

*Our Lady's Church*  
*Religious Education Program*  
*September 11, 2016 – May 7, 2017*

**Our Program:**

The Religious Education (formerly CCD) program will begin after the 8:30am Mass on Sundays and end at 10:45am, for grades one through eight. All grades will attend on Sundays this year.

Classes will begin at 9:30am in front of the statue of St. Joseph. Please wait there with your child. Please pick up your child by 10:45. Please do not leave your child waiting because you plan to attend 11:00am Mass. Please instruct your child to wait for you on the steps in front of the church and not to step into the parking lot until you have stopped your vehicle at the base of the steps to pick him/her up. We are concerned about children running across the parking lot when people are arriving for 11:00am Mass. First and second grade parents are requested to come into the building to pick up your child.

Our program runs 35 weeks this year but with holidays we will have 27 sessions with about 5 hours of extracurricular activity this year. Each session is approximately one hour. That averages to about 30 hours per year and only 240 hours of religious education for the entire 8 years a child studies with us. It is impossible to learn everything there is to know about our faith in that amount of time. Therefore, the lessons learned during class time, need to be reviewed, expanded upon and reinforced by you, the parents.

We have available to you the Family Guide produced by Ignatius Press. It comes in two volumes. One volume covers grades 1-4. The other covers grades 5-8. These volumes have activities that you can do as a family. These activities follow your child's text and allow you to help them reinforce what they have learned. It is so important that you set the example and take an active role in your child's Faith Development. This is NOT more homework! Much of it is simply prayer and reflection with activities to apply our Faith to our daily actions.

**Parent's role in faith formation:**

Faith should be taught daily in the home, through prayer, words and actions. By living your faith daily, you will be the most important teacher of faith formation that your child will ever have.

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children in the faith, prayer, and all the virtues. They have the duty to provide as far as possible for the physical and spiritual needs of their children.

**Our Catechists:**

The job of the catechist here at Our Lady's Church, is to assist the pastor and you, the parent, in the formation of your child, in the Catholic faith. Our Catechists are an example of self-sacrifice, giving of their own time to the task of proclaiming God's Word. We are grateful to them.

**Registration:**

Registration is held only one Sunday (April 5, 2017). Returning students, who do not register at the appointed time, will be charged a \$5 late fee when re-registering past April 5, 2017. Please contact the Rectory office if you need financial assistance.

**Attendance:**

Just like school, consistent, regular attendance is needed in order for your child to achieve the best results in their faith formation. Please see the Fr. John or Mrs. Biglin for special circumstances.

**Dress Code;**

Modest and appropriate clothing should always be worn especially when attending Mass and Religious Education. This means no tight fitting clothing or clothing that displays inappropriate printed slogans, no see-through fabrics, no short skirts or short pants. Please, no sweats.

**Discipline Policies:**

Every person is worthy of being treated with the care and respect befitting one made in the image of God. Therefore classroom behavior needs to be characterized by genuine Christian care, mutual respect, and honesty. Disruptive behavior prevents learning for the whole class and can be frustrating for the catechist who is volunteering their time for the good of your children. Therefore, if your child displays disruptive behavior, you, the parent will be notified. If the behavior continues, we will ask you, the parent, to attend class with your child in order to control the child's behavior. If the child continues to be disruptive, we will offer you, the parent, the tools necessary for home schooling your child.

**Sacramental Classes:**

The Archdiocese of Washington requires a minimum of two years sacramental preparation for the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation. First Holy Communion and First Reconciliation are sacraments that are administered in Second Level (grade). The child will have completed First Level (grade) and be actively participating in the current (second) level. Confirmation is administered to Eighth Level students. Preparation is levels Seventh and Eighth. Older students would need special arrangements.

All students, preparing for a sacrament, not baptized at Our Lady's Church, will need to supply us with a copy of their Baptismal Certificate no later than November first. If you do not have a copy, please contact the parish where your child was baptized and have them send a copy.

**Handbook for Catholics:**

Handbooks were given to each family over the past years. Please continue to review the handbook. It is a great tool to aid you in teaching your child the Catholic Faith. Additional handbooks will be available if your family has not received one.

**Christmas Celebration – Children's Mass:**

We will celebrate a Children's Christmas Mass at 4:00pm on Christmas Eve. We plan to have each grade level participate in this Liturgical Celebration. Please plan to attend this Mass with your child, or notify your child's teacher if you are unable to attend. We understand that some of you will travel far to be with family and we support you in that. Our Catholic Family covers the globe and we are always at home at Mass. We often feel this most during the Christmas Season when we visit and attend Mass in another parish.

**Child Protection Classes:**

This year we will be using a new program approved by the Archdiocese of Washington called *Circle of Grace*. You will receive more information in a separate packet.

**Lost books:**

The fee to replace a lost book or Bible is \$20. If your child loses his/her binder, the parent will need to supply a replacement. Please have your child bring their binder to each class. Information and notes to you will be sent home in the student's binder. Please remember to check it each week.

**Bad Weather Policy:**

An announcement will be emailed out to all families for closings. Please use your own best judgment as to the condition of the roads, your auto, and your own ability to drive in those conditions. We would not want any of our parents or children to be at risk for the sake of one class.

**Empty Ink Cartridges:**

We collect empty ink cartridges. Please bring your empty ink cartridges. There is a collection basket in basement near the rear exit. The money we earn is used for purchasing ink and paper supplies throughout the year.

**Cell Phones and Electric Devices:**

We have a very brief time for class and all distractions are to be avoided. All electronic devices and cell phones are to be turned off and stored in an unseen and secure location.