

SAINT PATRICK PARISH



Faith Formation Program K - Grade 8

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The driving force behind our Religious Education Program is the notion that our faith is a gift to be celebrated and lived. We are told early in life that God, above all things, is love, and that His love is perfect and unconditional. We believe that learning about God and sharing His love should be a wonderful learning experience and to treat the faith as the sacred gift it is.

Our sessions are geared to help children learn the Bible and our Catholic beliefs and traditions, so as they grow in the faith, they can make educated, mature decisions about their spiritual lives. We provide a safe environment and a warm and welcoming atmosphere, conducive to both learning and prayer. Within the comfort of the class, the children build a rapport with each other and with the catechists, making the experience more rewarding and enjoyable. Sharing the Catholic faith and teaching the basic principles of the Church are hardly small endeavors, and the lessons cannot all be fun and game sessions. We, therefore, strive to strike a balance between the things our children like to know and the things they need to know with regard to choices, church morality and consequences.

Our curriculum is carefully developed to inform, encourage and guide our young people regardless of their background and knowledge. We believe it is necessary to be flexible enough to meet people wherever they may be on their faith journey and walk with them toward a better understanding of God and our place in His world. We cannot do this alone, and in recognizing and respecting parents as the primary religious educators of their children, we feel it is important to not only work with the children, but our parents as well. We try to involve parents as much as possible by inviting them to join us for retreats, services and special events.

Our religion extends infinitely beyond an hour in church on Sunday mornings. We can only support and reinforce that which is practiced at home. We can give meaning to the rituals and symbols of our Church, but only you can give meaning to our faith in how you live and worship every day. We are confident that your daily commitment to God, combined with the curriculum and activities provided by our Faith Formation Program, can and will effectively guide our children as they grow, learn, and face the future by believing, loving, and living the gift of faith.

Our parish staff is privileged and honored to be a part of your family's faith journey.

Program Overview

KINDERGARTEN

Although our formal program begins in first grade we offer kindergarten on Sunday mornings providing we have the Catechists to teach. Class is held every other week from 10:15-11:45 am.

TRADITIONAL CLASSES

(Grades 1 - 8)

Our program is a cooperative one of parents teaching children. A grade level Leaders Guide is provided along with all the training, supplies, and all the support you need to be a successful Catechist.

Sunday Sessions A & B: Grades 1-8 are held on alternate Sunday's from 10:15-11:45 a.m. (not necessarily every other week).
Tuesday Session: Grades 1-6 are held weekly from 4-5 p.m.

CLASS NOTIFICATION AND CATECHIST INFORMATION: In September all registered children will receive a "Welcome to Our Class" card indicating the day and time of class. Catechists and assistants will also provide their home phone numbers and email addresses so that you can communicate with them directly. This is the only time you will receive this information so please make note of it for the future.

CLASS PLACEMENT AND SWITCHES: All special requests are to be made at the time of registration and will be taken into consideration. Last minute switches cause havoc and should be avoided. All requests must be done through the office of Faith Formation: 973-635-0625 x27.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Grades 6-8

UNDER CONSTRUCTION! We are in transition of following a Youth Ministry model.

Our program begins with a [Parent/Teen Orientation](#), to introduce our new curriculum, [Catholic Connections, A Handbook for Middleschoolers and the Break Through Bible](#) published by St. Mary's Press.

We hope to offer several service opportunities and retreats. The year will conclude with a 7th & 8th grade NET Retreat on Saturday, February 26th.

PARENT/TEEN ORIENTATION

DATE: Sunday, September 26

TIME:

PLACE: Parish Center (Gym)



AGENDA:

- Parent/Teen Orientation
- Living with Your Teens and Maybe Liking It (Parents)
- Teens will meet with their Catechists, create their own sundaes and prepare questions for our Parent Panel.
- Parents & Teens (Gym): Parent Panel will answer the teens' questions.

HOME STUDY (Grades 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8)

This program is recommended for children who cannot attend a regular scheduled class, and for children who need one-on-one instruction. A child's textbook is provided for completion at home with the help of a parent. The completed book, including with all unit tests, are to be returned to the office (by October of the following year) so that we can credit the work and send you a Certificate of Completion. Children are encouraged to attend all grade level liturgical experiences and retreats.

Text books and Family Guides will be available after October 10th in the main office, 41 Oliver St. from 9-4:30pm

(Home Study is not available in Grade 2)

Children in grade 2 who are preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist are required to attend a weekly class in the traditional program and participate in our Sacramental Preparation Program.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Our program makes every effort to mainstream all children with disabilities into a grade level appropriate to their learning ability. Parents are to call and schedule a meeting to discuss their child's special needs so that we can design a program to meet their needs.

“RCIA” RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS

For children in grade one and older who are not Baptized are invited to join the RCIA process for adults and/or children who wish to become Catholic.

For more information call Sr. Margaret 973-635-0625 x26.

CURRICULUM Grades K-5



Blest Are We: Faith & Word Edition is a Spiral Thematic Curriculum.

Six standard themes – one (1) in each grade level – are highlighted along with lives of the saints and real-life examples of Christian witness. In addition, the four pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* are incorporated in the unit structure at each grade level. Special features include:

- **The Bible** – Presents important Bible knowledge and skills
- **Let Us Pray** – Teaches traditional Catholic prayers and devotions
- **Our Catholic Heritage** – Provides an age-appropriate summary of Church teaching organized according to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- **Feast and Seasons** – Includes eleven (11) lessons celebrating Liturgical Seasons and Feasts.

Connects Home and Parish

The “Take Home” page is at the beginning of every chapter to give families background information, an engaging activity, prayer, and weekly planner to promote cooperation between home and parish. Found to be in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Pray and Share

Each lesson begins with an opportunity for children to pray with Scripture, share their personal experiences, and complete an activity that introduces the lesson's theme.

We Believe

Provides a concise statement of Catholic doctrine.

Faith Words

Promotes understanding with key vocabulary words that are highlighted and defined.

Scripture and Doctrine

Scripture is the foundation of every chapter and leads to a presentation of Catholic doctrine – statements of belief, worship, morality and prayer.

Saints and Holy People

Saints and other important Catholic figures are brought to life with inspiring stories.

Chapter Review

Access and reinforce learning with full page reviews.

Faith in Action

Familiarizes children with a variety of Parish Ministries and Vocations, reinforcing their sense of belonging to the Church and the Parish Community.

SUPPLEMENTAL CURRICULUM



In addition to the curriculum, other mediums such as music, arts & crafts, audiovisual aids, service projects, prayer services, and role-play are used to enhance the learning experience of the children.

Our Resource Library has an extensive collection of videos/DVDs, children's literature and crafts for catechists to incorporate into their lessons. Also available to our catechists are workshops, catechetical reference and resource material to help provide theological background and enrichment.

LITURGICAL EXPERIENCES: *CHURCH TOURS * RECONCILIATION SERVICES

Parents and children who attend Sunday classes are invited to participate in our Church Tours, Reconciliation Services, Prayer Services, and Seasonal Events. All events will be held on Tuesdays during regularly scheduled class times. Covered Dish Suppers will be from 5-6:30 p.m. All parish children and families are welcome.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE



“For I have set you an example, which you also should do as I have done to you” John 13:15. These words were spoken by Jesus to his disciples after he washed their feet at the Last Supper, a visible sign of service to others. The Evangelist John makes the point that serving others is at the heart of being a follower of Jesus.

Discipleship, which is what we are called to, is a very important part of who we are as Christians. As part of our curriculum each class will participate in an age-appropriate service project. Parents will be notified by the catechist if extra time or help is needed.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION PROGRAM



Our Sacramental Preparation Program: Our Sacramental Journey

- Begins with a Retreat for children and their parents
- Rite of Enrollment
- Regular Mass attendance. Children are encouraged to attend Liturgy of the Word with Children held at the 9:00 a.m. Mass
- Several special classes held during regular class time
- We Celebrate Reconciliation & We Celebrate Eucharist workbooks: Parent/child homework
- Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation g) followed by refreshments.
- Jesus Day
- Communion Rehearsal
- First Eucharist Celebrations

PARISH AND DIOCESAN POLICIES REGARDING THE SACRAMENTS OF FIRST RECONCILIATION & FIRST EUCHARIST

Parents of children in grade two or older who wish for their children to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation (Penance) and/or First Eucharist (Holy Communion) are invited to enroll their children in our Sacramental Preparation Program.

Children are required to complete grades one and two, and participate fully in our Sacramental Preparation Program. A special mailing will be sent home with more detailed information and dates.

Upon registration, parents whose children did not attend a formal grade one Religious Education Program are given the opportunity to work with their child over the summer to complete the First Grade Workbook prior to entering grade two.

The Diocesan regulations for First Reconciliation (Penance), in line with the Holy See, require us to prepare children to receive this sacrament before First Eucharist.

SACRAMENTS REGARDING CHILDREN ATTENDING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Diocesan Policy states that children should prepare and celebrate for the Sacraments of Initiation in the parish community in which they worship.

The children will not be required to attend weekly religion classes. However, they must participate fully in the Sacramental Preparation Program. (Refer to Sacramental Preparation Program)

Whole Community Catechesis

EVERYONE IS WELCOME: Singles, couples and families!

- Come together in a friendly environment and share a simple meal.
- General Session: Presenting the Theme
- Everyone learns the same concept in age-appropriate breakout sessions.
- Everyone gathers to share and pray

A Take -Home Kit is provided so that learning can continue at home.



PARISH POLICIES

ATTENDANCE AT LITURGY Faith is a lived experience and must go beyond a formal religious education program. Children are expected to take part in Mass with their families on a weekly basis and practice STEWARDSHIP by SHARING THEIR TIME – TALENT – TREASURE. It is essential that families enrolled in our Faith Formation Program worship at our Parish to assure consistency of Faith Development in our Community. The Pastoral Staff is most willing to help reconcile and reach out to those parents who for any reason have drifted from the regular practice of their faith. This is a very important aspect of our Ministry to our people.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Attendance is taken and children are expected to attend regularly. The teaching schedule is listed on the website for each session. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that missed lessons are completed at home, with the help of a parent, and returned to the Catechist the following week. Our attendance policy is based on rapport and comfort. We ask you to make every effort to have your child attend all sessions. The more sessions a child attends the more he/she will feel confident and willing to share in discussions and prayer. The overall experience is richer and more fulfilling when attendance is regular and consistent. Additionally, the program is more effective when the child is exposed to all the lessons.



If your child will be absent, please call or email your child's Catechist, not the office or school. Lessons are posted on the website so that you can complete the missed lesson at home in time for the next class.

Parents whose children do not attend regularly due to sports and other conflicts should consider placing their child on Home Study, enabling placement for a child who wishes to be part of a group and is on a Waiting List.

BEHAVIOR



It is our hope that the atmosphere at St. Pat's reflects Christian values of cooperation and respect for self, others and our church building. We know that you will assist us by reminding your child of these expectations. You will be notified if these expectations are not met and a mutual resolution will be determined.

Please be advised that cell phones or any form of technical communication is not permitted during classroom time.

**We don't expect angels,
but we do want them to be
on their best behavior!**

EARLY PICK-UP is not permitted for sports or other activities because it is too disruptive to the class. If on occasion you need to pick up your child early from class, please advise in a note as to the time you are coming, and we will have your child waiting at the front desk. Be sure to sign out your child in the early dismissal book.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS - EMAIL ADDRESS - PHONE NUMBERS

For your children's safety please update all information by accessing your account.

DUPLICATE MAILINGS/EMAIL

Please request a duplicate mailing if a parent or guardian lives at another address.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS



When the weather outside is frightful, cancellations will be announced on:

Parish Website

Emails will be sent

Tuesday Session: Ordinarily, when the township schools are closed due to inclement weather, the Parish Religious Education classes for the day are cancelled. **Parents will be called by their child's Catechist only if an event is cancelled due to non-weather related reasons.**

Please use your own discretion on whether the roads are safe to travel.

PARISH SAFETY POLICIES

In compliance with the Diocesan mandate all Catechists, Pastoral Staff and adult Volunteers who work with children are required to:

- Attend a three-hour *Virtus' Protecting God's Children Awareness Session*, and as required upon completion, register online for periodic online training sessions
- Submit to state & federal Criminal History Background Check with fingerprinting (fee is paid by program)
- Comply with the Diocesan Code of Conduct
- Abide by the Parish Safety Policies and Procedures

PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT



The following measures have been taken:

- We receive notification of all known sex offenders in the area.
- A peanut/food free environment
- All who enter the building during class time must report to the Safety Monitor on duty.
- Safety Monitors will patrol the halls during class time.
- Children in Grades K-3 must be picked up from class and signed out by a parent, older sibling or authorized adult listed on the Carpool Authorization Form.
Download a form and give to catechist on first day of class.
Forms are also available at the main desk (in the school) during class time or from your child's Catechist.

PLEASE HELP US TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE



- **Needed: Volunteer to be a Safety Monitor!** While your children are in class.
- **Medical and Liability Release Form:** Completed forms are kept on file in case of an emergency. Forms are available at the main desk during class time or can be downloaded from the parish website. **If you did not complete and return one to the office, please mail or bring it on the first day of class.**
- Download a Medical Release Form if changes occur during the year. Complete the information and mail or bring to the office. You can update your email, address and/or phone number by accessing your account on the parish website.
- Carpool Authorization Forms for children in grades K-3 must be on file if someone other than a parent is picking up your children from class. Download and form and give to child's catechist on the first day of class.
- Request duplicate mailings if a parent or guardian lives at another address, so everyone is informed.
- Note on the Carpool Authorization Form if you **DO NOT** want a parent or other adult to pick up your child from class.

Arrival:

- Be sure class is in session (refer to calendar on website).
- For the safety of your children drop off your child **no earlier** than ten minutes before class time.
- Never leave a child unless an adult is present.
- Safety Monitors will assist the children to class.

Departure:

- Early pick-up is not permitted, however, on occasion, if you need to pick up your child early, send a note and report to the Safety Monitor at the desk.
- Children in Grades K-3 must be picked up and signed out from their class. Children in Grades 4-6 will be dismissed. Arrange a meeting place.



TUITION

Traditional Program
Home Study Program

\$105 per child (\$100 early bird special)
\$50 per child

Tuition helps to defray the cost of Administration, Textbooks, Supplies, Arts and Crafts, Video/DVD Library, Catechist Workshops, Training and Resources.

As a Christian community we will never deny a child a Religious Education due to financial difficulties. Families can note request full or partial scholarship at registration. All requests will be held in the strictest confidence.

CATECHIST CERTIFICATION

In compliance with the Paterson Diocese all of our Catechists are working toward acquiring the 52 hours of study needed to earn their Basic Certification. Some Catechists have achieved their Basic Certification and are working toward the 14 hours of study per year to validate their Basic Certification.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Our program is a cooperative one of parents teaching children.

Help is needed in the following areas:

- Catechists for Grades K-8
- Co-Catechists
- Class Monitors
- Substitutes Grades K-8
- Safety Monitors (during class time)
- Office Work (on-call basis) or a few hours per week
- Assist with Special Events
- Liturgy of the Word with Children
- Assist with First Holy Communions and rehearsals.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF VOLUNTEERS

Catechists: Adults who are new to our program are required to attend one Session of three classes to prepare them for their new Ministry:

- The Role of the Catechists
- Planning and Enhancing Your Lessons
- Class Management and Discipline

Sessions are offered during the day and in the evening over the summer and early September. Catechists will receive all the support and help they need to be successful in their ministry.

A Catechist takes responsibility for preparing and teaching a class. Catechists are also required to attend two Staff Meetings, at least one Workshop, and communicate with the Director and the parents of their students. Catechists will be assigned a Class Monitor help with where needed.

Co-Catechists: Two trained adult Catechists take responsibility for a class by taking turns or preparing lessons together and teaching the class. Both are present for all classes.

Class Monitor: Adults or teens who are assigned to a class to help the Catechist where needed. They are not responsible to plan or teach lessons.

Safety Monitors: Adults or teens who help the children to class, monitor all who enter the building and the halls when class is in session. They also assist the director with collecting and handout information to catechists. In an emergency they are to alert the police and follow the emergency procedures for evacuation or lock-down of the building.

Substitutes: Ideally, adults with previous teaching experience, willing to teach a class when a Catechist is absent. A lesson plan will be provided.

Office Helper: Adult or teen helper a few hours a week, during the year, or called as needed for special tasks. Some projects can be done at home.

Liturgy of the Word/Music with Children at the 9am Mass

Leaders of the Word and/ or Music are required to attend one training session.

They receive a Leader's Guide to help them proclaim God's Word with children in K- 3. Leaders are scheduled approximately once every six to eight weeks.

Special Projects for Children by Children

Help to plan and organize programs.

Age Appropriate Service Projects

Help to plan, organize and execute Service Projects for our children.

SHARE HIS MESSAGE- BE A CATECHIST

Friendly, outgoing Messiah seeks similar adults to share His message with the future generation. If you like children and sharing your faith, and you enjoy laughter and good times, then you are that special someone who can teach a faith formation class.

No experience or degree is necessary. We will train you and He will guide you. Come on; help our kids have a lifelong relationship with Jesus and the Church. Catechists are needed at all levels.

Our program offers flexibility in order to meet your busy schedule. Babysitting is provided (on Tuesdays) and you receive an \$85 deduction on tuition.

*There's nothing that can help you
understand your beliefs more
than trying to explain them to an inquisitive child.*



LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH CHILDREN



For children in K-3 during 9 a.m. Mass September - May

We encourage 3 & 4 year old children to attend **PRAY & PLAY**, a Scripture-based Program designed for children of this age. Sessions are held in the Parish Center during the 9:00 a.m. Mass. There are no fees or sign-up.

Children attending Liturgy of the Word will be dismissed after the Opening Prayer and are then led downstairs where they will hear the Word proclaimed by trained adults.



The Leader of Word gives an interactive reflection on the reading, while the Leader of Music leads the children in singing the Psalm Response and Alleluia.

The children also have the opportunity to pray for their loved ones and their concerns. Each child will receive a Bulletin on the readings to bring home and color. The children are reunited with their parents and the community during the Presentation of the Gifts.

NEW VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOME

There will only be one Training Session.

Leaders of the Word will receive a Leader's Guide.

Leaders of Music will receive the Leader's Music Guide & CD.

You will also receive all the support you need to be successful at your new Ministry.



You will only be scheduled once every 6-8 weeks at your convenience.

For More Information about Liturgy of The Word Music with Children

Call: 973-635-0625 x27 or email: vsalvatore@st-pats.org



CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Children in grades 2-5 are welcome. Rehearsals will take place every Thursday evening from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. beginning September 24th **The children will sing every other Sunday at 9a.m. Liturgy beginning September 20th**



Spirit Song (Middle School Choir) is open to Parish children in Grades 6-8.

Rehearsals take place on Wednesdays or Thursdays from 6:30-7:30 p.m, beginning September 2nd.

Spirit Song will sing at the 9:00 a.m. liturgy beginning September 27th.



Instrumentalists: All ages and ability are welcome

Contact Richard Barnett

Music Director 973-635-0625x31

Fr. Bob Mitchell
Pastor

Virginia "Ginny" Salvatore
Director of Faith Formation