

Religious Education Parent Handbook



St. Mary and St. Michael Parishes (www.catholicgalena.com)

*****NEW LOCATION***231 South Bench Street**

Director of Religious Education: Heidi O'Shea

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Family Prayer

*We bless your name, O Lord,
for sending your own incarnate Son,
to become part of a family,
so that, as he lived its life,
he would experience its worries and its
joys.*

*We ask you, Lord,
to protect and watch over this family,
so that in the strength of your grace
its members may enjoy prosperity,
possess the priceless gift of your peace,
and, as the Church alive in the home,
bear witness in this world to your glory.*

*We ask this thought Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Mission Statement

The combined St. Mary and St. Michael Religious Education Program exists to assist parents in leading their children to heaven by becoming lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ. Nurtured by the Sacraments and prayer, inspired by the Work of God in Scripture, we promote knowledge of the faith, moral formation, and experience the richness of faith through devotions and ongoing work of service.

Role of the Parent

Parents are encouraged to support their child's faith formation in the following ways:

- Attend Mass every week (and Holy days of obligation)
- Make attendance at Religious Education a priority
- Take some time after class to ask what they learned and answer any questions. Information and internet links will be provided to support at home learning.
- Pray together-taking special care to be sure the child knows the basic prayers appropriate for his grade (see curriculum).
- Provide regular opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

It is so very important that children are given the opportunity to share in the Sacrifice of the Mass every week and frequently participate in the Sacrament of Confession. It is difficult for children to grasp what they are being taught in class if they do not experience the Sacramental life first hand.

Role of the Catechist

Your child's catechist is a person faith, volunteering his/her time in order to share Christ's message. Catechists attend training and stay up to date on church teaching as well as teaching strategies. They prepare lessons to help children learn about their faith, strengthen their prayer life, develop an age appropriate understanding of Catholic social teaching and most importantly to develop a relationship with Jesus.

Parents and Catechists: Together we share and teach the faith

“Parents are the principal and first educators of their children” (CCC 1653). Children will learn what it means to be Catholic and a member of the church primarily through the experiences in their families. As noted in the mission statement our program “strives to assist” families. The instruction they receive in the program should complement what is being taught at home it should not be the only religious instruction they receive. We are here to help and provide resources as well.

Tuition and Registration

Registration will take place during the summer months. Parents need to complete the registration forms and make payment or arrange for a payment plan. The cost of religious education for the 2019-20 school year is \$50.00 for one child, \$70.00 for two, \$90.00 for three and \$110 for four or more. Catechists and regular volunteers in the RE program receive free tuition. If the tuition presents a hardship for your family, contact the DRE to discuss a fee waiver/reduction.

Schedule

Class schedules are available at catholicgalena.com and in the weekly bulletin. Also, please sign up for **Flocknotes! This will be my primary way of communicating with you. If you haven't already done so, go to the website and follow the link.**

Attendance/Youth Masses **NEW**

Classes are on Wednesday evening from 6:30-8:00. **We are moving BACK to the religious education building on Bench Street. At least one grade level will meet in Dolan Hall (the St. Michael church basement).** Attendance at every class is extremely important. We have them for just 25 hours or so a YEAR. Children in grade 3-8 are also assigned ONE Sunday Youth Mass. Participation at this Mass is expected as this counts as a true learning experience. You will receive a schedule of each grade's Youth Mass and location. PLEASE SAVE THE DATE. We count on every child to take part and they do such a great job! Please plan to attend as a family and invite other family members too! **This year the Youth Mass dates are going to be RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FAMILY MASSES. Each grade will take a “turn” with the Mass parts as in the past, but all families are asked to try to attend this Mass together.** (See the Schedule).

In addition, during Sacramental preparation years, additional classes and activities are scheduled to supplement and enhance the learning and preparation. If your child is going to be absent please contact Heidi O'Shea (text preferred) at 815-541-4528.

Drop off/Pick up

Students should be dropped off no earlier than 6:15 in front of the religious education building or Dolan Hall. Someone will be on the porch or sidewalk to help you drop off and pick up.

Weather Emergencies/Cancelling of Classes

If school is cancelled or lets out early (due to weather) on an RE day classes are cancelled that evening. If a cancellation is necessary for another reason (or for worsening weather conditions in the evening) I will use FLOCKNOTES to communicate. I will TRY to get it posted on the website catholicgalena.com. We have fire and tornado drills to ensure safety in our buildings. **If there is a tornado warning we will hold the children in the building until it is safe to release them. In the event that we need to evacuate the buildings for a lengthy period of time, Galena City Hall (parking lot and/or building) will be the pick up point.**

Curriculum

We will be using Our Sunday Visitor in grades 1-6 this year. Children will not bring text books home. Parents will be provided supplemental information via handouts and/or the website about what is being taught. Please review these sources and use them to start conversations with your child about what they are learning. There's a parent page with TONS of resources and information to grow your faith while your child learns too. Please visit aliveinchrist.osv.com/family for information on praying together, the Sunday liturgy and more!

Students preparing for Confirmation require two years of instruction will be using *YouCat Study Guide (Confirmation 1) and You Cat Confirmation*. In addition, sometime during the 2 year preparation the students will work through *YOU: Life Love and the Theology of the Body*. We are fortunate that Fr. Reese will be teaching the Theology of the body material. A parent handbook and student workbook will be provided for Theology of the Body.

Teaching Safety-Empowering God's Children

We will continue to conduct the diocesan mandated **"Teaching Safety-Empowering God's Children Program."** **You will receive information at the back to school Mass about the specific date this material will be covered. Links to information about the program and opt out form are on catholicgalena.com under the religious education tab.**

Here's a quick reference list regarding the prayers students should be learning. If you don't know them all you can look on the USCCB website or catholiconline or the diocese of Rockford website. We will also be having special family event to create take home placemats with the prayers for your children(s) grades.

- Kdg: Sign of the Cross, Glory Be, Angel of God
- 1st: Hail Mary, our Father, Grace Before Meals, Grace After Meals
- 2nd: Act of Contrition
- 3rd: Maintain all from earlier grades
- 4th: I Confess (Confiteor), Nicene Creed, Holy-Holy-Holy, Lamb of God, Hail Holy Queen
- 5th Apostles' Creed, Rosary, Angelus, Memorare
- 6th Act of Faith, Act of Hope, Act of Love
- 7th Prayer to the Holy Spirit, Morning Offering, Episcopal Blessing Response, Eternal Rest
- 8th: Maintain all from earlier grades.

Behavior/Bullying

Children are expected to behave in religious education the same as they would at their school or in church. If your child is disruptive he/she may be asked to sit with the office assistant for a short time until they are ready to re-join the class. You will be notified if there are any problems. Bullying and harassment are prohibited during all church sponsored education programs or activities. Please let the teacher or DRE know if you have any concerns.

Contact Information (more info)

Please use my cell phone (815-541-4528) to contact me. A text is going to be quickest; but a call and/or voicemail works too as does email. The parish secretary can be contacted during regular business hours at 815-777-2053. Remember, all parish offices are in the "old" rectory next door to our religious education building.

I am looking forward to a year filled with learning and new experiences. Remember the day of your child's Baptism? I remember my children's' Baptisms as a day full of hope, and love, and grace. We will help you continue to fulfill the promises you made to Jesus on that day. We have been given such a great gift. These children ARE the church!

Heidi

8/2019