

August 2019

CATECHIST AND AIDES NEWSLETTER

WELCOME BACK!!

Thank you for your generosity in giving of your time and talents to help our children grow in love of God.

GATHERING DAY--SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH GRANDPARENT DAY



We begin a new academic year with a gathering day for all our Religious Education students (both Sunday and Monday) in Grades K-5 and their families on Sunday, September 8th. We invite all students, families and especially grandparents to join us at St. Mary Parish Hall from 9:00am-11:30am for special activities and refreshments to celebrate Grandparents Day. This also includes a special recognition for students, families and grandparents at the 10:30am Mass. Please see link <C:\Users\dfarland\Documents\gradnparents day flyer.docx> for attached flyer regarding this intergenerational celebration. **We are in need of volunteers to help facilitate activities for this gathering time. Please email Darleen at dfarland@stmarysgrifton.org if you are interested in helping.** Thank you!

CALENDARS FOR CLASSES and OTHER IMPORTANT INFO

Our calendars for both Grades K-8 classes are available on the parish website which can be accessed at https://stmarysgrifton.org/documents/2019/8/RE_Calendar_SchoolYear_2019-2020.pdf

Calendar for High School classes are also available on the parish website and can be accessed at https://stmarysgrifton.org/documents/2019/8/RE_HS_FALL_2019_SCHEDULES.pdf

A link to our August Parent letter can be accessed at:
https://stmarysgrifton.org/documents/2019/8/RE_Parent_Letter_Aug2019.pdf

Arrival and Departure Guidelines can be accessed at:
https://stmarysgrifton.org/documents/2019/8/RE_Arrival-n-Departure_Procedures.pdf



TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES



At St. Mary's, we will continue to use the bucket system located in the religious ed. closet. For anyone who might be new, please see Darleen and she will show you where that is located. Please do not hesitate to request any supplies you need that are not already in your buckets.

Grade 1-5--I will leave textbooks, artwork posters and support materials labeled with grades/teachers/aides in Room 6. These will already be signed out to you. If you have not yet returned teaching materials from previous years and are no longer using them, please leave for Darleen so we can reuse. For Grade K teachers, please see me for materials.

♥ Welcome to
Kindergarten

NEW THIS YEAR—We are offering Kindergarten classes for both Sunday morning and Monday afternoon sessions. Thank you to Emily Malone, Sharron Doane, and Ed Romeo for piloting this first year of classes.

8 Tips for an Engaging Religion Class

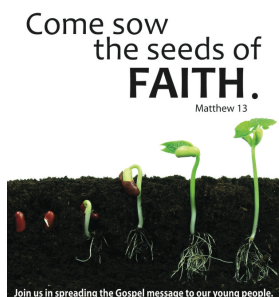
1. **Mix Things Up**—Include in your lesson plan a mix of activities: small-group discussions, crafts, videos, prayer, etc. Class time should be broken up into chunks of time for presenting information and allowing for review, with enough variety to keep the kids' attention.
2. **Appeal to the Senses**—When teaching about the Last Supper, bring a loaf of bread to class to share with students. To help kids memorize the Ten Commandments, use a song. (You Tube can be a great source for this kind of thing; just make sure you preview any video all the way through before showing it to your students.) At Christmas, set up a creche and let students move the figures toward it during the weeks of Advent. Be sure the activity connects to the topic.
3. **Make it Personal**—Limit the amount of time you read from the textbook. Certainly, there are times when the text explains a point beautifully or presents a great story that should be read verbatim. However, the more you study the material ahead of time and share the information in a conversational tone, the more the kids will actively listen.
4. **Use Discussion**—When you see students' eyes glazing over while you present new information, draw them back with a question. If you are presenting information on prayer, for example, ask someone about his favorite time to pray. If you are teaching about Baptism, ask the obviously bored child in the back of the room if she has ever gone to a Baptism. This helps bring the children's focus back to your presentation.
5. **Use Play**—A quiz reinforces the information you introduce to students, but you don't have to call it a quiz. Instead call it a game or call it play. For example, create bingo cards with the names of items found in your parish church. When you show a picture of the item, students need to know the correct term in order to put a marker piece on top of the word or words on their bingo cards. The possibilities are endless.

6. **Redirect**—When class time for discussion or an activity is over, use a redirection technique to return the students’ attention to your primary focus. For example, show your hand above your head and count aloud, “one, two, three. All eyes on me.” Or clap your hands in a distinctive pattern, which the kids repeat back to you, indicating that you have their attention.

7. **Praise Active Involvement**—Teaching religion often is a two-way street, and it is helpful to point out those moments with praise and affirmation: “What a great question.” “That’s an interesting point.” “You offer a good insight.”

8. **Share Your Own Excitement**—Maybe your last class went great; maybe it was only okay; maybe it give you hives just thinking about it. Whatever your last class experience was like, start out with a fresh and positive outlook for the next class. Even if you can manage only a few moments on the way to class, take time to invite the Holy Spirit into your heart. You’ll be amazed at what a pleasure teaching an engaged group of kids can be.

Article by Chris Ingersoll, Catechist Magazine



HELP STILL NEEDED—IF YOU KNOW OF ANYONE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN HELPING WITH THE GRADES BELOW, PLEASE ENCOURAGE THEM TO CONTACT DARLEEN

Monday 4:30-5:30pm

Catechists for Grades 2 & 4
Aides for Grade K, &, 4,

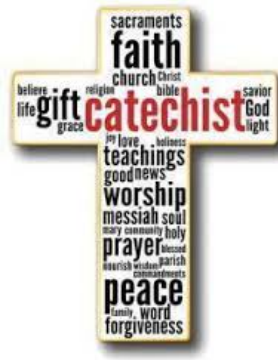
Also we are looking for someone with special education experience to help with a Sunday morning class.

If you would be interested in being an Aide for the HS Church class on either Sunday mornings from 11:45am-1:00pm or Sunday evenings from 6:00-7:15pm, please contact Darleen

Please contact us as far in advance as possible for any absences.

Darleen Farland dfarland@stmarysgrafton.org 508-344-0461

Carole LeBlanc cleb1329@aol.com 508-839-3325



-4-

The Spirituality of the Catechist

Reflection of the Call to Ministry of the Catechist—Personal Spiritual Growth

The Spiritual Characteristics of a Catechist

The spiritual life of a catechist should be characterized by

- A love of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and of Christ’s Church, our Holy Father , and God’s holy people
 - A coherence and authenticity of life that tis characterized by their faithful practice of the faith in a spirit of faith, charity, hope, courage, and joy
 - Personal prayer and dedication to the evangelizing mission of the Church
 - A missionary zeal by which they are fully convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith and enthusiastically proclaim it.
 - Active participation in their local parish community, especially by their attendance at Sunday Eucharist
 - A devotion to Mary, the first disciple and the model for catechists, and to the Most Holy Eucharist, the source of nourishment for catechist
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB),
National Directory for Catechesis

Questions for Reflection

Which of the spiritual characteristics of a catechist best describes you? Why?

Which characteristic provides the biggest challenge for you to work on this year?
How?

Why are all these characteristics important as you seek to “echo Christ” this year?

-5-