



**AFTER SCHOOL
FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM
INFORMATION BOOKLET
2012-2013**

**ST. MARY PARISH
WAYNE MICHIGAN**

Partnering with families to help children live the Gospel of Jesus Christ

**AFTER SCHOOL FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM
GRADES 1-8
GENERAL INFORMATION
2012-2013**

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From the Director of Faith Formation

“As branches dry up without the virtue of the root, so works, to whatever degree they may seem good, are nothing, if they are disjoined from the solidity of the faith.”
~ St. Gregory the Great

Welcome to the After School Faith Formation Program at St. Mary Parish! The catechists and I believe that assisting you, the primary educator of your children, to be one of our most honored privileges. We know that family is the primary community, the domestic church, where faith is shared and nurtured. It is the home where children are first introduced to prayer and faith traditions. It is in the home that habits of church attendance are started and will be nurtured. The Catechesis of the Church nurtures and incorporates members into the Body of Christ. Thus the bond between home and church enables, empowers and nurtures families to be living examples of Christ and builds up the Kingdom of God.

The goal of Faith Formation is to deepen and nurture the faith of the Body of Christ. Our catechists build upon the foundation that you have laid by fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of faith.

Please join us on **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2012 from 6:30-8:00pm** as we begin the year with a **Family Night for all students AND their parents/guardians**. This event will begin in the church with a prayer service. After the prayer service, the children will be dismissed to meet with their catechists while the parents/guardians will attend a brief meeting in the church. After the meeting the parents/guardians will have the opportunity to meet their children's catechists and pick-up their children's books for the year.

We are excited about the many opportunities for active learning that translates into active faith. We welcome your interest and involvement, and especially enjoy hearing from parents/guardians regarding their child's faith formation.

John Buehner,
Director of Faith Formation

CURRICULUM

GRADES 1-6

RCL Benziger's *Blest Are We: Faith and Word Edition* is the catechetical program used. This program is a spiral thematic curriculum that presents important concepts through **the Four Pillars of the Catechism: What Catholics Believe, How Catholics Worship, How Catholics Live and How Catholics Pray**. Each year, as the children's understanding and faith grow, topics are revisited and new elements are added to continue their faith development. With this approach, children learn all aspects of our Catholic faith at an age-appropriate level.

GRADES 7-8

RCL Benziger's *Faith First Legacy Edition* is the catechetical program used. This program is concerned with Catholic faith, religion and belief. Its goal is to transform children and bring them to a deeper relationship with God through an exposition of their Catholic heritage- its beliefs, moral code, rituals and practices and life of prayer. It offers a systematic process of faith reflection that helps young people make important connections between their increasing knowledge of the Catholic tradition and their daily lives. It helps them think about faith and life in increasingly complex ways as they grow. It encourages them to make choices by remembering the events of their own lives and applying the Church's heritage of faith to them.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

1. You must be a **registered member of St. Mary Parish** to register your child in the After School Faith Formation Program. The Director of Faith Formation prior to registering your child for the program must approve exceptions to this requirement.
2. You must complete a **2012-2013 After School Faith Formation Registration Form** (included with this packet). This Form is also available on the parish website under "Faith Formation". Click on "2012-2013 Registration Form". It is also available at the Parish Office.
3. **If you are enrolling a child for the first time in the Program**, you must also complete a **Baptism Information Form** (included with this packet). If your child was not baptized at St. Mary Church, Wayne, you must also provide us with a copy of your child's baptism certificate and attach it to the Baptism Information Form. This Form is available on the parish website under "Faith Formation". Click on "Baptism Information Form". It is also available at the Parish Office.
4. **Returning families to the Program please note ...** you must re-register your child each year for the After School Program. If you are also registering a new child in addition to a child who has been in the program, you must complete the Baptism Information Form for the new child and provide a copy of the child's baptism certificate (as applicable) when you re-register.
5. **PLEASE NOTE:** Registrations for the 2012-2013 After School Faith Formation Program will only be processed if there is space available in your child's grade. If space is not available, due to a lack of catechists in a particular grade level, your child will be placed on a waiting list.

TUITION AND FEES

- **TUITION:**
\$90.00 per family up to August 31, 2012
\$120.00 per family beginning September 1, 2012
- **TEXTBOOK FEE:** \$20.00 per child

TUITION and TEXTBOOK FEES MUST BE PAID IN FULL AT REGISTRATION. However, no child is denied Faith Formation due to financial hardship. Contact the Director of Faith Formation if you are experiencing a financial hardship to discuss this matter.

PLEASE NOTE: THERE IS A \$30.00 CHARGE FOR ANY RETURNED CHECK.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

The After School Faith Formation Tuition and Textbook Fee can be paid as follows:

1. Mail the completed Registration Form and Baptism Information Form with a copy of your child's Baptism Certificate attached to it (as applicable) and your payment in full to: **St. Mary Faith Formation Office, 34530 Michigan Ave., Wayne, MI 48184. YOU MUST BE A REGISTERED PARISHIONER TO USE THIS PROCEDURE.**
2. Place the completed Registration Form and Baptism Information Form with a copy of your child's Baptism Certificate attached to it (as applicable) and your payment in full in a sealed envelope marked "**2012-2013 After School Faith Formation**" and place it in the collection basket at any of the weekend Masses. **YOU MUST BE A REGISTERED PARISHIONER TO USE THIS PROCEDURE.**
3. Bring the completed Registration Form and Baptism Information Form with a copy of your child's Baptism Certificate attached to it (as applicable) and your payment in full to the Parish Office during regular office hours.
4. **SCRIP Program:** Families can use the St. Mary SCRIP Program to pay for Tuition, Book Fees and Retreat Fees.

This information is available on the parish website (www.stmarywayne.org). Click on the "St. Mary School" link on the left-hand side of the page. On the St. Mary School page scroll down to "Scrip" on the left-hand side of the page. Click on "Scrip Documents" and choose from the documents listed. Scrip information is also available at the Parish Office.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Please consult and save the ***Class Schedule for 2012-2013*** (included in this packet) for the schedule of classes from September 2012 through April 2013. You can always call the Faith

Formation office if you are unsure that Faith Formation classes are being held on a particular Monday. **Every one of the scheduled Faith Formation classes is important and your child is expected to attend all classes.** The 2012-2013 Class Schedule is also available on the parish website under "Faith Formation". Click on "2012-2013 Class Schedule". Additional copies are also available at the Parish Office.

CLASS TIMES

CLASSES ARE CONDUCTED ON MONDAY ONLY. Children in grades 1-4 attend class from 5:00-6:30pm. Children in grades 5-8 attend class from 7:00-8:30pm. **Please ensure your child is on time for class!** Children are to enter the building through the Haney Hall doors off the Sims Street parking lot. The children assemble in Haney Hall and are escorted to their classrooms by their catechists after prayer. Parents/guardians are invited and encouraged to join the children for the prayer in Haney Hall before they are dismissed to their classrooms. The Prayer Time in Haney Hall is part of each and every class. ***You are also invited and encouraged to attend any of your child's classes throughout the year.***

CLASS ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

100% attendance at all classes is expected. Attendance is taken at each class. Attendance at each class is critical for consistency in learning, since each lesson builds upon the previous lesson. **If your child will be absent from class, arrive late for class or need to leave early from class, please contact the Faith Formation office no later than 3:00pm on the day of class.**

Students will not be permitted to leave the building alone. If you are picking your child up early from class, a parent/guardian must come into Haney Hall and request their child be brought to Haney Hall from their classroom. **DO NOT USE CELLULAR DEVICES TO CONTACT YOUR CHILD DURING CLASS TIME.**

The Archdiocese of Detroit expects that all Faith Formation programs consist of at least 30 hours of structured program learning. Therefore we monitor student absences during the program year. **Excessive absences may result in you assisting your child with the subject matter he/she has missed.**

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

If the Wayne/Westland Community Schools are closed on a Monday due to the weather, the After School Faith Formation Program classes are cancelled. School closings are announced at the earliest possible time on radio stations WJR (760 AM), WWJ (950 AM). Announcements will also appear on the Fox Channel, NBC and ABC. You can also call the Faith Formation Office. If classes are cancelled, there will be a message regarding the closure.

COMMUNICATION

Each student enrolled in the Program, from time to time, will, bring home specific information pertaining to meetings, sacraments, etc. Please be sure to check with your children after each class for any notes they may have received in class. **In addition, whenever possible, we may send information to you via email from faithformation@stmarywayne.org. Please look for our communications and update us if your email address changes. If your home address and telephone number(s) change, please update us on this information as soon as possible.**

It is expected that you as parents/guardians might have some questions or concerns from time to time. Please direct these questions and concerns to your child's catechist or the Director of Faith Formation.

EXPECTATIONS/BEHAVIOR CODE

The development of behavior proper to responsible Christian living is an integral part of the After School Faith Formation Program.

PARENTS:

1. Ensure that your child attends all classes and is on time for class.
2. Ensure that you and your child attend Sunday Mass each week.
3. Communicate to the Director of Faith Formation any special needs or circumstances that may affect your child within the classroom.
4. Be an active part of your child's learning and be involved in his/her faith formation.

STUDENTS:

1. Behave in a Christian manner at all times showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students.
2. Actively and respectfully participate in classroom activities and discussions.
3. Attend all classes and complete any assignments or homework.
4. Follow these After School Faith Formation **RULES OF CONDUCT**:
 - ❖ You will not possess nor be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or tobacco of any kind.
 - ❖ You will not bring any weapons to class.
 - ❖ You will not use any language that is rude or offensive or write anything that is rude or offensive.
 - ❖ You will not be disrespectful to yourself or to any other person
 - ❖ You will not leave the building or premises without the permission of an authorized adult.
 - ❖ You will wait in Haney Hall after class for your ride to come and pick you up.
 - ❖ You will obey the rules of your classroom as well as the rules of the After School Faith Formation Program.
 - ❖ You will follow directions at all times.
 - ❖ You will not use any electronic device without the permission of an authorized adult.
 - ❖ You will not go into other rooms or parts of the building without the permission of an authorized adult.
 - ❖ You will not run, chase or throw things in the building or in the church.
 - ❖ You will not eat or drink or chew gum in the building or the church.
 - ❖ You will commit yourself to having an open mind, participating actively and possessing an attitude of Christian love and action.

The purpose of these rules is to put into practice the "Golden Rule". These rules will be strictly enforced. This list is not all-inclusive. The above behaviors and any other behaviors that do not befit the proper conduct required of a student in the After School Faith Formation Program will be dealt with on an individual basis. Breaking any of the rules will result in the following **Disciplinary**

Process:

- 1) A Warning will be given to the student with possible dismissal from the classroom and a telephone call to his/her parents/guardians.

- 2) If misconduct persists the parents/guardians will be requested to come and get their child and a meeting will be scheduled with the child's catechist and the Director of Faith Formation.
- 3) All serious misbehavior will be dealt with immediately. Parents/Guardians will be contacted to come to discuss the matter with all persons involved. Serious misbehavior could lead to suspension and/or expulsion from class for the year.

DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Please adhere to the following procedures for dropping off and picking up the children. Following these procedures will ensure the safety of the children when arriving for class and leaving class.

1. Enter the Sims Street parking lot through the West End (nearest Third Street). Exit the Sims Street parking lot through the East End (nearest Fourth Street)
2. Students should be dropped off near the entrance to Haney Hall. Drivers should pull forward as far as possible. Children should be ready to leave the vehicle **ONLY ON THE CURB SIDE/HANEY HALL SIDE OF THE VEHICLE.**
3. Do not park in the handicapped parking in front of Haney Hall unless you have a handicapped parking permit/license plate.
4. When picking up students, you must park in a designated parking space. Do not park along the curb or create your own parking place.
5. We encourage drivers, when picking up the students, to come into Haney Hall and escort the children to their vehicles. Do not stand in the parking lot and call out to the children to come to you. Particularly with the younger children, ensure that the children are supervised when moving through the parking lot.
6. **NO STUDENT IS TO LEAVE HANEY HALL AFTER CLASS UNLESS A PARENT or GUARDIAN OR AN APPOINTED DRIVER KNOWN TO THE STUDENT IS THERE TO PICK THEM UP.** The After School Program catechists will supervise the children in Haney Hall until they are picked up.

SACRAMENT REQUIREMENTS

The celebration of the sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation for children who have been baptized in the Roman Catholic Church ***require two (2) years of good attendance (at least 80% of the classes attended each year) in the After School Faith Formation Program.*** If a child has not attended a Faith Formation (Religious Education) program or a Catholic School program within the past two years, the child must attend the After School Faith Formation Program for two (2) years and celebrate the specific sacrament(s) during his/her second year in the Program. Families transferring a child from another Faith Formation (Religious Education) program or Catholic School program must provide written documentation of attendance in that program for the previous year from either the Director of Religious Education or the School Principal at that parish to fulfill this two-year requirement.

Parents or guardians of children of catechetical age (at least 7 years old) who have never been baptized or who were baptized in a church other than the Catholic Church must first contact the Director of Faith Formation prior to registering their children in the Program.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION

Children preparing for the Sacraments of First Eucharist, Reconciliation or Confirmation are still dependent upon their parents. They learn primarily from the attitudes, words and behavior of their parents. For this reason parents have the primary responsibility for the education and preparation of their children for celebrating these sacraments.

Sometimes, for various reasons, the parents are unable to fulfill their role as the primary educators in preparing their children for the sacraments. In such cases alternatives are possible. They can delay the preparation and celebration of the sacrament until they are able to fulfill their role. They can delay the preparation and celebration until the child is mature enough to fulfill the responsibilities on his/her own. Or they can select an adult sponsor for the child who would fulfill the role ascribed to the parents.

The sacramental policies below outline the responsibilities of both the parents and the candidates wishing to celebrate a sacrament.

FIRST EUCHARIST (FIRST COMMUNION)

Eucharist is a sacrament continuing the process of initiation begun at Baptism. It is the sacrament in which the Christian community comes together to celebrate Christ's presence among us. As we are fed by the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist and by the people gathered together, we go forth to serve others as Jesus did. Candidates for the celebration of first Eucharist are to:

- be at least seven years of age and baptized.
- attend and fully participate in at least two years of formal Faith/Religious Formation or its equivalent.
- attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- attend and participate in all After School Faith Formation classes.

Parents/Guardians of the candidates are to:

- attend Sunday Mass regularly with their children.
- attend the Parent/Guardian Meeting and other First Eucharist activities unless excused by the Director of Faith Formation.
- support and cooperate with the After School Faith Formation Program by working with their child at home.

The First Eucharist preparation program basically consists of a rite of Enrollment at a Sunday Mass, a Parent/Guardian meeting, a Family Activity Day and a Practice for the First Eucharist celebration. The parents/guardians will receive a “***Eucharist 2012-2013 Packet***” in October containing all of the information and requirements pertaining to the sacrament.

RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is the outward sign by which we celebrate a merciful and forgiving God and renew our relationship with Him and the community. It celebrates the fact that we can be forgiven at all times. First Communion candidates are to be prepared and to celebrate Reconciliation prior to celebrating First Communion.

Candidates for First Reconciliation are to:

- be at least seven years of age and baptized.
- attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- attend and participate in all After School Faith Formation classes.

Parents/Guardians of the candidates are to:

- attend Sunday Mass regularly with their children.
- attend the Parent/Guardian Meeting and other Reconciliation activities unless excused by the Director
- support and cooperate with the After School Faith Formation Program by working with their child at home.

The Reconciliation preparation program basically consists of a rite of a Parent/Guardian meeting and a Family Activity Day. The parents/guardians will receive a “**Reconciliation 2012-2013 Packet**” in October containing all of the information and requirements pertaining to the sacrament.

CONFIRMATION

As a Sacrament of Initiation, Confirmation is closely related to Baptism and Eucharist. Christians are reborn in Baptism, strengthened by Confirmation and nourished and sustained by the Eucharist. Confirmation renews and strengthens the baptismal call to responsibility as a member of the community, responsibility to bring the Good News, and responsibility to serve others and take part in Jesus' mission.

Candidates wishing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation are to:

- have participated fully in a cumulative, formal faith/religious formation program or its equivalent through the 7th grade.
- attend Sunday Mass regularly.
- attend and participate in all After School Faith Formation classes.

Parents of the candidates are to:

- attend Sunday Mass regularly with their children.
- attend the Parent /Guardian meeting unless excused by the Director of Faith Formation.
- support and cooperate with the After School Faith Formation Program by working with the candidate at home.

The Confirmation preparation program basically consists of a rite of Enrollment at a Sunday Mass, a Parent/Guardian meeting, a commitment to service, a retreat, a rehearsal and the Confirmation Mass. The parents/guardians will receive a “**Confirmation 2012-2013 Packet**” in October containing all of the information and requirements pertaining to the sacrament.

CIRCLE OF GRACE

The Catholic Church teaches that God has created each of us as unique and special. Genesis 1:27 tells us that we are created “male and female in God’s image” and that God saw this as “very good.” In that goodness, we are meant to respect ourselves and everyone else as persons created and loved by God. God intends our relationships in life to be experiences of divine love. Respectful, nurturing, loving relationships increase our understanding of our own value and help us to love others. It is never too early to help children understand how very special they are and how relationships in life are called to be sacred. Understanding this can help them to protect the special person they are and to be respectful of others.

In November 2008 the Archdiocese of Detroit mandated that a safe environment training program be integrated into the curriculum of faith formation programs throughout the Archdiocese. The program is titled “Circle of Grace”. The goal of the Circle of Grace program is to educate and empower children to actively participate in a safe environment for themselves and others. Circle of Grace will equip children with essential knowledge and skills grounded in the richness of our faith by:

- Reinforcing their understanding that they are created by God and live in the love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Assisting them to describe the Circle of Grace which God gives each of us
- Helping them to identify and maintain appropriate physical, emotional, spiritual and sexual boundaries
- Helping them to identify all types of boundary violations
- Giving them the opportunity to demonstrate how to take action if any boundary is threatened or violated

Circle of Grace emphasizes the sacredness of each person. Circle of Grace is sensitive to the stages of child development and is grade-level specific. Each lesson is correlated with Catholic teachings. The program is structured for implementation each calendar year in all grades. Each year children, grades 1-8, are introduced to different aspects of the program. **It is not a sex education program. Each grade level will participate in one session of Circle of Grace during regular class.** You are invited and welcome to attend the session that your child will participate in. You are also welcome to review, prior to your child’s session, the Circle of Grace Lesson Plan that will be used in teaching your child. If you choose **not** to have your child participate in Circle of Grace, you must obtain an “Opt Out” Form from the Faith Formation Office and complete it and return it to the Director of Faith Formation prior to the date of the session.

Should you have any further questions or concerns about the Circle of Grace Program, contact the Faith Formation Office.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer participation is welcomed and needed in various areas of the After School Faith Formation Program. Training and on-going support is provided for all catechists. All staff and volunteers are required to: participate in Protecting God’s Children, a diocesan-sponsored program that addresses the issues of child abuse and undergo a criminal screening and background check. Catechists are always needed in the Program. Anyone interested in volunteering in any way should contact the Faith Formation Office.

