

ST. ALOYSIUS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2011-2012

Our office is located at 40 Maple Street in the Parish Center
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*“A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.”
Luke 6:40*

Welcome to a new year of Religious Education! Thank you for your cooperation and for entrusting your children to us. Please pray that our efforts this year will bring all of us closer to the Lord Jesus. **Our program begins the week of September 11th.** Please read this communication carefully as there have been changes and additions to some of our policies and procedures.

FIRST DAY OF CLASS PROCEDURES IN GRADES 1-6

Monsignor Scheyd will meet with all students and a parent on the first day of class. Those attending Religious Education on Monday through Thursday will meet in the church and those attending on Sunday will meet in the school gym. Parents, please plan to stay with your children in the church or gym as we kick-off our new instructional year. Catechist and room assignments will be given then.

Enclosed is our calendar for grades 1-6 which will give you the dates and times we meet throughout the year.

KICK OFF EVENTS FOR LEVELS I & II (GRADES 7 & 8) CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROGRAM

Level I (7th Grade) Confirmation Students are **required to attend the Level 1 Kick-Off Program on Wednesday, September 14th from 7:00 pm-8:00 pm in the Saint Aloysius Gym** with Bryan Mercier, a national speaker and retreat leader.

Back again, by popular request for our Level II (8th Grade) students Bryan Mercier will speak **at our Level II Kick Off Program for Confirmation Candidates on Monday, September 12 from 7:00-8:00 pm in the St. Aloysius School Gym.** Attendance at this event is a Confirmation requirement.

Students will meet in their **individual classes beginning the weeks of September 19th and 26th**. Those who are entering Level II will remain with their class and will be contacted by their catechist. Those entering Level I will receive their placement the first week of September. Calendars for the year will be handed out by your child's catechist at their first class.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Each student should complete a minimum of 25 hours of religious education, which is approximately ONE DAY out of a year. Because faith formation is an on-going process, it is important for children to attend consistently throughout the year. Catechists in all grades this year will take attendance at all classes and required events. **TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE A YEAR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION THERE MAY BE NO MORE THAN FIVE ABSENCES FOR GRADES 1 - 6 AND THREE ABSENCES FOR CONFIRMATION PREPARATION GRADES 7 AND 8** (this would be equivalent to a student missing more than a full month of weekday school). Excessive absences may necessitate additional work assignments and review of a child's readiness to receive a sacrament and/or advancement to the next Religious Education grade level. We understand that extenuating circumstances do occur: illnesses, family difficulties, etc. We request that you contact the Religious Education office if that is the case so that we can help you in any way possible. All conversations are kept confidential.

PUNCTUALITY

Please be prompt when dropping off or picking up your child. Our volunteer catechists make every effort to begin on time. In many cases they must pick up their own children from an activity or are headed to Mass.

BEHAVIOR/CONDUCT

We seek to provide an environment that allows children to learn, experience, and grow as members of our faith community. A partnership between parents and catechists is necessary to achieve this goal. Children are expected to be courteous to other children and respectful of all adults. The catechist in the classroom will set the rules of behavior: for example, raise your hand to speak, no name-calling, etc. The catechists, supported by the Religious Education staff, will discuss the consequences of inappropriate behavior with the children in general terms. At all times, catechists will attempt to administer discipline with dignity for the child. However, in order to control behavior that is causing constant disruption to a class, it may be necessary for the catechist or a member of the staff to contact you. To maintain an atmosphere where learning can take place, parents may be required to accompany their child to class.

SAFETY/ HEALTH

Your child's safety is of paramount importance to us. All of our catechists have been background checked and have attended the "Protecting God's Children" program required by the Diocese of Bridgeport (we suggest all parents attend this valuable program so that they may volunteer in their child's class--go to virtusonline.org for more information).

We require that you bring your children in grades 1-6 to the classroom and pick them up at the classroom. Children will not be dismissed to find you in the parking lot or in the building. Please print and complete the authorization form from the parish website www.starcc.com, (*please be sure all your contact information is up to date, and notify the office of any changes that may occur throughout the year*) indicating all persons who may pick up your child: grandparents, carpooling friends, etc. Bring the completed form with you the first day of class and hand it to your child's catechist. We are aware that many 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th graders are "walkers". Please let us know that by signing the authorization on the pink sheet. Please advise the Religious Education office directly of any court orders or divorce and family situations that require particular attention. Be assured of our confidentiality in all personal matters.

Please be advised that we do not have a nurse on the school or church premises or at our in home classes during Religious Education. Any medication your child needs to take should be administered prior to coming to class. The Religious Education staff and catechists will not maintain, supervise the taking of, or administer any medication. If you have a child that may require an epi-pen, you are asked to contact the office so that we may share with you the Diocesan guidelines for children with anaphylaxis.

Parents are reminded that there is no staff supervision on the playground, either before or after class. You are solely responsible for your child's safety when using the playground.

St. Aloysius is a peanut-free school. Because of various allergies, parents are responsible for providing their own child's snacks.

COMMUNICATION

As a Church community, it is important that we partner in the formation process of our children and be in communication with each other. Please be sure all your contact information is up to date, and notify the office of any changes that may occur throughout the year. Please put the religious education email address ccd@starcc.com into your address book so that our group communications do not go unnoticed in your Spam folder. Please check the parish bulletin either on-line at www.starcc.com or in printed form WEEKLY for important announcements from religious education.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

All grades build upon one another so that children learn, review and live out the Scripture, doctrine and tradition of our faith. Each level has a particular focus and students are expected to know the prayers at the grade level indicated:

Grade 1	An introduction to the Trinity and to knowing, loving and serving God, who is Creator. <i>(Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)</i>
Grade 2	An emphasis on the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. <i>(Act of Contrition)</i>
Grade 3	The history, structure and traditions of the Catholic Church as the community of Jesus are emphasized. <i>(Apostles Creed)</i>
Grade 4	The focus is the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes.
Grade 5	The seven sacraments, prayer, and vocations are emphasized.
Grade 6	Focus on salvation history as described in Sacred Scripture and our place in it.
Grade 7	Beginning of Confirmation preparation with a focus on Christian morality including moral decision making with the assistance of God's grace and based upon the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the teachings of the Church.
Grade 8	Final Confirmation preparation centering around the Sacrament of Confirmation, the gifts of the Holy Spirit as well as a full understanding of all of the sacraments that strengthen our faith, hope and love and empower us to be a disciple of Christ.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is taught at each grade level. All students participate in praying the Rosary during the year.

FINALLY ... AND MOST IMPORTANTLY ...

ATTENDANCE AT MASS EACH WEEK IS SO VERY VITAL TO YOUR CHILD IN THEIR FORMATION AS CATHOLICS. We come together as a parish community to worship, thank God, and support each other in prayer. It is at Mass that we come to know Jesus in the Eucharist. Attending Mass each week reinforces what is taught in the classroom. Without this important time to celebrate and pray together at Mass, it can be a struggle for your child ... indeed, for all of us ... to achieve a fuller understanding of the greatness of our God and the love and forgiveness of Jesus.

We are here to support the religious formation of your children . . . the future of our Church!

Msgr. William J. Scheyd
Pastor

Marie Pascale
Director of Religious Education

Kathleen Redman
Grades 1 - 6 Coordinator

Annemarie Jardon
Office Manager

Deacon Stephen Pond
Youth Minister

Chris Otis
Confirmation Coordinator