

Hope you are having a great summer! We are already planning for the upcoming school year. Enclosed is some information you will need.

1. 2011-2012 RE Calendar
2. Schedule for Religious Education classes and Liturgies
3. Guidelines for Religious Education
4. Registration Forms for Religious Education
5. Registration Forms for the Parish

### **Religious Education Class Schedule 2011-2012**

- 1) September 25
- 2) October 2
- 3) October 16
- 4) October 23
- 5) October 30
- 6) November 6
- 7) November 13
- 8) November 20
- 9) December 4
- 10) December 11
- 11) December 18
- 12) January 8
- 13) January 22
- 14) January 29
- 15) February 5
- 16) February 12
- 17) February 26
- 18) March 4
- 19) March 11
- 20) March 18
- 21) March 25
- 22) April 1
- 23) April 22
- 24) April 29
- 25) May 6

### **Guidelines for Religious Education**

Our program has five major areas:

- A. Special Liturgies
- B. Home Sessions
- C. Parent Sessions
- D. Student Sessions
- E. Community Gatherings

The cost this year for Religious Education is: \$60 for the first child, \$50 for the second and \$40 for the third

### **OUR PARISH**

Our emphasis is on the parish community. The hope of the future is in your hands. Being present is 90% of life. If you are not there how can we lead the future generation? We are part of a living tradition centered on the Mass. - Service to the community is being present to each other for social events, religious events and participation in the family of St. Brigid's.

**SCHEDULE FOR MASS WITH EACH CLASS (additional dates to be announced)**

- 1) September 18 Ice Cream Social/Meet and Greet Teachers/Teacher Blessing
- 2) November 6 Grades K and Grade 1
- 3) November 20 Grade 3
- 4) December 3 First Reconciliation Saturday 10:00 AM
- 5) December 24 Children's Liturgy
- 6) January 29 Grade 2
- 7) February 5 Grade 4
- 8) February 26 Grade 5 & 6
- 9) March 11 Grade 7
- 10) March 25 Grade 8
- 11) April 22 Grade 9
- 12) May 6 First Communion Sunday 10:30 AM

**VACATION DAYS – no classes**

October 9 Columbus Day  
November 27 Thanksgiving Vacation  
December 25 Christmas Vacation  
January 1 New Years  
January 15 Martin Luther King Vacation  
February 19 Winter Recess Vacation  
April 8 – Easter Sunday  
April 15 – Spring Break

**Holy Week & Easter - the most important week in the Liturgical Calendar**

**PARISH EVENTS**

Golf Tournament August 17  
Parish Picnic August 28  
Confirmation September 17  
Teacher Blessing/Ice Cream Social/Meet and Greet Teachers September 18  
First Day of Religious Education September 25  
Blessing of the Animals October 1  
Halloween Party October 30  
Holy Day – All Saints Day – November 1  
All Souls Day – November 2  
Lasagna Dinner November 6  
Holiday Bazaar November 12  
Thanksgiving Baskets for Shut-Ins November 13  
First Sunday of Advent November 27  
First Reconciliation December 3 Saturday 10:00 AM  
Christmas Party/Giving Tree December 4  
Holy Day – Immaculate Conception – December 8  
RE Christmas Party during RE December 18  
Holiday Open House/Decorate Church December 18  
Christmas Pageant December 24  
Mardi Gras Reverse Raffle – February 9  
Valentine/Anniversary Mass February 12  
Ash Wednesday February 22  
Passover Celebration March 18  
Easter Baskets for Shut-Ins March 18  
5K Road Race March 31  
Palm Sunday /Pancake Breakfast April 1  
Holy Thursday April 5  
Good Friday April 6  
Holy Saturday April 7

Easter Sunday/New Life Petting Zoo April 8

First Communion May 6

### **Five Major Elements**

A. Special Liturgies for each class including First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation as well as participation of each class at Mass.

B. Home Sessions are when families and classes reflect on the main themes that connect the liturgical calendar to active discipleship and choose to take action in response to the themes. Many actions are already traditions at St Brigid's, such as the Thanksgiving Food Drive, the December Stop and Shop Survival Center Drive, and the Lasagna Dinner for the Needy. And of course the Soup Kitchen of Amherst, and the Giving Tree.

C. Parent Sessions: when you talk with your child about the theology and sociology of the sacraments.

D. Student Sessions: Religious Education on Sundays.

E. Community Gatherings, such as the Christmas Eve Pageant, Easter New Life Petting Zoo, Parish Picnic, the Ice Cream Social and the Lasagna Dinner for the Needy.

### **The Program Guidelines**

1. Family Oriented - The word "YOU" in the church refers to the plural and not the singular. "YOU" are the community, not one person. "You are the salt of the earth" refers to the plural form of a community. The same refers to a parish community. "You are part of the Catholic Church" refers to the community and the family of a parish. In religious education the emphasis is on the community and not just the classroom. We are part of a living tradition centered on the Mass. Service to the community is being present to each other for social events and religious events at St. Brigid's.
2. We pass our religious faith on to the next generation in our homes, in our community and in the parish. Parents have the primary responsibility in educating their family in the ways of faith. Our programs are designed to assist and not replace parents in their role as teachers of the faith. Our emphasis is on the entire parish not the classroom.
3. Our program depends on parents and volunteers. We need about twenty catechists and assistants for about one hundred students from grades Kindergarten to Twelfth Grade.
4. Classes - In general pupils should be in the same grade in religion class as they are in public school. Parents should contact their teacher prior to the beginning of the school year if their child has any health problems or special learning needs. The pastor makes any changes in classes.
5. Calendar - During the year some dates on the calendar need to be changed because of special events or the weather. It is essential for you to read the Sunday bulletin on a weekly basis for the most up-to-date information.
6. Sacramental Preparation - First Reconciliation and First Communion are celebrated in the Second Grade. Preparation for the sacraments is a two-year process beginning in the First Grade. Parents are responsible for making sure the student begins the two-year program. (Otherwise they wait until the Third Grade)
7. Confirmation is celebrated in the spring of the Eleventh Grade. Participation in the Tenth and Eleventh program is required to participate in Confirmation preparation. All Confirmation candidates are expected to participate in five mini-courses (three the first year and two courses during the second year), -- a mini-course runs for six classes - four general sessions (two each year); two retreats (one each year) and service projects (twenty hours). These total fewer hours than the "traditional" classroom hours. Participation in weekly worship goes without saying (Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day). Students who do not meet the requirements should contact the pastor
8. Each grade (K- 12) has a take home exam to help you know what the curriculum is and bring you in contact with the teacher and the things they need to know.
9. Adults not in high school, seeking to prepare for Confirmation should contact the office.
10. Parents are responsible for providing transportation for the students. Parents are reminded not to interrupt teachers or disrupt the class by being consistently late or leaving for early pick-ups. Early pick-ups are not permitted for sports.

11. Respect for the volunteers is expected at all times. Students who are not well behaved will be asked to leave.
12. Please do not send a student who is ill or unable to fully participate in the class.
13. Parents should know at which exit they would meet the student. Safety is essential and must be emphasized by the parents to their child. No student should wait for a ride.
14. Special Masses will be celebrated for each class level. Parents should check with the teacher, calendar and bulletin for the date, time and role your student will need to know for these liturgies. Each class prepares at least one Mass a year.
15. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers directly. If there is a personal emergency or a question concerning cancellations, please contact your teacher.
16. Need a ride? Mass on Sunday is an obligation of faith and a commandment of God. Parents are to see that their son or daughter attends Mass on a weekly basis. Living our faith must not be sacrificed for sporting events or "sleeping in on Sundays".
17. Occasionally, a teacher is ill and needs the assistance of a parent in class. Your help will be greatly appreciated. Talent in art, preparing the students for special Masses, typing or secretarial work is a way for parents to assist their son or daughter's teacher. Any talent you are willing to share with us will be greatly appreciated.
18. Religious education is a joint effort. Parents' interest and support are vital. Parents should take the initiative and inquire about what is being done in the class. Parents should review with their children what was discussed in the day's class. If you ask your child "what did you learn or talk about in today's class?" parents should not be satisfied with the answer "nothing". Encourage your student to talk about the topics covered, what activities were done, what vocabulary was learned and what the teacher asked the student to do during the week.
19. Attendance to every class is required. You must call the teacher if you are not coming to class. Make up work will be provided. Please call the teacher directly, if you are unable to attend. Help us to make each class important.

### **Class plans, goals, and activities**

Each class has its own curriculum and goals for the year. Taken together, the goals introduce young people in age-appropriate stages to Life in Christ through the Roman Catholic community.

True to the Roman Catholic tradition, we reflect on Jesus' ministry and seek to imitate his way in everyday life. We engage with Works of Mercy. To do so, we contribute and bring companionship to the excluded; comfort to the sorrowful; and sustenance to the materially hungry, in various activities throughout the year.

### **Community Gatherings**

The Parish Picnic, Ice Cream Social, Lasagna Dinner, Christmas Pageant, Easter New Life Petting Zoo and First Holy Communion are all part of the gatherings at St. Brigid's - Also, there is daily Mass, and Thursday Adoration - A Day of Reflection.

### **Prayers & Resources**

- 1) The Lord's Prayer
- 2) Hail Mary
- 3) Ten Commandments
- 4) Beatitudes
- 5) Glory to the Father
- 6) Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- 7) Fruits **of** the Spirit
- 8) Act of Contrition
- 9) Prayer **of** Sorrow
- 10) Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy
- 11) Precepts **of** the Church
- 12) Apostle Creed
- 13) Nicene Creed

### **Sacraments**

Also true to tradition, we consider Sacraments as actions in the world: God expressing God's self in our midst. And we seek to nourish our Life in Christ especially in the Celebration of the Eucharist. So, in addition to more social-justice-oriented actions, families and class groups should expect to be active in reception of

the Sacraments.

### **Mass Participation**

Each Class leads the community with greeters, lectors, singing and gathering around the table of the Lord as Christ did with his disciples.

### **When, where and with whom:**

There are a total of 25 classes throughout the school year. Kindergarten through Grade 6 - Children gather with catechists from 9:15-10:15 Sunday mornings as scheduled. Grade 7-12 - Sunday Evenings at 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

### **KINDERGARTEN**

God Made the World

#### **Text:**

“God Made the World” (Sadlier “We Believe” series)

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

#### **Key words for the year**

Creation; grace; looking after one another; praying; looking after the world; God; Jesus; seasons of the liturgical calendar.

#### **Elements of the class session**

During class we pass through a check-in, then prayer. Every week we share the thought for the day and color a page relating to the weekly church readings. Helping the children to enter into a reading imaginatively, we convey a single-sentence lesson about the readings. We follow with reading and discussing a chapter from our workbook. We also make time for a small snack after saying a blessing. During this time we encourage the children to share things that are important to them. We end the hour with a craft or play pertaining to what we learned that day.

Doctrinally, through the year we introduce kindergarteners to life, creation, Mary, Jesus, and Church. We also explore the main themes of the year. Sometimes we talk about ways those themes are already alive with us, our families, and friends. Other times, we talk about our hopes and plans. With our catechists' guidance we may make an action during class like rehearsing for the Christmas Eve Pageant or making prayer cards.

#### **Goals**

At the end of the year students should have a sense of belonging in the Catholic community and an appreciation for Jesus' love. Kindergarteners should also have a sense of belonging in the Church and of their relationship with Jesus and Mary. They should know how to make the sign of the cross and pray the Glory Be. We pray they will have a healthy, lively sense of Jesus' love for us.

### **GRADE 1**

God Loves Us: We are in Relationship with God and Creation

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

#### **Text**

"God Loves Us" (Sadlier "We Believe" series)

#### **Key words for the year**

Creation, Bible, Blessed Trinity, prayer, Sign of the Cross, Christmas, Holy Family, trust, commandments, apostles, Lord's Prayer, temple, Easter Sunday, Pentecost, Church, parish, worship, pastor, Sacrament, Baptism, grace, peacemaker, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Mass, Gospel reading, altar, saints.

**Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the children through a routine of prayer, picture making, and stories. Doctrinally, through the year we introduce children to God Creator and Father; the Trinity; Jesus and Relationship; the Holy Spirit and the Church; Sacraments; and Stewardship. We play games that show our mastery of the vocabulary and ideas of the week. We talk about the themes that Christ has introduced to the families. Sometimes we talk about plans for action having to do with the themes. And, every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out.

**Goals**

At the end of the year first graders should have a sense of belonging to St Brigid's, know how to make the sign of the cross, and pray the Lord's Prayer with greater understanding than ever. We will encourage them to become familiar with the key words for the year. We pray they will have a healthy sense of responsible, graced relationship with God and neighbor.

**GRADE 2**

Jesus Shares God's Life and We May Deepen Our Relationship with Jesus

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

**Text:**

"Jesus Shares God's Life" (Sadlier "We Believe" Series) and "The Gift of Reconciliation" and "The Gift of Eucharist" (both Silver, Burdett, Ginn Sacramental Series)

**Key words for the year**

Holy Family, divine, Blessed Trinity, disciples, Apostles, Resurrection, Church, Catholics, Parishes (and Centers like ours), faith, worship, Sacrament, grace, Original Sin, Baptism, Confirmation, anointing with oil, Bible, Old Testament, New Testament, Gospels, commandments, great commandments, free will, sin, mortal sins, venial sins, mercy, penance and Reconciliation, conscience, contrition, confession, penance, absolution, Last Supper, Eucharist, Mass, Holy Communion, assembly, Liturgy of the Word, Psalm, homily, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Eucharistic Prayer, Blessed Sacrament, Tabernacle, called by God, pastor, bishops, diocese, pope, prayer, temple, saints, procession, new commandment.

**Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the children through a routine of prayer, conversation, games, and stories. Doctrinally, through the year we introduce children to Jesus' gift of the Church and our participation in the life of the Church including Baptism, Reconciliation and the Eucharist. We talk about the themes that Christ has introduced to the families, plans for action having to do with the themes. Sometimes our activities are based on those plans. For instance, we may act on the theme 'incarnation' by working with The Giving Tree. Every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out. And we prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

**Goals**

At the end of the year second graders should have a sense of being invited into a particular relationship with Jesus Christ, have an age-appropriate understanding and practice of the Sign of the Cross, the Lord's Prayer, the Act of Contrition, and the Hail Mary. They should have a working knowledge of the key words for the year. Second graders should be prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation by Advent and the Sacrament of Communion by the end of the year. We pray they will feel ready to respond to God's offer in well-informed freedom and with confidence.

**GRADE 3**

We Are the Church

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and

nurturing environment.

### **Text**

"We Are the Church" (Sadlier "We Believe" series)

### **Key words for the year**

Blessed Trinity, incarnation, prophet, repent, public ministry, disciples, apostles, Bible, Kingdom of God, faith, crucified, Resurrection, Second coming, heaven, Last judgment, mission, Ascension, Pentecost, Church, Christians, Acts of the Apostles, Gospel, martyr, bishops, dioceses, pope, Marks of the Church, Apostles' Creed, justice, prayer, synagogue, liturgy, pilgrimages, parish, pastor, deacon, vocation, lay people, vows, Sacrament, grace, Sacraments of Christian Initiation, Original sin, Passover, Eucharist, Mass, sacrifice, assembly, Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Concluding Rite, sin, conscience, Oil of the sick, eternal Life, funeral Mass, covenant, ecumenism, rite, saints, communion of saints, Immaculate Conception, Assumption, parable, miracles

### **Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the youngsters through a routine of prayer, conversation, projects and stories. Doctrinally, through the year we introduce children to Jesus, our friend; the ways we pray at St. Brigid's; the Bible; and the Marks of the Church. We play games that show our mastery of the vocabulary and ideas of the week. We talk about the themes that Christ has introduced to the families. Sometimes we talk about plans for action having to do with the themes. Sometimes our activities are based on those plans. For instance, we may decide to act on the theme 'in the world but not of it, counterculture' by choosing to help decorate the chapel for the Lenten season. And, every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out.

### **Goals**

At the end of the year third graders should have an age-appropriate grasp and practice of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed and the Hail Mary. They should be prepared to say grace before meals. They should have a working knowledge of the key words for the year. We pray they will feel they are whole participants in the wider life of the Catholic Church and in particular St. Brigid's Parish.

### **GRADE 4**

God's Law Guides Us and We Respond

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

### **Text**

"God's Law Guides Us" (Sadlier "We Believe" series)

### **Key words for the year**

Incarnation, disciples, Blessed Trinity, Original sin, Savior, Church, grace, peace, Beatitudes, Kingdom of God, justice, mission, Free will, sin, temptation, Mortal sin, Venial sin, conscience, examination of conscience, penitent, absolution, covenant, Ten Commandments, human rights, prayer, worship, idolatry, Psalm, reverence, bless, sacred Sabbath, synagogue, Holy Day of Obligation, Corporal Works of Mercy, Spiritual Works of Mercy, Mass, assembly, Liturgy of the Word, homily, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Eucharistic prayer, consecration, domestic church, human dignity, virtue, chastity, stewards of creation, martyrs, witnesses, covet, modesty, envy greed, poor in spirit, liturgy, Sacrament, Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Fruits of the Holy Spirit, parish, pastor, deacon, diocese, bishops, precepts of the Church, theological virtues, cardinal virtues.

### **Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the young people through a routine of prayer, conversation, projects and stories. Doctrinally, through the year we introduce the young people to Jesus: the way, truth and life; sin; conscience; penance and reconciliation; God's Law, with attention to the Ten Commandments; that we are strengthened by Eucharist; growing in holiness; and the call to discipleship. We talk about the themes that Christ has introduced to the families. Sometimes we talk about plans for action having to do with the themes. Sometimes our activities are based on those plans. For instance, we may decide to act on the theme "communion of saints" by encouraging

others to attend the Feast of All Souls Mass with us. And, every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out.

### **Goals**

At the end of the year fourth graders should have an age-appropriate grasp and practice of the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Ten Commandments, and the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit. They should also be familiar with the Magnificat. They should have a working knowledge of the key words for the year. We pray they will feel called to respond to God's Law of Love in the Church and the wider community.

### **GRADE 5**

Sacraments: We Embrace God's Life

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

### **Text**

"We Meet Jesus in the Sacraments" (Sadlier "We Believe" Series)

### **Key words for the year**

Blessed Trinity; Jesus' mission; Kingdom of God; apostles; church; evangelization; liturgy; Paschal Mystery; Last judgment; Corporal Works of Mercy; Spiritual Works of Mercy; Sacrament; Sanctifying grace; Christian initiation; common vocation; holiness; Baptism; Incarnation; salvation; prophet; eternal Life; saints; catechumenate; celebrant; chrism; Confirmation; gifts of the Holy Spirit; Passover; Eucharist; sacrifice; memorial; Real Presence; Introductory Rites; Liturgy of the Word; Liturgy of the Eucharist; Consecration; Concluding Rite; Liturgy of the Hours; Holy Day of Obligation; sacramentals; conversion; sin; Reconciliation; conscience; act of contrition; Anointing of the sick; Annunciation; Immaculate Conception; Assumption; virtue; faith; hope; love; priesthood of the faithful; lay people; religious; matrimony; marriage covenant; fidelity; holy orders; bishops; priests; deacons; Marks of the Church; ecumenism; stewards of creation.

### **Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the young people through a routine of prayer, conversation, projects and stories.

Doctrinally, through the year we introduce them to Jesus: incarnation, bread of life, healer; Sacraments; Celebration of Eucharist; Mary, model of discipleship; vocations, especially Matrimony and Holy Orders; Church as one, holy, catholic, apostolic. We play games that show our mastery of the vocabulary and ideas of the week. We talk about the themes that Christ has introduced to the families. Sometimes we talk about plans for action having to do with the themes. Sometimes our activities are based on those plans. For instance, we may decide to act on the theme "incarnation" by encouraging others to participate in the Christmas Vigil with us. And, every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out.

### **Goals**

At the end of the year fifth graders should have an age-appropriate grasp of the order of the Mass; vocations in Christian life; Mary and the practice of Marian devotions in the prayer life of the Church. They should have a working knowledge of the key words for the year. We pray they will feel called to engage with opportunities to embody God's love in everyday life and in the prayer and worship life of the Church.

### **GRADE 6**

We Are God's People

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

### **Text**

"We Are God's People" (Sadlier "We Believe" series)

### **Key words for the year**

Divine Revelation, Blessed Trinity, Divine Inspiration, Bible, Tradition, covenant, Book of Genesis, human

dignity, free will, conscience, soul, steward, sin, Original sin, Gospel, patriarch, Canaan, faith, Providence, Pharaoh, Exodus, Passover, Mount Sinai, miracle, manna, Ten Commandments, Ark of the Covenant, Nazirite, prophet, monarch, Wisdom, Psalm, idolatry, vocation, blasphemy, lamentation, superstition, hope, proverb, Torah, parable, Incarnation, Kingdom of God, Beatitudes, Last Supper, Resurrection, Pentecost, martyr, Catholic Social Teaching, Marks of the Church, ecumenism, holiness

### **Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the young people through a routine of prayer, conversation, projects and stories.

Doctrinally, through the year we introduce them to Covenant with God, including the Exodus, United Kingdom and Exile stories; Jesus, teacher, healer, redeemer, savior; new covenant in Christ and the birth of the Church; the Bible and Church today; and the Church in the world. We play games that show our mastery of the vocabulary and ideas of the week. We talk about the themes that Christ has introduced to the families. Sometimes we talk about plans for action having to do with the themes. Sometimes our activities are based on those plans. And, every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out.

### **Goals**

At the end of the year sixth graders should have an age-appropriate grasp of salvation history and their role in it; Christian vocations; engagement with Sacraments, sacramentals and the Church as it continues Jesus' ministry through work for social justice. They should have a working knowledge of the key words for the year. We pray they will feel called to embody and inspire an appreciation for God's unfolding love in everyday life.

### **GRADE 7**

Creed I and Creed II (Sadlier)

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

### **Text**

“Creed I” and “Creed II”(Sadlier “Faith and Witness” series)

New this year: "Morality: a Course on Catholic Living" (Sadlier "Faith and Witness" series)

### **Key Words:**

Apostolic, Beatitudes, Body of Christ, charism, compassion, contemplative prayer, conversion, covenant, disciple, Easter Vigil, eternal life, fellowship, grace, Great Commandments, heaven, Immaculate Conception, last judgment, Lord's Day, Meditation, Messiah, miracle, moral virtues, mystery, parable, particular judgment, Paschal mystery, passion, prayer, purgatory, reconciliation, resurrection, reign of God, salvation, scripture, theological virtues, Triduum, vocal prayer

### **Elements of the class session**

During class, we bring the young people through a routine of prayer, conversations, activities and stories. We break into small groups to discuss the importance of religion in human history and why our Catholic faith is such a special gift from God. We write short prayers thanking God for His wonderful revelations and to Mary, the mother of Jesus, for being a guiding light. We learn about truth, faith, sacrifice and evangelization by writing skits, making journal entries and role playing.

In class activities - For in-class work with the text, students will prepare the following over the year:

- Chapter 1 Read the words of Pope John Paul II about young people in the Chapter 1 Catholic ID. Then compile a "personal profile" of information you might tell the pope about yourself. Include such information as your name, age, birthplace, and heritage. Mention your hobbies, your favorite songs, stories, and poems, and other things that make you happy. Finally, say what might be beautiful and good or graceful and promising about you.
- Chapter 2 What are the "ingredients for a happy life"? Make a list of the things you think you need for a happy life. Then make a list of the things society says we need and a list of the things the Catholic Church tells us we need for a happy life. How are these three lists alike? How are they different? Which list do you think offers the ingredients for true happiness? After discussing each others' lists in the light of these questions, work in small groups to write and act scenes from an imaginary sitcom called "The Happy Life." Each scene should include at least two characters, one who follows

society's list for happiness and one who looks to the Church.

- Chapter 3 To be a disciple means to share the story of Jesus. We can keep Jesus' story alive by not being afraid to love our neighbor. We can show that love every day in acts as simple as letting someone know that we are thinking of him or her. Draw and decorate a card or design one on the computer. The message might be "Get well," "Thank you for being my neighbor," or simply "Thinking of you." Give the card to someone in the community to let that person know that you care.
- Chapter 4 Imagine that you have been asked to design a new video game. At each of several levels a teenage hero will be tempted by a specific sin disguised as a way to life and love—a lie, an act of jealousy, or some other act or deed that can weaken, wound, or even kill the hero's life with God. To move up to the next level the hero must resist the sin. Describe or sketch the temptation that the hero must overcome at each level. Show the false face each sin presents to the hero and specify the way the hero must reject the sin.
- Chapter 5 Imagine that you are an international pop star. Your music is enjoyed by people of all ages but is especially popular with children and young teens. To boost CD sales and start some buzz about your new album, your producer has suggested that you record a song that includes profanity and suggestive lyrics. Write a letter to the head of your CD label saying what your conscience tells you to do and why.
- Chapter 6 How do you think observing the Lord's Day as a "different day" might affect your life in positive way? How might your observance affect the lives of those whose lives touch yours? Using the Internet, research the ways followers of other religions observe a day of rest to reflect and become closer to God. Then talk with classmates, friends, and family members about ways to make each Sunday truly a different day.
- Chapter 7 One of the best ways to honor our families is to recognize them through artistry and imagination. Think of all the happy times you have spent with your family. What is your favorite family memory? Put together a scrapbook of words, images, and other mementos of that special event. If you don't have photos, include your own illustrations or images that symbolize the event. Write out your memories of the day or express your thoughts and feelings in a personal poem or prayer. Share your scrapbook with your family and save the book as a record of a special, happy time.
- Chapter 8 Look through Catholic newspapers and magazines and search the Internet to learn about Catholic organizations that respect life and promote peace. Consider contacting one of these organizations and finding out how young people can help the group in its work. Some groups work to help the victims of domestic violence; other groups are concerned with gun violence or violence stemming from the abuse of drugs or alcohol. Think about which issues of life and peace are most important to you. Then show that you choose life by working to bring about healing and peace.
- Chapter 9 God created our sexuality as a way for us to share love responsibly and with commitment. In today's media, however, sex is often used as a marketing tool or presented as a mere source of pleasure. Think of two films, TV shows, or commercials in which sexuality is treated in what you consider an appropriate and responsible way. Then think of two examples of films, shows, or commercials in which sexuality is dealt with inappropriately or immorally. As a class, talk about the differences between the good and bad examples. Discuss what you think is and is not appropriate in the media's treatment of sex.
- Chapter 10 What, in your opinion, is the most important issue facing us today? Is it violence? hunger? racism? sexism? Or is it something else? What is the best way to work for justice and dignity for all people? Should we work to solve these issues on a local level, a national level, or an international level? Using the Internet, research the various ways that individuals and groups at home and around the world are working to promote justice. Present your findings to the class and discuss ways to help.
- Chapter 11 Have you ever overheard someone gossiping about you? Did it hurt your feelings? What did you do? In many cases, when people gossip, they distort the information to make it more exciting for the listener. The listener, in turn, might put a further spin on the story when he or she tells it to someone else. Write a short story in which you describe what happens when people pass along a bit of gossip. Share your story in a group and discuss the effects of spreading rumors.
- Chapter 12 Choose a cardinal virtue and write a short story about it without actually naming the virtue you have in mind. Make copies of your story and give them to your classmates to read. Can they guess which virtue is depicted in your story?

- Chapter 13 Imagine that you are a best-selling novelist. You want to show in your new book the way that the moral or immoral acts of one person can affect the world. Write a brief outline or plot summary for this new novel. Be sure to describe the nature of your character's act or acts and their impact very clearly, as these acts and their consequences will drive your story.
- Chapter 14 Tell the class about a decision you have made that has made a difference in your life. Be specific. How did it feel to make such a decision? Did you ask other people's advice, or did you make the decision on your own? Do you think making this decision has given you the courage to make other decisions today and in the future?
- Chapter 15 Think of a priest you know and like. How has this priest motivated and encouraged you? Send him an e-mail to thank him for his help and to ask him for advice about vocations, either to the priesthood or to another calling. To which vocation—the priesthood, the religious life, marriage, or life as a single person do you think you might be called?

### **Goals**

At the end of the year, seventh graders should have an age-appropriate grasp of the importance of religion and the importance of faith and have an age-appropriate grasp of the fundamental dynamics and claims of Catholic morality. They should have an understanding of the statement that is written in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, “The desire for God is written in the human heart” and be able to discuss that throughout history and in every place on earth, humans have searched for God. They also should have a working knowledge of the key words for the year. We pray they will feel well-equipped to practice and pray their way through moral decisions and ready to explore and learn more about Catholic morality.

### **GRADE 8**

New Testament

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

### **Text**

New Testament (Sadlier "Faith and Witness" series)

Liturgy and Worship (Sadlier “Faith and Witness” series)

Church History – Living Our Faith

Living the Faith of Jesus

### **Key words**

Morality, grace, happiness, discipleship, the community of the church, Original sin, personal sin, forgiveness, freedom and discipleship, formation of conscience, The Ten commandments in relation to discernment; the Beatitudes, gift of family, authority, Sins against life, euthanasia, hatred, violence, war, healthy love of self, sexuality and the whole person, chastity, modesty, justice, Sins against justice, truth, Sins against truth, virtue, cardinal virtues, theological virtues, laws of the Church, works of mercy, what makes a person human?, influences and steps in decision making, vocations, priesthood, active religious life, contemplative life, parenting and family life

### **Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the young people through a routine of prayer, conversation, projects and stories. Doctrinally, through the year we introduce them to Catholic teaching and practice around morality. Sometimes we talk about plans for action having to do with the themes. Sometimes our activities are based on those plans. For instance, we may decide to act on the theme "Prayer, Fasting, Alms" by practicing an examination of conscience. And, every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out.

### **Goals**

At the end of the year eighth graders should have an age-appropriate grasp of the place of New Testament in the Catholic faith. They should be familiar with the person of Jesus and the Scripture-based claims about Him. Acknowledging both the sacred and the culturally-wrought aspects of Scripture, we will encourage the students to grapple with the text. We hope they will feel inclined to deepen their exploration of the New Testament. We pray they may find the New Testament inspiring as well. They should have a working knowledge of the key words for the year.

## **GRADE 9**

### New and Old Testament

Parents are welcome to visit at any time, and they may bring in their infants. Catechists maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

#### **Text**

#### **Keywords**

Matthew, Mark Luke, John, Paul, Corinth, Thessalonica, Letters of Paul, narrative, parable, poem, text.

#### **Elements of the class session**

During class we bring the young people through a routine of opening prayer, going over the main ideas and plan for the coming week, and delving into the activity/conversation/questions of the week. Sometimes we talk about plans for action having to do with the themes. For instance, we may decide to act on the theme "Thanksgiving and Communion" by volunteering for the Thanksgiving Food Drive. And, every few weeks we share how our families' or class group's plans for action have worked out.

*In-Class Activities* - For in-class work with the text, students will prepare the following over the year:

- Chapter 1 As you prepare to plunge into the New Testament in search of deeper knowledge and appreciation of the good news of Jesus, what are your thoughts? What questions do you have about Scripture, Tradition, and the world in which Jesus lived? Write down the three questions that you most want to explore, and share them with your classmates.
- Chapter 2 With a partner, discuss the nature of oral tradition. Use Internet resources to research oral traditions in various cultures (Native American storytelling, for example). Do you think passing on traditions using only the spoken word would work in today's society? How does the written New Testament ensure that the truth about Jesus and his teachings is handed on? Present your ideas to the class.
- Chapter 3 Use resources on the Internet to research the beliefs of present-day fundamentalists. How does the fundamentalist approach to Scripture differ from the Catholic Church's approach? With a partner, write and perform a role-play in which a person with fundamentalist views and a person with Catholic views discuss the truth of Scripture.
- Chapter 4 In the words of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, in Scripture "the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children and talk with them" (CCC, 104). Keeping these words in mind, write a short poem or meditation celebrating the marvelous way in which God moved the human authors of Scripture to transmit his truth.
- Chapter 5 The gospels as we know them today developed over time, in three stages. In a group prepare and perform a skit that shows the good news of Jesus being passed down from generation to generation, through the three stages.
- Chapter 6 A. Compile a genealogy for your own family. If possible, include photographs or illustrations of family members and ancestors. You might also want to search the Internet to find out more about your family's genealogy. OR B. Illustrate one of Jesus' parables, or write and illustrate a modern parable of your own. You might choose to update one of Jesus' stories to modern times or write an entirely original story to teach a spiritual lesson for today.
- Chapter 7 Throughout history, people living in different times and different places have pictured Jesus in many different ways. What does Jesus look like to you? Does his appearance matter? Draw a picture or write an impression in words of what Jesus looks like to you.
- Chapter 8 Pray the Shema every day, as Jesus did. Write the words of the prayer on a card or a small scroll, and keep it by your bedside to pray every morning and evening. You might also consider writing down and praying some of your favorite verses from Psalm 119.
- Chapter 9 Search on the Internet or in the library for a map of the region where Jesus lived as it is today. Compare that map to the one in this chapter of Faith and Witness: New Testament. How are the maps similar? How are they different? Which cities and other features on the map of the land in Jesus' time have the same names today?

- Chapter 10 Use resources on the Internet to research daily life in Nazareth at the time of Jesus. Imagine that you live in Nazareth in Jesus' time. What might your day be like? Write a letter to a friend in Jerusalem about what you did today. Make sure to be very descriptive. What sorts of things did you see and hear? What was the weather like? What did you wear? What did you eat?
- Chapter 11 Choose one set of parallel passages in the synoptic gospels (examples might be the baptism of Jesus, the temptation of Jesus, the cure of Peter's mother-in-law, or the parable of the mustard seed). Make a set of storyboards showing the similarities and differences between the versions of the story told in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Use quotations, illustrations, different colors or styles or type, or whatever devices you think will best show the synoptic nature of your story.
- Chapter 12 The Church sets aside one day each year to honor each of the four evangelists. Saint Mark's feast day is April 25; Saint Matthew's is September 21; Saint Luke's is October 18; and Saint John's is December 27. Look at a calendar. Which evangelist will be honored next? Design a card to celebrate that evangelist's feast day. Decorate the card with the evangelist's symbol and include an excerpt from his gospel. Then, on the feast day, send the card to a friend or family member.
- Chapter 13 In Catholic churches we often see the alpha and the omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, used as symbols of Christ. Think about the many different symbols we have for Jesus, including those, like the Alpha and Omega, that Jesus used when talking about himself the Bread of Life, the Good Shepherd, the Light of the World, the true vine, and others. Why do you think there are so many symbols? Pick your favorite symbol or symbols for Christ and design a poster depicting and describing them. Hang the poster in your room at home, or give it to a friend or family member as a gift.
- Chapter 14 In a small group prepare a living representation of the Lord's Prayer. Use reverent and illustrative gestures, dance movements, the spoken word, music, costumes, props, or any other devices you think are appropriate to express the meaning and majesty of each line of this greatest of prayers. Perform your living prayer for the class.

### **Goals**

Jesus in Art Using the Internet, research art that shows events in the life of Jesus. Choose two works depicting the same event as envisioned by artists from different cultures. How is Jesus portrayed in each work? Which elements of the depictions are similar, and which are not? Why do you think these differences and similarities exist? Share your pictures and the answers to these questions with your classmates.

### **GRADES 10, 11 & 12**

#### **Welcome to the Confirmation Program**

#### **Text Confirmation**

#### **Text Books:**

#### **One Faith, One Lord**

#### **Journey through the New testament**

#### **Journey through the Old Testament**

#### **Morality An Invitation to Christian Living**

#### **Sacraments Celebration of God's Life**

#### **Keywords**

Bishop, Apostles, Holy Spirit, Baptismal Vows, Laying on of Hands, Anointing with Oil, Sign of Peace, Confirmation Name, Sacraments of Initiation, Sponsor, Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost, Council of Trent, Vatican Council II, Prophets of the Old Testament, Descent of the Holy Spirit, Trinity, Paraclete, Advocate

#### **Elements of the class session**

The program is three trimesters (six weeks long) offering a choice of courses (a total of five minicourses) during the two year program. Two retreats are required - one each year. Also, two general sessions (one each year) and twenty hours of community service over two years (20 hours to meet Jesus). It is a program in that it gives you many choices to fit your schedule and your interests. These are requirements to be fulfilled before you receive Confirmation.

Confirmation is one of three Sacraments of Initiation, along with Baptism, and Eucharist. It is a sacrament that celebrates God, the Holy Spirit and the special strength and gifts in a baptized person. It is a community celebration and emphasizes your gifts from the community and to the community. You bear witness to the

Lord, Jesus Christ. You can become a better Christian.

**THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE:**

Wisdom Understanding Judgment Courage - Fortitude Knowledge Love - Piety Reverence for God *As a result -from the Gifts of the Holy Spirit come:* charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, goodness, self-restraint or chastity. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

**The role of a sponsor**

The sponsor helps the confirmed person in the unfolding of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. A sponsor accompanies each person being confirmed. They are adult Catholics who have been confirmed. A parent may not be his or her child's sponsor. Before confirmation the sponsor may help the candidate prepare for Confirmation. A sponsor should meet with the candidate every week to answer questions, to help them understand the classes, help with their community service projects and pray with their candidate, to open their hearts to the Holy Spirit. The sponsor is chosen in the first trimester.

**The role of the parents**

The Parents' role is to create a Christian environment in the home by their example and participation in the church. They should help prepare the student reflecting on this special sacrament, praying with them. The home is a place where faith is best nourished.

**The role of the Parish**

The Parish helps support the spiritual growth of all people, helps them to take an active part in the parish and Confirmation. They demonstrate the Christian commitment in their daily life.

**The role of the Bishop**

The Bishop follows the example of the Apostles who asked for the Holy Spirit to come to the person. He is the leader of the Diocese and our representative to the world.

**Confirmation Name**

The confirmation name is a saint's name whom you plan to imitate. If appropriate it is your baptismal (a saint's) name.

**Courses, (Each year there are three courses, each course lasts six weeks for a total of 18 weeks)**

**Service Projects, retreats and parish activities complete the program each year**

**Parish Activities**

Mass Preparation, Community Service, and a Retreat will be part of the school year in preparation for Confirmation.

No one is admitted to the program after the first trimester. Confirmation is received in the Junior or Senior year of High School and the candidates must be 17 years of age.

***To learn more about our Religious Education program and books, visit [www.Sadlier.com](http://www.Sadlier.com) and click on Catechetical programs from Pre K – Adult.***