

To Teach As Jesus Did



2007 - 2008

**Religious Formation
St. Sabina Parish
8147 Arnold
Dearborn Heights, Mich.
48127
313-274-5635**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We welcome you for the first time or perhaps again, to our Religious Formation Program.

Because of the privilege and responsibility of our Baptism and Confirmation, we are all called to minister to our families, and our community. Whenever we do this, we are following the example of Jesus.

As parents/guardians, you are the first and most important person to kindle the faith-life of your child/children. We sincerely hope that what we offer through our Religious Formation program will provide meaningful opportunities for you and your family.

Enclosed you will find pertinent information regarding our programs. Throughout the year you will be receiving further details about the specific programs in which you and your children are involved. We ask that you read this booklet carefully and save it in order to refer to it periodically.

As always, we thank you in advance for your co-operation. Catechetical programs are only as good as the co-operation between parents/guardians, catechists, and the pastor.

Peace to you and your family,

Fr. Raymond Bucon, Pastor

Catherine A. Ghrist, Director of Religious Formation

PARENTS:

We ask parents to be supportive of our Religious Formation Program in the following ways:

- to show interest each week in what has happened in class. Perhaps sit down with each child, go through the lesson in the text and discuss it.
- help your child/children to be conscientious about any homework given to them.
- actively participate in the sacramental preparation of your child/children. Attendance at parent meetings, special liturgies and prayer celebrations will help with this.
- help your child/children learn how to pray as well as to learn their prayers. Throughout our programs prayer is recognized as a personal contact with God and the students are taught and encouraged to pray in their own words, prayer formulas are introduced gradually and are examined thoroughly.
- keep your child's absences at a minimum; and when they must be absent please let us know.
- help your child/children practice the example of Jesus at home and at play. Saying I'm sorry; forgiveness; unconditional love; and most of all, concern and understanding towards their family, friends and classmates.
- Mass attendance is also a way to support what the children are learning in their classes each week and is therefore a necessary component to a quality program.

"Since Parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their children, hence, parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. For it evolves on parents to create a family atmosphere so animated with love and reverence for God and people, that a well rounded personal and social development will be fostered among children.

(Vatican II)

religious Education is defined as integration of education, celebration and service. It is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded. Religious Formation programs must encompass the threefold mission of Jesus. "*Jesus taught, Jesus served, Jesus celebrated*" and then He said, "I have given you an example, now go and do likewise." (To Teach as Jesus Did)

REGISTRATION FOR CLASSES:

Parents are asked to register their child/children for classes each year. Registrations are processed in the order they are received.

Registration dates will be established and published in the bulletin each year.

Anyone registering after the final published registration date will be placed on a waiting list for a class to open if there are vacancies. Students placed on a waiting list will be notified when space becomes available.

FEES:

To somewhat offset expenses of our programs, a fee is charged as follows:

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 1 child | \$70 |
| 2 children | \$85 |
| 3 or more | \$100 |

This fee is to be paid at the time of registration; if it is not reminders are sent periodically.

No child is turned away from our programs because of inability to pay.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Parents will be given a written evaluation from time to time from the Catechist regarding each child's participation and cooperation. An attendance record is kept and will be discussed if the child has missed too many classes.

Parents are encouraged to communicate freely with their children's catechist, either in written form or by phone. Parents are also invited to call the Religious Formation office for information or assistance. 313-274-5635.

CLASS TIME PROCEDURES :

Entering and Leaving the Building:

Students are asked to enter and leave the school building by the parking lot entrance. We ask that parents do not drop off or pick up their child/children but that you come into the Religious Formation Office to both drop off and pick up. **NO CHILD WILL BE ALLOWED TO GO INTO THE PARKING LOT WITHOUT A PARENT.**

It is the policy of St. Sabina to allow children to wait inside the building near the entrance specified until 5 minutes before the beginning of class, at which time their catechist will pick them up and take them to class. Class time is 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. on Mondays from Sept. until May unless otherwise notified.

This policy will continue so long as this waiting period is orderly. We ask that, unless the circumstances are unusual, your children not arrive more than 15 minutes early.

In the event that your child has to be excused early, please notify the OFFICE in advance if possible. We cannot allow children to leave early without having had prior contact with a parent or guardian.

If you must pick up your child before classes are dismissed, please check in with the office first.

NO ONE WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE HALL FOR ANY REASON UNLESS THEY HAVE FILLED OUT A BACKGROUND CHECK AND HAVE ATTENDED THE PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN WORKSHOP OFFERED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT. St. Sabina, along with the other parishes in the Archdiocese must be compliant with the Dallas Charter.

TARDINESS:

Classes will begin and end on time, as scheduled.

Beginning the third week of classes, late students must report to the office and obtain a tardy slip before reporting to their rooms. No late student will be admitted to class without one. This is in order to free the catechist from the necessity of stopping an already begun class to mark the attendance of the late comer. In the event of consistent tardiness, parents or guardians will be contacted.

ATTENDANCE:

Beginning the third week of class, the parents of children who are absent each week will be called. This is for the child's safety as well as to encourage good attendance.

If you know your child is going to be absent, please call the Religious Formation Office: 313-274-5635.

Good attendance is a requisite for the reception of any sacrament. No more than 3 absents for First Eucharist in either first or second grade and no more than 3 absents for 7th or 8th graders who are preparing for Confirmation.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

In the event classes have to be cancelled because of bad weather, parents will call the office and a recording will be on the phone. If the school is closed for the day due to inclement weather, the Religious Formation Department will also be closed. Please check with the television for their school closings list. If St. Sabina is on it...there is no class. If your child's religion class is cancelled for any reason other than weather, you will be personally notified.

****PLEASE REMEMBER:** we cannot adhere to the Public school calendar; therefore, religion classes will be held unless our calendar states otherwise. if, however, you have a school calendar we can see prior to setting our calendar, we would be happy to include Spring Break, Mid-winter Break, etc. to coincide with our scheduled days off.

Once every two to three months, our catechists will have an in-service day when they will be required to be here but there will not be class for the students. You will be notified before hand so you will know not to come to class.

DISCIPLINE:

Students are expected to exhibit behavior inside and outside of the classroom in compliance with their age so as to show proper respect for themselves, their catechists, and their peers.

Students are expected to show respect for the parish property. There is a school in session here daily and it is our responsibility to show respect to the day students, and teachers by not disturbing anything in the desks or lockers. No one is allowed to get into the desks of the day students, leave them notes, scratch messages on them or take things from them; this applies to the lockers in each classroom also. If we find any kind of destruction to the desk or locker, parents will be called and restitution will be made.

MALICIOUS DESTRUCTION OF THE PROPERTY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED NOR WILL HARM TO ANOTHER PERSON.

Students who continually disregard the norm for an orderly class and are a cause for disruptive behavior or who are caught bullying will be dealt with in the following manner:

- the catechist will try and deal with the student to try and change the behavior, however, if the disruption continues, the student will be sent to the office.
- If the student is sent to the office a second time, parents will be contacted by the student.
- If the student is sent to the office a third time the student will finish the year doing their work at home, unless they are in a year with a sacrament in which case Father will be involved in the determination of the discipline.
- In the case of malicious destruction of property or harm to another person, parents will be contacted immediately along with the police if need be.
- if a conference with parents/guardian is required the student will not be allowed back in the classroom until that conference has taken place.
- **Bullying will NOT be tolerated under any circumstances.**

SACRAMENTAL POLICIES:

All sacramental programs are in accord with the guidelines and directives of the Archdiocese of Detroit and the directives as set down in the National Catechetical Directory.

A student's grade level or the chronological age at which a sacrament can be received; is not the guarantee that the student will receive that sacrament. Many factors are considered such as attendance, participation, attitude, willingness and desire to receive the specific sacrament. In case of Confirmation, compliance with the requirements as set down by the Archdiocese of Detroit and the parish are also a factor in the reception of the sacrament.

According to the Archdiocese of Detroit, no student can or will be denied a sacrament, however, the time of reception of any sacrament can be postponed to a later date if the circumstances warrant such an action.

- to assist in determining this, each student enrolled as a candidate for one of the sacraments will be interviewed by the pastor
- if a concern arises as to a particular student's readiness or willingness to receive a sacrament parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to come in for a discussion of the concerns

For two consecutive years prior to the reception of First Eucharist/Reconciliation and Confirmation, there must be GOOD ATTENDANCE at Religious Formation Classes. If a student transfers into St. Sabina's program, proof of good attendance in another program or Catholic school may be required.

In order to have a unified vision and understanding of each specific sacrament, a student is required to attend classes each year from Kindergarten to grade 8 so they have a knowledge of the scope and sequence of the information needed to receive each sacrament having been fully prepared to do so.

A working relationship between the parents and catechists, and the Pastor is needed to prepare each student for the reception of each sacrament. Parents are expected to attend and participate in any meetings specifically designated for each sacrament and to present their child at the sacrament of Reconciliation.

EUCCHARIST

Students are usually prepared for the reception of The Eucharist in grades 1 and 2. The actual reception of the Eucharist takes place in grade 2.

Proof of Baptism is required if the child has not been baptized at St. Sabina Church.

Students may receive and celebrate the Eucharist for the first time with their family prior to the Solemn Group First Eucharist Celebration. This can be done within the time limits and according to procedures set by the parish. All are required to attend the First Solemn Eucharist celebration as a group. A form will be given to each family to be filled out and given back to the teacher or catechist and in turn given to the Pastor, requesting a Family First Communion.

RECONCILIATION:

Catechesis must take place in all grades levels for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each class will receive the sacrament twice during the year. Direct preparation will take place in grade 2.

Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will take place in a group with individual confession and absolution. Parents are asked to present their child to Father if they can. There is no roll taken, this sacrament is between the parents, the child and the pastor only. Your child will practice going to "confession" but they will not be allowed to actually confess their sins to anyone other than the pastor.

Proof of Baptism will be required if your child was not Baptized at St. Sabina Church. A form requesting a Family Reconciliation will be filled out and given to your child's teacher or catechist which will in turn be given to the pastor.

All sacraments will be preceded by a Parent Meeting at which forms, important information and schedules will be given out and questions will be asked. It is our policy for the Parent/guardian to work with the child at home while the child also works in the classroom to ready themselves for the reception of any sacrament. Parents will determine when their child is ready to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation or Eucharist then inform the pastor if they need a special Family Mass prior to the group celebration.

CONFIRMATION:

St. Sabina parish is presently working on a two year schedule for Confirmation. The 7th grade begins preparation by working at service projects (each student must have a total of 10 hours total for the 7th grade) and this continues to the 8th grade where more work is done (each student is required to complete 30 hours: 10 for home; 10 for community at large and 10 for the parish community).

Each candidate in the 8th grade is required to write a letter to the Pastor requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation along with his or her reasons for requesting this sacrament. They will also be asked to include in their letter what their request is from the parish and a brief paragraph about themselves.

Each candidate in the 8th grade is required to select a Confirmation name. This name is to be thought about and a paper will be written about it giving the reason it was chosen. Baptismal names are the best since they help the students understand the link between Baptism and Confirmation. A Saint's name is preferred if the candidate is not going to use their Baptismal name.

Each candidate in the 8th grade is required to have an interview with the Pastor prior to the sacrament. Father will suggest a time or the candidates will call the Rectory and make an appointment with Father 313-561-1977.

Choice of Sponsor: The sponsor must be at least 16 years old; be a practicing Catholic; and must have been Confirmed. Parents are not allowed to be sponsors, however Godparents are encouraged to continue in the relationship with their Godchild by being the sponsor. It is NOT necessary for a girl to be sponsored by a female or a boy to be sponsored by a man.

Students are required to attend the Confirmation Retreat day, the Practice day, and any and all service opportunities placed with in the program.

Once a date has been set by the Bishop; parents and students will be notified as soon as possible.

Confirmation is a Sacrament of Initiation and should not be used as a means of exit from the church. Therefore, students should be encouraged to continue to be educated, to serve, and to celebrate. Confirmation is NOT a graduation from but an entrance to, please make sure you teach it that way.

OUR PROGRAM:

Our program is rooted in the following two truths:

1. the Kingdom of God is among us here and now.
2. all of life is a journey in faith and everyone is not at the same place in his/her journey at the same time.

Based on the above we strive to put people into our program based on where they are in their faith-journey as well as where they are in our sacramental programs. In regards to children their grade level in the public school is a consideration but not the main criteria in their placement within our program.

Our program begins with the 4 and 5 year olds/Kindergarten and proceeds to the 8th grade. We meet from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. each Monday in the school.

There is an adult program for those who wish to learn more about their faith or would like to become Catholic or for those who wish to complete their Sacraments of Initiation which meets on Sundays after the 11:00 a.m. mass, which is the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Contact the Rectory and speak with Father prior to attending a class.

At Christmas, the children in each class present a Caroling Evening on the last class prior to the Christmas break. All parents/families are asked to attend and snacks are offered in the Religious Formation Office following the program while the children are in their classrooms.

On the Monday of Holy Week, the children present "A Visit To Jerusalem" in the Gym. Each class offers a booth in the gym, which has been turned into Jerusalem, to show parents and parishioners what the town of Jerusalem may have looked like during the time of Christ. The children are dressed in the clothes of the time as are the catechists. We invite the whole family to come and see what it was like for Jesus. This is a great way for the children to learn more about the life and times of Jesus more than reading about him, they will actually also experience a bit of his history.

Calendars will be sent home each month to inform you of upcoming events and class dates so please make sure you check your child's back pack or folder when they come home.

MEDIA:

NO I-pods, MP3 players, CD players, phones or pagers will be allowed in class so please make sure they are not brought to class with your child. If the children need to contact you they may do so on the office phone. If you need to reach them, we will certainly be happy to get them from their class and you will be able to talk with them, otherwise they don't need to have anything which will distract them in class. Phones with cameras are never allowed in the building.

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN:

If you need to come into the building for any reason you must be aware that you can not go into the hall or the classrooms without having someone from the office with you unless you have had a background check and have taken the Protecting God's Children workshop. We are in compliance with The Dallas Charter and the Archdiocese of Detroit so we

cannot allow anyone in the hall or the classrooms who has not yet taken the class or had the background check done. Background check forms are available at the office and may be returned to the D.R.E. when completed. For information on Protecting God's Children please go to www.virtus.org to register for a class. Click on registrations on the left side of the screen and it will walk you through the registration process. You will need to take a workshop in the area and you need to pre register for it.

If you need any further information about the Religious Formation Program at St. Sabina Parish, please don't hesitate to Call the office at 313-274-5635 or stop in.