

## **Family Centered Catechesis**

Hi Families,

I hope you are all doing well. This has been a trying time for all of us. We have been busy developing a new program to roll out for September 2020.

We have been researching best practices with other Religious Education programs in other states and dioceses to see what has been working. I have had numerous meetings with Fr. Tom to come up with some ideas to improve the program and to focus on Mass attendance for our children.

On a positive note, our program continues to grow with increased registration each year but we are not getting the same amount of volunteers. Times are changing and both parents now work which makes it hard to volunteer your time. This year, I have been teaching five different classes for lack of volunteers. It is time to take a different approach to the Religious Education model. So, in an effort to evolve with changing demands, St. Anthony S.T.A.R.S. program would like to move our focus from a "children only" program to educating the entire family. By focusing on the family, we can partner with, you the parent to help you educate your child on their faith while being part of the parish community. The benefits are:

- Parents and children learn together
- Helps parents share their faith with their children
- Families are more involved in parish events
- Flexibility in scheduling- learning revolves around the family's schedule
- Less demand for volunteers and restrictive time slots
- Increased enrollment demands are met

I know this is a lot to take in right now with everything else going on in the world. Relax, take a deep breath and read the following update. Please know that we are open to speaking with families where there may be unique circumstances and will work to make adjustments.

When the world goes back to "normal", we will schedule meetings to review the new program. In the meantime, if you have any questions, you can send me an email at [stanthonyreled@optonline.net](mailto:stanthonyreled@optonline.net) or call the office at 914-949-0212. We should be there from 11 to 4pm Monday through Wednesday.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support and I look forward to sending out registration packets in May.

Stay safe and God Bless,

Mrs. Jean Jacksen

## **Family Centered Catechesis or (F.C.C.) 3<sup>rd</sup> grade thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade**

We are introducing Family Centered Catechesis. Parents will be the main teacher and we will partner with you to help you teach your children the faith. The program we have developed is being used in many parishes and is having a positive affect not only on the student but the family unit. It is expected the following will be completed at each grade level in order for the child to advance to the next grade.

- Students must do the work weekly
- Families must attend Mass on a weekly basis
- Family Mass Plan is submitted indicating the Mass attending each week
- Parents and students attend a monthly meeting on Sunday. During the parent's meeting, students will attend a monthly class to go over the work which had been previously completed at home.

## **Sacramental Preparation 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders**

Since 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders are preparing for the Sacrament of Holy Communion, these grades will **attend class twice a month**. They will continue to do the weekly work from home but will attend classes twice a month in preparation for the sacrament. It is expected the following will be completed in order for your child to receive the Sacrament of Communion.

- Parents will assist students with weekly assignments.
- Families attend Mass on a weekly basis
- Family Mass plan submitted indicating the Mass attending each week
- Students attend classes twice a month on Monday from 4pm - 5pm
- Parents will attend retreats/meetings with student in preparation of the Sacraments.

Note: If you have a child in sacramental preparation as well as another grade, parents do not have to attend the monthly meeting on Sunday but the student in the other grade would need to attend the review. There will be other meetings/retreats parents will attend in preparation for First Confession and First Holy Communion.

## **Sacramental Preparation 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders**

Since 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grader prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation, these grades will **attend class twice a month in preparation**. They will continue to do the weekly work from home but will attend classes twice a month in preparation for the Sacrament as well as one Sunday evening per month.

- Instead of weekly assignments, we have come up with a credit based system where students will complete certain assignments at their own pace. This will be further discussed at the meetings in the future.
- Families attend Mass on a weekly basis
- Family Mass plan is submitted indicating the Mass attending each week.
- Students attend classes twice a month on Tuesday from 6:30pm-8:00pm and one Sunday evening 6:00pm Mass per month.
- Parents will attend retreats/meetings with students in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade Community Service hours ( new monthly youth ministry opportunities satisfies volunteer hours)

Note: If you have a child in sacramental preparation as well as another grade, parents do not have to attend the monthly meeting on Sunday but the student in the other grade would need to attend the review. There will be other meetings/retreats parents will attend in preparation for Confirmation.

Our curriculum will change as we will use Pflaum Gospel Weeklies which tie in the weekly Sunday Gospel that will be the focal point of each weekly lesson. This helps families better understand the message of the Gospel each week at Mass.

Monthly workshops/meetings will explain future lessons and will sometimes have a guest speaker for special events. Students will report to class for review the work completed and or complete a craft on a specific topic.

Parents will receive the Pflaum weeklies quarterly at the meetings and this worksheet will be completed on a weekly basis. Completed worksheets will be brought to the monthly meetings for 3 thru 6 and brought to class for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade when they meet.

Families will also complete a Family Mass plan indicating what Mass they will attend each week.

Our approach is to assist families to live the Christian life and put their faith at the forefront by praying together and participating in faith based activities/events.

If you have any questions, please send me an email at [stanthonyreled@optonline.net](mailto:stanthonyreled@optonline.net)

Our office hours are Monday thru Wednesday from 11am to 4pm but please call before to make sure we are not in meetings. 914-949-0212.

Thanks,

Jean Jacksen, Coordinator, St. Anthony of Padua Religious Education