



**ST. ANN'S
MINISTRY OF
CHRISTIAN FORMATION
for
CHILDREN & YOUTH**

**A Handbook for Parents
2017 – 2018**

**St. Ann's Catholic Church
105 S. Snead St.
Ashland, VA 23005**

September 2017

Dear Parents,

Ready for a new year? If you keep any kind of calendar or journal, just flip back to this time last year and thumb through all the events that have peppered our country, our state and even your own family. There have been quite a few changes in our world since I greeted you like this a year ago: a new administration, a new Bishop to install, a new speed limit on 54; out with Martin's, in with Food Lion.

But some things never change. Now it's time for the inevitable: "Back to School" -- with PTA meetings, new books, new teachers, new clothes, new schools new friends, etc. With summer vacations behind us, the rhythm of life seems to start anew with the first day of the new school year. For some it means seeing your babies off on the school bus for the first time; for others, it means sending your children off to college for the first time.

In all of these ever-changing events, the one thing we can count on as a solid constant in our lives is the loving and guiding hand of God. I invite you to practice looking for God's presence in your very own unfolding, changing life. He is there waiting to be discovered. And finding Him is exciting! He loves being discovered as He reveals Himself to us. I suggest to you, our parents, that there is no better way God has of revealing Himself to you than giving you your very own children. Discover them again for what they are: each child is a gift from God, a precious gift, one you are responsible for cherishing and nurturing. I urge you to see them as God's gifts, given to you for a few short years to love and cherish.

By loving them, you continue God's very act of creation. Give them food, clothing and shelter, but more importantly, feed them your faith, show them your love for God, laugh with them, play with them, hug them, and pray with them. Show them your faith. The success of our Christian Formation sessions here at Church depends on how well you show the love of God in your very own home -- the House Church.

You can also show it by your faithful participation in the Mass each weekend. The chance of your children coming to know and love Jesus, to know the joy of the Gospel, is greatly increased if they see Mom and Dad celebrating their faith with them.

Please know of my constant prayers for you and your family.

(Rev.) Christian J. Haydinger
Pastor

MISSION STATEMENT
OF SAINT ANN'S
MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION

*St. Ann's Ministry of Christian Formation
is committed to sharing our Catholic Faith with others,
by proclaiming the word of God,
and by celebrating the good news of salvation.
Since our Faith is most powerfully expressed in our celebration
of the Eucharistic Liturgy,
the center of all our ministerial efforts,
we strive to express our beliefs in programs and activities
that provide opportunities
for all age groups to experience
a deeper, more loving and personal relationship
with Jesus Christ.*

St. Ann's Christian Formation Staff

Fr. Chris Haydinger.... Pastor
Lise Mikkelson DRE, Minister of Christian Formation
Julie Hendricks..... Coordinator for Children (K - 5)
Steve Turner..... Coordinator for Youth (6 - 12)
Maria Davis..... Coordinator of Youth Ministry

CHRISTIAN FORMATION PROGRAMS

Children's Program Coordinator: Julie Hendricks (office ph: 798-5039/ cell ph: 357-0935)

Children's Program	Kindergarten Catechists	First Grade Catechists	Second Grade Catechists	Third Grade Catechists	Fourth Grade Catechists	Fifth Grade Catechists
Sunday AM 9:45-10:45	Carmen Cox Elizabeth Northcraft Erin Long Marcy Long	Eileen Long Maureen Long Wendy Just	Joann Weissbart Bethany Matheson Carla Crews-Tentor Bridget Davis Morgan Crews Grace Davis	Rebecca Strader Justin Wilson	Mary Brazier Dave Frazer	Courtney Lander Todd and Stacy Stephenson
	Kindergarten / First Grade Catechists		Second Grade Catechists	Third Grade Catechists	Fourth /Fifth Grade Catechists	
Wednesday PM 6:00 -7:00	Marian Dalla Valle Chris Nowlin		Brooke Vozzolo Jessica Carneal		Sarah Uy Dave DePuy	

Youth Program Coordinator: Steve Turner (office ph: 798-5039 / cell ph: 678-8002)

Youth Program	Combined 6,7,8 Grade Catechists	9th Grade Catechist	10th Grade Catechists	11th -12th Grade Catechists
Sunday AM 9:45-10:45	Dave Klisz Deanna Gallagher James Gallagher			
Sunday PM 12:15- 1:15	Marcia Davis Denise Katz	Mary Doss Dave Schweiger	Larry Mikkelson Steve Turner	Amy Flagg Eileen Long
Wednesday PM 6:00 - 7:00	Art Bedard Nicole Bedard			

Youth Ministry Coordinator: Maria Davis (office ph: 798-5039 / cell ph: 836-3008)

To complement and enhance the content presented in regular CF sessions, St. Ann's provides a variety of community building, leadership development, and social outreach activities for our Middle (grades 6-8): and High School (grades 9-12) students.

Middle School Game Nights - Fridays - Parish Hall - Set up 6-7, Game Night 7-10 pm

Oct 13 Dec 1 Jan 5 Feb 2 Mar 2 Apr 13 May 4

High School Pizza, People & Praise! - Sundays - Parish Hall - Set up 4:30 - 5:30, P3 - 5:30-8:00 pm

Oct 1 Oct 29 Jan 21 Mar 4 Apr 15 May 6

F.I.R.E. (Family-centered Intergenerational Religious Education) - Lise Mikkelson

Meeting times and places are determined by the participating families.

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Attendance

Please make every effort to assure your child's regular attendance at the weekly Christian Formation classes and activities. Regular attendance assures continuity of both content and process to enhance learning and growth. There will likely be absences due to illness or family travel plans. **If you know your child will be absent, please notify the teacher in advance.**

Behavior

Expectations

The following are the minimal behavioral expectations in the classrooms:

1. Pay attention.
2. Listen to who is talking.
3. Speak when it is your turn.
4. Keep hands to yourself.
5. Be courteous and respectful to others.
6. Do your best.

Inappropriate Behavior

For an effective learning experience, good order and conduct are expected during the sessions. To assist the volunteer catechists, the following policy and procedure has been adopted:

Verbal Warning: The child is warned verbally by the catechist that his or her behavior is inappropriate.

Removal from Session: If the behavior continues, the child is removed from the session and must speak with the coordinator. Child may return to the next scheduled session. The parent is immediately advised of the removal from the session. Consultation with the pastor may occur.

Children who consistently cause a breakdown in the learning environment will either be removed from class or the child's parents will be required to attend classes with him/her.

Student Sign In and Sign Out

Grades K through 5

- For the safety of all, children must be signed in and out of their classroom by their parent.
- **Please do not leave your child in a classroom until a Catechist is present!** Catechists will begin receiving students five minutes before the start of class.
- For safety reasons, no child is allowed to leave the building without an adult escort. Please see that your child is picked up in a timely manner. Siblings sixteen years of age may pick-up and drop-off their younger siblings; please provide written notice to your child's Catechist if this will occur. If your child is carpooling with an adult other than yourself, please indicate this in writing and give to your child's catechist at the beginning of the program.

Grades 6 through 12

Middle and High School youth may sign themselves in and out. If your child needs to leave class early, parents are required to notify the coordinator or catechist in advance.

Curriculum

The curriculum for all levels includes classroom, worship, service, and home experiences. All are considered essential components of the Christian Formation program. Students in grades K-5 will be using Pflaum Publication's "Gospel Weeklies." Students in grades 6-8 will be using the "Gospel Weeklies" Program. Students in High School use the Diocesan Curriculum, "Journey to Emmaus."

Classroom Experience

Sessions are held throughout the year utilizing curriculum.

Worship

The most important thing we do as Catholic Christians is celebrate Eucharist together each week. By their regular participation, children are immersed in our faith traditions.

Whole Community Catechesis

Periodically the whole parish gathers in the Hall on Sunday after Mass for a whole community catechesis for all ages. We begin with sharing a meal together. Then after a presentation on an appropriate topic, we will form break-out groups for children and adults for reflection and faith sharing. Children and Youth enrolled in our CF programs are expected to attend, as these events are part of their Christian Formation program.

Outreach Experiences

Students and families are asked to participate in church sponsored outreach programs throughout the year. (Outreach Dinners, Christmas Angel Tree, ACES drives, Bright Beginnings, programs for our community's needy, etc.)

Outreach Experiences for Youth

This component will consist of several "Outreach" experiences coordinated through the Christian Formation in conjunction with our Youth Ministry activities.

Home Experiences

Parents are expected to participate in weekly Mass with their children. Talking with your children about that Sunday's gospel or the day's classroom instruction is a great opportunity for parents to share the greatest gift they have to give to their children – their Faith. Parents are also encouraged and expected to pray with their children at home, allowing them to learn the prayers of our Catholic tradition. The development of the faith-life of your children is most profoundly affected by the faith sharing experiences they have in your home

Retreats

Students will participate in planned retreats throughout the year.

Parent Meetings

Parents are expected to attend parent meetings that are scheduled throughout the year.

Celebrating Sacraments

To foster a true sense of the Sacred, and to allow for the assimilation of the catechetical process, we expect that those preparing to encounter Jesus Christ in the Sacraments be enrolled in their Christian Formation classes during that academic year and in the prior year as well (i.e., 1st & 2nd grades for Reconciliation and Eucharist; 9th & 10th grades for Confirmation). During this time of preparation, the student must regularly attend Christian Formation classes and other immediate preparation sessions.

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

St. Ann's follows the diocesan recommendation that First Reconciliation and First Eucharist take place in the second grade, Preparation for First Reconciliation must be completed before the student may enter the preparation program for First Eucharist. Only 3 absences will be allowed. Whenever absent, students should complete the student textbook pages for the date missed and return that assignment to the Coordinator. During these years of preparation and celebration, the student should:

1. Be a member of the parish.
2. Attend CF classes and events regularly.
3. Attend all the required parent/student sessions with a parent.
4. Give a copy of their baptismal certificate to the CF office (Date, Name and Address of the church where the baptism took place).
5. Attend Mass regularly throughout the year.
6. Attend the communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
7. Attend the Mass celebrating the reception of First Eucharist.

(Students older than second grade, who have not celebrated First Reconciliation and/or First Eucharist, follow the same guidelines.)

First Reconciliation Important Dates

Parent Meeting	Saturday, September 23, 2017: 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Parent-Student Retreat	Saturday, October 28, 2017: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Reconciliation Service	Saturday, November 04, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

First Eucharist Important Dates

Parent Meeting	Saturday, February 10, 2018: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Parent-Student Retreat	Saturday, April 14, 2018: 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.
First Eucharist Masses	Saturday, April 21, 2018: 5:00 p.m. Sunday, April 22, 2018: 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Confirmation

Bishop DiLorenzo has recently determined that the Diocese of Richmond will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation in the tenth grade. All tenth graders who enroll in our Christian Formation programs and wish to be confirmed are eligible to enroll in our Confirmation Preparation Program. After discerning his/her readiness, the students will present themselves to the pastor to make known their intention to celebrate this Sacrament. During the time of preparation, the student must regularly attend classes and related events. Only 3 regular class absences in the 10th grade year will be allowed. Attendance at all special Confirmation Preparation sessions is required. Additionally, in preparation for celebrating the Sacrament, it is expected that the student should:

1. Be a member of the parish.
2. Attend Mass regularly all year.
3. Attend the Sunday Mass presenting the confirmands to the congregation. \
4. Attend the regularly scheduled.10th grade Christian Formation classes and events.
5. Attend the separate Confirmation Preparation Sessions.
6. Attend the Confirmation retreat.
7. Choose a sponsor, who will attend selected classes and events with the Confirmand.
8. Give copies of Baptismal and First Eucharist certificates to the CF office (including date, name and complete address of the church where the Sacraments took place.)
9. Choose a Confirmation name if desired (an admired saint as a role model).
10. Celebrate Confirmation at Mass on *(date, time & place TBD by the Diocese)*.

Confirmation: Important Dates

Information Session	Wednesday, October 11, 2017	6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Discernment	Sunday, November 5, 2017	12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Preparation Class (1)	Sunday: January 7, 2017	1:15 to 4:00 p.m.
Preparation Class (2)	Sunday, January 28, 2018	1:15 to 4:00 p.m.
Retreat	Saturday, February 3, 2018	8:15 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Preparation Class (3)	Sunday: February 25, 2018	12:15. to 4:00 p.m.
Preparation Class (4)	Sunday: March 18, 2018	12:15 to 4:00 p.m.
Mass (6)	Celebration of the Sacrament	TBD
Mystagogia (7)		Sunday after Confirmation

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Parent Volunteers

All parents are expected to volunteer. Since parents have the primary responsibility for nurturing their children's Christian formation, St. Ann's expects that all parents will volunteer their time and service during the year. Your assistance is critical to the success of our programs. The example of your participation in this ministry visibly demonstrates the importance of our faith to our children; they learn what they see and hear. For the protection of our children, all volunteers must meet the Diocesan Safe Environment Regulations, and be VIRTUS certified. In addition, Catechists receive training and are certified through the Diocese's "Pathways" program.

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Lead Catechists** (One per class) Prepare and present lessons to assigned grade level with help of assigned Catechist.
- **Catechists** (One per class) Work with Lead Catechist in preparing and presenting lessons to assigned grade level.
- **Substitute Catechists** Fill in for a Catechist on an "as needed" basis.
- **Classroom Aides** Help and assist Catechists in classroom.
- **Hospitality Team** (15 adults needed) Plan and staff special receptions for Sacramental programs, Retreats, and other activities as needed.
- **Special Activities Team** (15 adults needed) Plan and staff special activities for events planned throughout the year as needed, serving as Special Activities Team Members and Youth Ministry Volunteers.
- **Hall Monitor** (1 per class session) Monitor the facility and classrooms to ensure the safety of the children and compliance with Safe Environment regulations.
- **Nursery Workers** (2 per class session) Care for volunteers' children during class time.
- **Door Monitors** (2 per class session) Monitor the doors coming into the Parish Center to ensure the safety of the children and compliance with Safe Environment regulations.
- **Bathroom Monitors** (1 per class session) Monitor the bathrooms in the Parish Center Lobby to ensure the safety of the children and compliance with Safe Environment regulations.

Inclement Weather Policy

If inclement weather requires the cancelation of Christian Formation Classes, a message on the church's voice mail greeting will confirm it. The CF Coordinator will contact catechists and students' families through email notification. Cancelations will also be noted on the St. Ann's Facebook page, and it will be posted on NBC12's "Community Closing" page. To access their webpage, go to www.nbc12.com and click Closings and Delays.

Communication

In order for our Christian Formation program to run smoothly everyone is asked to maintain open communication between their child's catechists and Christian Formation Coordinator. Issues cannot be properly addressed unless they are brought forward through the proper channels.

Prayer

Every day, say a special prayer for your children. Say a prayer for your child's Catechist. Say a prayer for your family. Say a prayer for yourself. And then say a little prayer for all those people who have no one to pray for them. May God bless and keep you and your family.