

WELCOME TO OUR 2019-2020 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION YEAR

Dear Parents,

*The Religious Education Program for the children and youth of St. Bartholomew's Parish is scheduled to begin on **Sunday, September 15, 2019** for all of our students in grades **KINDERGARTEN through Ninth**. The catechists (Religious Education teachers) join us in looking forward to working with you and your children this coming year.*

You are the primary educators of your children, you were their first teachers and continue to teach through word and example. Just as you take your job as a parent seriously and maximize each moment, we catechists understand our commitment as teachers and will strive to work with your children to enrich their lives. Together, working with the Spirit, let us pass on the Catholic tradition to our youth.

This handbook contains valuable information regarding schedules, overview of the program, sacramental guidelines, and policies that will ensure an effective and efficient Religious Education program. Please read the handbook and refer to it throughout the year, especially with respect to classroom discipline, scheduling and attendance.

*Mrs. Lynn Szymanski
Director of R.E.*

*In September you will electronically receive a letter from your child(ren)'s catechist. Their letter will share with you their expectations for the year. This letter will also confirm your child's placement for the year. At the bottom of the letter, there is a tear off for you to **sign and return** after reading the letter and sharing it with your child(ren). Or instead of printing the tear-off, you may stop in your child's class and sign that you have read the letter.*

Also included as an attachment will be a grade level appropriate syllabus for you to keep, which shows lessons for each week, in the event your child misses a week and needs to complete the work at home. Also note the dates when there are NO classes.

A third attachment will be our Safety and cell phone policy.

Please keep this email and refer as necessary throughout the year!

AND From the Pastor's Desk...

My Dear Friends,

One of the first things one notices about this wonderful parish of St. Bartholomew is that we are a parish of families. The families are the fabric of a believing community. The faith is handed on from generation to generation here. One of our strongest assets in this process is our Religious Education Program. It is close to the heart of what we are as a parish.

Come September, classes begin again and our children will progress in their knowledge and love of God. We need your enthusiastic support in this crucial task. We are blessed with an excellent staff headed by Mrs. Lynn Szymanski. I have great confidence in the whole program. We need your involvement, your commitment to guarantee the success of our catechetical efforts.

God bless you,

Fr. Michael Roach

2019-2020 CLASS SCHEDULE AND MEETING DATES

We will try to adhere to this schedule, please consult the monthly E-calendar for any changes or call the office, 410-239-8881 OR EMAIL: LSzymanski@archbalt.org.

September 15, 16: **ALL** grades, Kindergarten through Ninth
Sunday, September 15: Home Study Session 12:30 p.m.

September 22, 23: **ALL** grades, K-9
**Reconciliation Parent Mtg #1 during class times in Parish Center
Sunday, Sept. 22: WinterFest Meeting 12:30 p.m.*

September 29, 30: **ALL** grades, K-9

October 6, 7: **ALL** grades, K-9
Class of 2019 Confirmation Celebration with Bishop Parker at 1:30 pm

October 13, 14: **ALL** grades, K-9

Oct. 20, 21: **ALL** grades, K-9 **Finals sent home for 7, 8, 9**
** Reconciliation Parent Mtg #2 during class times in Parish Center
Sunday, Oct. 20: Home Study Session 12:30 pm*

October 27, 28: **ONLY** grades, K-6 **RETURN FINALS FOR 7,8,9**
Grade 9: Confirmation Info Meetings: HISTORIC CHURCH

**Saturday, NOVEMBER 2: Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10 a.m.*

November 3, 4: **ONLY** grades K-6

November 10, 11: **ONLY** grades K-6

November 17, 18: **ONLY** grades K-6

November 24, 25: NO CLASSES WINTERFEST
PLEASE JOIN US AT THE MANCHESTER ACTIVITIES BUILDING ON SAT.
NOV. 23, 8 AM - 3 PM AND ON SUN. NOV. 24 FROM 8 AM - 1 P.M.
ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT OUR R.E. PROGRAMS!

December 1, 2: **NO CLASSES THANKSGIVING**

December 8, 9: **ONLY** grades K-6
Sunday, Dec. 8: Home Study Session 12:30 pm (Adopt/Christmas)

December 15, 16: **ONLY** grades K-6

December 22, 23: **NO CLASSES: CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR**

December 29, 30: **NO CLASSES: HAPPY NEW YEAR**

January 5, 6: **ALL** grades Family Life 1-8 and Kinders

January 12, 13: **ALL** grades Family Life 1-8 and Kinders

January 19, 20: **NO CLASSES: MLK Family Life Homework (1-8)**

Jan. 26, 27: **ALL** grades Family Life 1-8 and Kinders

February 2, 3: **ALL** grades Family Life 1-8 and Kinders

Feb. 9, 10: **ALL** grades FL 1-8 (Collect FL books) and Kinders

Feb. 16, 17: **NO CLASSES - PRESIDENTS DAY**

Feb. 23, 24: ONLY grades K-6

****First Eucharist Parent mtg #1 during classtimes in Parish Center
Sunday, Feb. 23: Home Study Session 12:30 pm**

Mar. 1, 2: **ALL** grades, K-8 AND Confirmation classes begins

Mar. 8, 9: **ALL** grades, K-8 AND Confirmation

Mar. 15, 16: **ALL** grades, K-8 and Confirmation

Mar. 22, 23: **ALL** grades, K-8 and Confirmation

Mar. 29, 30: **ALL** grades, K-8 and Confirmation

Sunday March 29: Confirmation Retreat 11:30-4:30

April 5, 6: **ALL** grades, K-8 **Finals sent home for 7, 8**

April 12, 13: **NO CLASSES: HAPPY EASTER**

April 19, 20: ONLY grades, K-6 **RETURN FINALS FOR 7, 8**

April 26, 27: ONLY grades, K-6

Sunday, April 26: Home Study Session 12:30 pm

****May 2: FIRST COMMUNION CELEBRATION**

Practice Friday, May 1

**Sacrament of Reconciliation dates/info.*

***Sacrament of Eucharist dates/info.*

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Students are expected to maintain and exemplify Christian attitudes and values, especially while they are physically present in our buildings.

Students are expected to listen and respond respectfully to their teachers and all volunteers. Catechists will explain their classroom procedures and expectations the first week of class and students are expected to follow these regulations.

Students unable to follow these guidelines will be asked to leave the room and report to the R.E. office. The R.E. coordinator or assistant will speak with the student about their behavior or attitude and encourage the students to correct the problem without parental involvement, since this is a first offense.

If the student continues to be disrespectful or uncooperative, the students will be asked to report to the office a second time. At this time, the parent will be notified of this reoccurrence and asked to discuss the problem at home with their child.

If the problem continues, the parent will then have two options, the first is to accompany the student to the remaining classes to ensure proper discipline or to become an active participant in the home study program, attending the monthly sessions and completing the curriculum at home with their child.

During the year, we ask that you show your respect and support for the work and dedication of our Religious Education volunteers and staff.

GREAT RESOURCE FOR PARENTS, STUDENTS AND CATECHISTS:

www.faithfirst.com

Age appropriate games and activities for students; Parenting 101 articles for parents; Resources for catechists and parents...check it out today!

FAMILY LIFE CATECHESIS & CHILD PROTECTION EDUCATION

In compliance with Archdiocesan policy, we will be incorporating Catechesis in Family Life and Child Protection education into our weekly curriculum for students in grades one through eight. This comprehensive presentation of family life and morality is in keeping with the teachings of the bishops of the United States and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Benziger Family Life textbooks and materials will be available for parent previews during the month of September and throughout the year in the R.E. office. Also available are *Frequently Asked Questions about Family Life Catechesis and Child Protection Education* handouts. Also, check out Benziger's website: rclbfamilylife.com. Parent Username: flfamily Password: flrclbf01

Family Life curriculum will begin in January in grades 1-8. Please review your child(ren) syllabus to see the schedule of these in-class lessons as well as weekly homework assignments: completing the Unit Reviews at home with your child(ren), then initialing the Unit Review page.

If you would like your child to *opt out* of this program, please *request a written waiver* from the R.E. office.

POLICIES

1. All students attending the R.E. program must be (re)registered each year through the R.E. office before they are admitted to class.
2. Parents should complete all necessary forms and return them with the tuition fees prior to opening day of classes or a deadline date, if one is given.
3. Combined fees (tuition and books) are \$100.00 for one child in Nursery through Grade 9; \$150.00 for two children in these grade; \$200.00 for three students; \$250.00 for four. (\$25.00 discount for re-registration prior to May 31st. Partial payments may be arranged.
4. The student's Baptismal certificate must be seen and verified in the office at the time of the initial registration.
5. **Regular attendance of Mass** as a family is extremely **important** and Religious Education classes should not take the place of Mass. The Mass is very important to our faith, without adequate experience of Mass your child is at a distinct disadvantage in understanding our Catholic tradition. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to attend Mass with your child weekly. It is SO IMPORTANT that your children attend Mass weekly to hear the Word of God, for nourishment through our worship and participation in the sacramental life of the Church, in addition to attending Religious Education classes.

Student preparing for the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation are *required* to attend weekly as part of their preparation.

6. We require that students enrolled in R.E. classes attend promptly on a regular basis. Students *should arrive five to 10 minutes* prior to class time. Late arrival disrupt the class as well as put your child at a disadvantage as he/she has to catch up with the group and often times is embarrassed by arriving late. Parents please, please try to be prompt with arriving and dismissal. If someone other than a parent or legal guardian is picking up your child, please send a written note granting permission to that named person for dates that apply.
7. Religious Education is extremely important for the "total formation" of your child. Absence from class should be only due to illness, death in the family, or extreme emergency. Any assignments or class work should be completed at home with parents. Families will be emailed with the lessons missed, please complete, prior to returning. Every child will be given a folder which will have a syllabus, to assist parents with lesson, meetings and no classes dates. ***Please note:** If your child **misses 50%** or more of the classes and/or the teacher is unable to evaluate due to absences, they will be asked to complete a final assessment before placement in the next grade level and if necessary complete make-up over summer.
8. All students must come to class prepared with their textbooks and their folder, which assists in communications between home and church. Parents please check the folder for handouts or communications **weekly** and the text for lessons.

9. Parents dropping-off or picking-up their children:

NO STOPPING ALONG THE DRIVEWAY AROUND THE PARISH CENTER.

We need your cooperation! Due to Fire and Safety regulations, we must keep these lanes open. Please park in the lot behind the Parish Center or walk from church to pick-up child.

10. **Kindergarten through 5th grade** will meet for classes in the lower level of the Parish Center. Please pick-up your child from the classroom.

Grades 6, 7, 8 meet in upper level classrooms. Please ask your older student to meet you downstairs if you pick up a younger child or outside of the side door in the grassy area adjacent to the sidewalk.

Grade Nine will meet in the Historic Church for the fall semester. Students may meet their parents in the Historic Church parking lot.

12. For safety and security, doors will be locked 5 minutes after classes begin, please use the front entrance of the Parish Center to enter, through the office area, during class times, for early dismissal or for late arrivals. (All doors have panic bars to allow for exit.)

GENERAL INFORMATION

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE

The office of Religious Education is in the Parish Center, upper level. The Parish Center is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and during scheduled R.E. classes. We strongly believe in effective communication and invite your questions, concerns or comments at any time. Our phone number is 410-239-8881. Mrs. Lynn Szymanski, LSzymanski@archbalt.org, is the Director of Religious Education, and Mrs. Lisa Utz, Lisa.Utz@archbalt.org is the R.E./Parish Administrative Assistant.

Visit our website: www.StBartholomewManchester.org

Each year worldwide, the Church celebrates the beginning of a new catechetical year together. Catechetical Sunday is September 15th and this year's theme is "Stay with Us".

Class Sessions and Times

Session A: 8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m., Sundays

Session B: 10:45 a.m. to 12 noon, Sundays

Session D: 4:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Mondays

Session H: Home Study (see next page for dates) Pre-Registration is required

HOME STUDY

Pre-registration required

Sunday, Sept. 15, 2019 12:30 p.m. Welcome and Distribution of materials
Sunday, Oct. 20, 2019 12:30 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019 12:30 p.m. Christmas; Adopt a Family gifts due
Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020 12:30 p.m.
Sunday, Apr. 26, 2020 12:30 noon Turn in completed texts and binders

All families are expected to attend **a minimum of 4 meetings** throughout the year as well as turn in completed materials to be evaluated at the end of the year. If you are unable to attend any of these dates, please call the R.E. office to make an appointment to pick-up monthly materials, and for your child's progress to be monitored. After successfully completing these requirements, students will be placed appropriately for the following year.

During the year, if you are unable to complete the home teaching requirements, your child may be transferred to a traditional class, as available, in order to advance to the next grade. However, transferring from traditional classes to our Home Study Program during the R.E. year will be approved on an individual basis. Questions, concerns, please call the office, 410-239-8881 or email: LSzymanski@archbalt.org

SUPPORT OF THE PARISH AND R.E.

We ask that you support the Religious Education Program and your parish through sharing your Time, Talent and Treasure. In order to maintain our programs, we need **every** family to use Parish envelopes weekly and support our R.E. collections, by using the green envelopes, received in your regular collection envelope box, or you may donate electronically through our website: Parish Giving link, Religious Education. We also ask that you are **ACTIVELY** involved with Winter Fest. Ways to volunteer will be coming home with your child, please volunteer and encourage family and friends to attend. Care and Share ladies also welcome new members to their Wednesday morning meetings, no special talents needed. Together we can accomplish great goals that will benefit RE.

Special thanks to the Care and Share Group for their year round work and support of R.E.

CLASS CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations of classes, meetings or events, because of inclement weather...Posted on our website: www.stbartholomewmanchester.org. Families will be notified by emails, if possible AND the catechists will be notified of class cancellations and when time permits, they will contact their students by telephone. Please notify the office of any contact info. so we may be able to reach your family. Also a recorded message in the R.E. voice mailbox #2 will announce cancellations, whenever possible. Also if Carroll County Schools are cancelled **due to weather** on a Monday, then there will be no Religious Education classes that Monday. **Please complete the missed lesson due to class cancellation at home with your child(ren) in grades 1-9.**

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

A newsletter will be sent home electronically the first of every month. Please read it and refer to the monthly calendar, as it will be used as a direct line of communications with parents. Each student will receive a folder the first class, please **look** through the papers in the folder **WEEKLY**, after each class. As often there will be communications sent home that need a response or just "For Your Information" correspondence. There is a schedule of classes and meetings included in this handbook, however, please check the monthly calendars to verify all dates/possible changes.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

Requirements for all Sacramental programs:

1. All students should have had regular attendance in a religious education program for at least one year prior to entrance into the program for immediate catechizing of the sacrament.
2. Parents, who have children ready to receive a Sacrament, are required to attend the parents' sessions on immediate catechizing for the Sacrament. Please mark these dates from the schedule in this handbook on your home calendar and make these meetings a priority.
NO make-up meetings are planned.
3. Students are expected to attend all sessions, during immediate preparation as well as practices for the celebration. If your child misses a class, please send in a written note explaining the absence. Each student will be assessed on their readiness to receive the Sacrament. Parents will work directly with their child on a separate "homework" book and with prayers or any particular need their child may have while preparing.

Reconciliation

The beauty, peace and healing of the Sacrament is presented in a very joyful, loving, peace-filled way. We urge all parents to renew their appreciation of the blessings of this much misunderstood and much "under used" sacrament.

Ordinarily first sacramental confession should precede the reception of First Communion (cf. Canon 914; NCD, 126; and Manual of Policies for Christian Formation #2.14). In keeping with these policies, our preparation for First Reconciliation begins in the second grade, with the parent's assistance and approval.

Our program requires parents to attend two Reconciliation sessions designed for parents, the **first** is during classtimes in the Parish Center on Sept. 22/23 **and** the **second** is on during classtimes in the Parish Center on October 20/21. Along with attending these sessions, the parents are asked to assist with catechizing and complete a "homework" book with their child or they may request that the Sacrament be delayed for their child.

Immediate preparation for Reconciliation begins in the week of Sept. 22 and continues through Monday, October 28th. The sacrament will be celebrated in the church on *Saturday, Nov. 2nd* or by appointment. Request forms will be given to each family at the Sept. 22/23 meeting.

Eucharist

Eucharist is the center and heart of Catholic life, what we are and do. We strongly encourage all parents to examine their own appreciation of and involvement in the weekly Sunday Mass. We try to guide all the students to a deeper understanding of the most important of all Sacraments, but, if this is not reflected in the home, 75 minutes a week in class will not give anyone a true appreciation of the importance of the Mass and reception of His Most Precious Body and Blood of our lives. "Children Learn What They Live"

Parents are asked to attend **two** immediate preparation sessions for Eucharist. The **first** is during class times in the Parish Center on **February 23/24**. In the event of bad weather, the meeting will be rescheduled. The **second** meeting is during class times in the Parish Center on **April 5/6**. These meetings are adult oriented and it is not necessary for the students to attend. The students begin their immediate preparation the week of Feb. 23rd and parents will be asked to reinforce lessons at home using a Eucharist textbook for homework lessons. These completed books will be collected April 19 and 20th.

The Sacrament of Eucharist may be celebrated as the parents choose (select one).

1. Special Parish celebrations with classmates and their families.
Scheduled for **May 2nd**
2. During any regularly scheduled parish Mass.

We pray that this First Reception of Eucharist is only the beginning of the faith journey for your child and that he/she will continually be refueled by Jesus' Body and Blood.

CONFIRMATION

After the completion of their ninth grade curriculum, students as well as those older, in High School, that have not received the Sacrament are invited to attend **with** their parents an informational meeting, please attend on Oct. 27 at 9:30 a.m. in the HISTORIC CHURCH, if needed there will be a make-up meeting on Oct. 28 at 5:00 p.m. also in the *Historic Church*. After prayer, considerable thought and discussion, the students are asked to return a letter indicating their intention about receiving the Sacrament. Those that are requesting acceptance into the immediate preparation for the Sacrament, begin their free-standing preparation program weekly beginning March 1st through March 29th with make-ups due to inclement weather to be scheduled as needed.

Throughout the program, the students will be involved in class work, homework, service projects, working with their sponsors, prayer celebrations and a one-day retreat, March 29th. There is a program fee to defray the cost.

The celebration of the Sacrament will be determined by the Bishop's schedule.

Please bear in mind that this is a free-standing program and not a requirement for all ninth grade students. Any eligible Confirmation candidates will be notified annually of this program throughout their high school years.