

ST. MICHAEL PARISH



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FAMILY HANDBOOK PRESCHOOL 3 - GRADE 5 2018-2019

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

Welcome to St. Michael Religious Education!

We are pleased that you have chosen to enroll your child in Religious Education. Our program is meant to SUPPORT and NURTURE the faith that you share with your child in the home. Religious Education classes alone cannot instill faith in your child, nor is it the purpose of this program to do so. 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 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 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 very 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 - May

Monday-Thursday 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Friday 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Sunday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*

June & August

Monday-Friday 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

July Building closed for maintenance

*The office will be open Mondays until 6 p.m. & Wednesday until 8 p.m. when classes are in session.

OPEN HOUSE Sunday, Sep 9, 2018 10-10:30 a.m. in the gym

CLASSES BEGIN Sunday, Sep 16 & Monday, Sep 17

PARENT GATHERING/RETREAT Sun, Sep 23 & Mon, Sep 24 during RE class

While children are in class, parents will meet in the Parish Center for an overview of the coming year. We will have a short prayer service and a look at the curriculum, service projects, and opportunities for family involvement in class.

To accommodate our families' busy schedules, we offer 3 RE Class Sessions

Preschool 3 through Grade 5

SESSION A

Sunday
8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

SESSION B

Sunday
10:20 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

SESSION C

Monday
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

PARISH MASS SCHEDULE

Monday – Friday 6:30 AM and 8:00 AM
Saturday 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM
(5:00 PM fulfills Sunday obligation)
Sunday 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM and Noon

PARISH RECONCILIATION SCHEDULE

Monday & Thursday 7:15 - 7:45 AM
Tuesday 12-1:00 PM and 6:00 - 7:00 PM
Wednesday 6:00 - 7:00 PM
Saturday 8:30 - 9:15 AM and 4:00 - 4:45 PM

As Catholics we are expected to attend Mass every Sunday. Religious Education classes do not take the place of the Sunday obligation.

The classroom experience is enhanced when children attend Mass with their family and the Mass experience is enhanced by the classroom teaching.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF

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 DRE. 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 offer students a variety of prayer experiences and opportunities for Christian service to others. Although Reconciliation and Eucharist are first celebrated in the second grade, a focus on understanding and celebrating the fullness of the Sacraments is in all the grades.

Magdalena Glaz, Director of Religious Education

E-mail: mglaz@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 eighth grade. The many components of these classes provide time for catechesis, social gatherings, liturgy, and service.

Tammy Croll, Middle School Coordinator

E-mail: tcroll@stmichaelcommunity.org

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

Baptismal Preparation & Adult Formation: Our outreach is focused on bringing converts into the Catholic Church through the RCIA process. We provide training to the parish in the form of baptismal preparation and training for volunteers.

John Ellison

E-mail: jellison@stmichaelcommunity.org

Phone: 630-462-5045

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 #s are not given out without the Catechist’s permission.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

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 children 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 any 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 service opportunities offered in the parish and in his/her RE 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. You may also email us at reodesk@stmichaelcommunity.org with the absence. 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

Homework assignments may be given by the Catechist and will often involve specific prayers or activities to do together as a family. 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 1-5. 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 a child 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.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In case of an emergency including hazardous winter road conditions, extreme cold, or tornados, RE classes may be canceled. The decision to cancel will be made by the DRE or the Preschool Coordinator. Our primary tool for informing you of a class cancellation will be our call messaging system which also allows us to send an email with a link to the voice message. We will also use 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.

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.

SECURITY ISSUES

Coordinators, Catechists, Aides, Office Volunteers, Drop Off/Pick-up Monitors and Crossing Guards will be given a name badge to wear while in the building for security and safety reasons. We ask that all classroom visitors report to the office prior to any class visitation. Students should carry the folder given to them at the beginning of the RE year to each class. The label on the outside cover of the folder serves as their Religious Education ID. We ask you to report a lost badge or folder to the RE 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.

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)