught on Sunday mornings, the children are still obligated to attend Sunday Mass. The classroom experience is enhanced when the child attends Mass with his family as is the Mass experience enhanced by the classroom teaching.

Curriculum Meeting and Open House - Sunday September 11 & Monday September 12, 2016 during regular scheduled class time.

While children are in class, parents will meet in the Parish Center for an overview of the coming year with the Director, Tammy Croll. During the last 30 minutes of class we will have an Open House session. Parents are invited to meet each of their children's catechists and review the plans for the year with each child.

CATECHISTS

Our teachers in the Religious Education program are called CATECHISTS. A catechist is “one who echoes the Word of God.” Our Catechists are all volunteers who freely share their time, talent and faith with the children of our parish. Please support them in prayer through the coming year and offer your help any time they need assistance in the classroom.

CONTACTING CATECHISTS

We ask parents desiring to contact a Catechist to please call the Religious Education Office at (630) 682-3650 and leave a message for them. Home phone numbers are not given out without the Catechist’s permission.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

The St. Michael Community celebrates our unity by bringing the school and the Religious Education families together for the celebrations of First Eucharist and Confirmation.

The Sacrament of First Holy Eucharist is celebrated in 2nd Grade. A two-year preparation period is necessary for celebration of these Sacraments. First Reconciliation is celebrated during regular Religious Education class time and First Eucharist is celebrated in May. Parents are expected to participate in their child’s sacramental preparation. Meetings are held to help parents better prepare their child(ren) for the sacred Sacraments.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

It is important for parents and Catechists to support and encourage each other. Catechists supplement, in a more formal way, the education in faith, which occurs informally in the home. Please be supportive of Religious Education in the following ways:

- Please check your child’s Religious Education folder each week after class for weekly communications. On-going information about the Religious Education program will be found in the Sunday Bulletin and **in e-mail notices throughout the year.** (It is imperative that parents provide the Religious Education Office with a valid e-mail address as email is our primary means of communicating.)
- Attend Mass with your child(ren) on Sundays and Holy Days and receive the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation (Confession) frequently. Your example speaks volumes.
- Join your child in participating in the service opportunities offered in the parish and in his/her Religious Education class.
- Show an interest each week in the activities happening in your child’s class. Invest a few minutes each week to review the material your child covered while in class and to check for homework assignments that need to be completed and turned in on time.
- Introduce yourself to your child’s Catechist and stay in contact throughout the school year. Communicate any concerns you may have with how your child is doing and also let them know when everything is going great.
- Support our parish family with your prayers, the gift of your time and financial support.

ATTENDANCE

Please call the Religious Education Office at 630-682-3650 to report your child's absence. Calls can be made any time during the week. If no one is in the office when you call, please leave your name, your child's name, grade, time class meets and reason for absence on the voice mail. (We appreciate it if you would speak clearly and spell unusual last names.) You may also email us at reodesk@stmichaelcommunity.org with the absence. Again, please provide the child's first and last name, grade, time class meets and catechist. If no call or email is received for a child prior to the beginning of class, the parents will be called in compliance with Diocesan policy.

WEEKLY CHECKLIST

Each student is asked to bring the following supplies to class each week: **Two-pocket folder and Textbook (provided), Pencil or pen, blue drawstring bag and a willingness to learn.**

HOMEWORK/FAMILY PAGES

Occasionally, a homework assignment may be given by the Catechist, especially in the upper grades. These assignments will serve as an extension of the lesson covered in class. Your support in sharing our Christian faith and helping your child complete these activities is appreciated.

MISSED LESSONS

If a student is absent, he/she will be expected to make-up the lesson at home. Parents are asked to review materials with their child and see that the missing lessons are completed and returned to the catechist upon their return to class. (A schedule of lessons for the year will be in your child's folder.) When possible, please plan family vacations on days when there are no classes scheduled.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Evaluations will take place twice a year for students in grades 1-6. The evaluations will be recorded and sent home to parents in January and at the last class. These reports indicate how successfully certain goals are being met by the students. They are not meant as an evaluation of your child's personal faith.

TARDINESS / EARLY DISMISSAL

Classes begin promptly at their scheduled time. Starting class times are: Sunday 8:30 a.m. and 10:20 a.m., and Monday 4:30 p.m. Students are expected to be in their seats, ready to go, before the beginning of class. Please respect the Catechists and Aides, who have given so much of their time preparing each lesson, by arriving on time.

If your student arrives late for class, please check in with the Attendance Volunteers or notify the office at 630-682-3650; otherwise parents may receive a phone call reporting the student absent. (This can cause confusion as to whether or not the student is in class or is missing.) A student can only be dismissed early if he/she has a written notice from a parent/guardian. The notice should be shown to the classroom Catechist and also to the Attendance Volunteer before leaving the building.

DISCIPLINE

Thoughtfulness and consistency is our guide for discipline in the Religious Education program. A conscious effort in resolving any substantial or ongoing problem will be taken immediately within the classroom setting by the Catechist. Respectful behavior, representing the Christian ideals of our parish, is expected at all times. Disrespectful language or behavior will **not** be tolerated. Students will treat the property of St. Michael School and Faith Center with respect. Students must dress appropriately at all times. **Valuables, electronic items and toys are to be left at home.**

Behavior problems in the classroom will first be handled by the Catechist. If the behavior problem persists, the Director, Coordinator, parents and child (when appropriate) will be asked to become involved in correcting the situation.

SPECIAL NEEDS / MEDICATIONS

Please contact the Religious Education office, at 630-682-3650, to help us facilitate the best experience possible for all our children with special needs. Also note that Religious Education staff and Catechists may not dispense medications. If a child requires medicine, a parent or guardian should dispense it or make other arrangements.

FACEBOOK

St. Michael Religious Education has a page on Facebook. "Like" this page by searching for "St. Michael Wheaton Religious Education". This page is meant for informational purposes, which we will use for emergency closings, meeting reminders, etc.

TEXT MESSAGING

This year we will be implementing a text messaging alert and reminder program. In order to do this, we will be asking for your cell phone provider information to allow our system to send you messages. Regular text messaging fees will apply. You will be given a form on the first day of class to share this information OR to OPT OUT if you prefer NOT to receive these messages. PLEASE NOTE that we WILL NOT be using a call system this year, so texting, Facebook or postings on our church website will be the modes of communication we use to get this information to you.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In case of an emergency including hazardous winter road conditions, extreme cold, or tornados, Religious Education classes may be canceled. The decision to cancel class will be made by the Director of Religious Education or the Preschool Coordinator. We use texting, Facebook and our church website to inform our families of closings and other important announcements. Do not assume that your child's class will be canceled just because another day's class was canceled.

TRAFFIC SAFETY GUIDELINES

The safety of our children is an important concern for all who participate in the Religious Education Program at St. Michael's. In order to ensure a safe and orderly procedure for dropping off and picking up students, please follow these directions carefully:

Drop off and Pick up Procedure for 3 year old preschool thru 2nd Grade - A parent, guardian or an older sibling is required to drop off and pick up children 3 years old through 2nd grade **at the classroom door**.

Your cooperation in following these procedures will provide for the safety of your child/ren. Please be patient, cautious, and courteous to your fellow parishioners and volunteers.

We need your help!

Please call if you can help with traffic patrol during arrival or dismissal times.

SECURITY ISSUES

All Coordinators, Catechists, Aides, Office Volunteers, Drop Off/Pick Up Monitors and Crossing Guards will be given a name badge to wear at all times while in the building for security and safety reasons. We therefore ask that all classroom visitors report to the office prior to any class visitation. All students should carry the folder given to them at the beginning of the school year to each class. The label on the outside cover of the folder serves as their Religious Education ID. If you lose your name badge or folder, we ask that you request a new one from the Religious Education Office.

Students Assigned to classrooms in St. Michael School:

In order to continue to provide a secure environment for the students, there will be limited access to the school building. All doors will be locked at all times and will be accessible only through Door 1 by a keypad code given to families.

Students Assigned to classrooms in the Faith Center:

The front door and doors leading to each floor of the building will be locked at all times and accessible by a keypad code given to families.

PARKING

Please be aware there is no parking in the *Second Hand Rose* parking lot at any time or *West Suburban Bank* parking lots AT ANY TIME. Also, parking is only permitted on the **east side of Wheaton Ave**. Please **do not park on the west side of Wheaton Ave** for drop off or pick up as you may be ticketed or towed by the Wheaton Police Department.

OTHER GUIDELINES

- Students must walk while in the building at all times.
- Students are required to wait outside the classroom until the Catechist/ Aide has arrived.
- No student should be dropped off more than 10 minutes prior to the start of their class.
- Please be prompt in picking up your child after class ends. If you are delayed, they will be brought to the Religious Education Office, located on the 3rd floor of the Faith Center. Please inform your child's Catechist if someone other than the usual person will be picking up your child after class.

DIOCESAN INFORMATION

So that our parish is in compliance with the Diocese of Joliet and the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People we ask all families to refer to the following documents:

- Revised Diocese of Joliet Pastoral Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors
(<http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/siteimages/chancerytribunal/OYCP/PolicyRegardingSexualAbuseofMinors2013.pdf>)
- Diocese of Joliet Standards of Behavior for Those Working with Minors
(http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/siteimages/reo/Safe_Environment/Parent_Guide_to_Preventing_Child_Sexual_Abuse_rev_8.25.14.pdf)
- Parent Guide to Understanding and Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Brochure
(http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/siteimages/reo/Safe_Environment/Parent_Guide_to_Preventing_Child_Sexual_Abuse_rev_8.25.14.pdf)
- Internet Safety for Teens
(http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/siteimages/reo/Safe_Environment/Internet_Safety_Brochurer_rev_July_2014.pdf)