

KINGDOM BUILDERS

BLESSED SACRAMENT FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK 2023-2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS



MEET THE FAITH



Corinne Cathcart

FAITH FORMATION TEAM LEADER & COORDINATOR CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION & SACRAMENTS



CORINNEC @BLESSED-MIDLAND.ORG



(989) 835-6777 EXT. 232

Favorite Saint

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA, WHO HELPED MAKE PEACE IN THE CHURCH AND EVEN ADVISED TWO POPES!



FORMATION TEAM



Melissa Kato

COORDINATOR OF YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY & FAMILY LIFE



MELISSAT @BLESSED-MIDLAND.ORG



(989) 835-6777 EXT. 263

Favorite Saint

SAINT JOSEPH WHO FOLLOWED GOD'S COMMANDS TO PROTECT AND CARE FOR THE FAMILY ENTRUSTED TO HIM.



Christy Granda

COORDINATOR OF ADULT FORMATION & DISCIPLESHIP INITIATIVES



CHRISTYG @BLESSED-MIDLAND.ORG



(989) 835-6777 EXT. 233

Favorite Saint

SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX, WHO WAS KNOWN FOR HER HUMILITY AND HER PURSUIT OF HOLINESS.



Sunny Clark OFFICE PROFESSIONAL



SUNNYC @BLESSED-MIDLAND.ORG



(989) 835-6777 EXT. 241

Favorite Saint

MOTHER TERESA, SAINT TERESA OF KOLKATA, WHO SERVED THE POOR IN INDIA.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Families,

Welcome back to another year of fabulous Faith Formation opportunities for your entire family! This year's theme is KINGDOM BUILDERS! We pray the words "Thy kingdom come...Thy will be done...On earth as it is in heaven" every time we pray the Lord's Prayer. Jesus tells us over and over in the Gospels what the Kingdom of God will be like, so what are we doing to make God's Kingdom happen here on earth? This year, let's be Kingdom Builders together!

Catholic Social Teaching, the focus for this year's programming, is about building a holy, just society amid all the chaos and heartache in today's world. The many Faith Formation opportunities for all ages and levels are designed to help each of us—ages 4 to 104—to understand and engage with Jesus's call to care for "the least of these" and to live our faith out in the world.

I invite you to check out pages 2 and 3 of this handbook to get to know the creative and inspiring members of our Faith Formation Team, and a favorite saint that inspires each of them to be a Kingdom Builder. They're all looking forward to praying, learning, and growing in faith with you this year. Don't hesitate to call or email with any questions you might have.

Everyone had a wonderful time celebrating our monthly-ish Family Fun Events together last year, so we're bringing them back again this year! Check out page 5 for the dates, and mark your calendars! Everyone is invited to join our parish family for these events, and to bring along a friend or two!

The Faith Formation Team can't wait to build God's Kingdom alongside you! Grab your hard hats, friends, and let's get started!

Peace, Corinne Cathcart

PARISH FAMILY FUN EVENTS



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY PROGRAM



CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD



The Liturgy of the Word comes after the Introductory Rites at Mass and includes the readings, the Homily, the Creed, and the Prayer of the Faithful. Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) takes the same components and interprets them into child-friendly language and themes. The goal is for the children to "graduate" into Mass with an understanding of both the Sunday gospel and the underlying structure of the Mass.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS is held in conjunction with Assumption BVM Parish.



MIDDLE SCHOOL YM SUNDAY PROGRAM



MIDDLE SCHOOL YM AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM



HIGH SCHOOL YM Sunday program



End of year Celebration

Retreat

Youth-to-Youth

17

22-23

April

group has their own dedicated room in the parish center with comfy chairs and couches that create a homey atmosphere!

YOUTH 2 YOUTH RETREAT

APRIL 20-21, 2024 The Youth 2 Youth Retreat is a yearly retreat for high school students, held in the spring at Camp Rotary. The retreat is planned and facilitated by high school students who have previously participated in the retreat. This retreat helps teens recognize God's presence in many ways through prayer, worship, witness talks, God Time, games and much more!

The Retreat Team should plan to be at Camp Rotary April 19-21.

YOUTH 2 YOUTH RETREAT TEAM MEETINGS



- SEPTEMBER 05, 7-9 PM: PARENT/STUDENT INFO MEETING
- SEPTEMBER 24, 6-8 PM: YM KICK-OFF
- *SPECIAL DATES: OCTOBER 21, 8:30 AM-6 PM: DISCERNMENT DAY
 - DECEMBER 03, 6-8 PM: ADORATION
 - APRIL 19-2: RETREAT DATES FOR TEAM



Students who have already been to the retreat may participate as members of the the Youth 2 Youth team. This team works September-April to plan the two-day retreat. Students grow in their own faith while creating an environment for others to develop and grow in their relationship with Jesus.

YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAM

The Youth Outreach Team is an opportunity for those in high school to put their faith in action by reaching out to others in service. This group meets about twice a month beginning in September through the beginning of June in preparation for the summer mission trip. In order to participate in the mission trip, each member is required to have a minimum of 25 service hours with the team each year. Some of these hours will be filled by helping out with various fundraising projects such as, wreath sales, the pasta dinner, adopt-a-family, the pancake breakfast, Easter flowers sales, and more!

TRIP DATES: JUNE 9-15, 2024

LOCATION: KNOXVILLE, TN

OUTREACH TEAM MEETINGS



YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Blessed Sacrament is working to establish a young adult/young family group at the parish! To sign up for emails, join the Flocknote mailing list!



SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism

Please contact the Faith Formation Office (989-835-6777) anytime during your pregnancy to register for required parent baptism classes or fill out the form online.

For Adults seeking baptism, please call the Faith Formation Office to inquire about joining the Church and attending RCIA classes.



As you may know, the Bishop has moved the Confirmation age from second grade to Middle School. He is also requiring that Sacramental preparation for Confirmation be a two-year program. Most recently, he has approved the program *Purpose* from LifeTeen as the Diocesan-wide curriculum for Confirmation prep.

Blessed Sacrament will be working with Assumption BVM this year to pilot the new program. If you have a child who is over the age of 12, needs the Sacrament of Confirmation, and would be interested in joining this small group of students to begin preparation, please contact Christine Sellnow.

SACRAMENTAL PREP PROGRAM

To prepare for the sacraments, a child must:

- Be Baptized Catholic or other recognized denomination.
- Be a member of the parish at which he or she will be receiving the sacraments.
- Be at least seven years old at the time of reception of the sacraments.

First Reconciliation

First Reconciliation preparation begins in October with a Parent-Child Session that includes family prayer, activities for kids, information for parents, and registration for the program. Families may choose to attend either of two dates for this event. During October and November, families work together at home on their First Reconciliation books. In December, the children gather at church for their Jesus Experience Day when they participate in retreat-style activities and celebrate the sacrament.

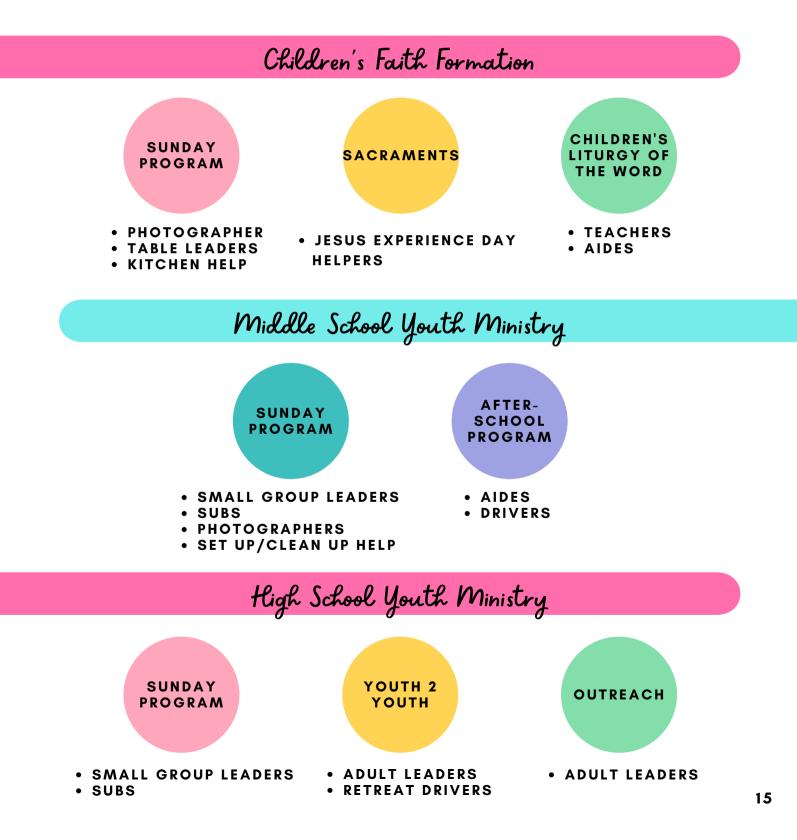


Similar to First Reconciliation preparation, First Eucharist preparation consists of Parent-Child Sessions offered in February and early March, family book-work at home during March and April, and a Jesus Experience Day at the end of April. In May, we'll have a required practice day and First Eucharist Masses at each Mass on *May 4 and 5*.



WE NEED YOU!

A successful Faith Formation program is only possible with the help of awesome adult volunteers. We invite you to participate in your child(ren)'s Faith Formation in whatever way your gifts, talents, or passion lead you! Below are lists of some of the positions for which we need parent volunteers. Please contact the respective program coordinator if you would like to volunteer in one of these areas. And if you would like to be involved in some way that is not listed, please let us know!



POLICIES

A

ACCIDENTS

First aid is administered only in minor cases, as an emergency treatment, until the injured person is placed under professional care. It is the parent's responsibility to notify our office of any changes in emergency information that occur during the year.

ADMINISTRATION

All concerns and questions should be handled by the appropriate program coordinator. Parents may contact the Faith Formation Director for further assistance after having tried to address the question/concern with the appropriate person.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance at Faith Formation meetings is important. Every effort should be made to keep absences to a minimum.

В

С

CERTIFICATION

Our youth leaders and catechists are encouraged to attend workshops/seminars and are required to participte in our certification program.

CHANGE IN ANY INFORMATION

Please keep us informed of any change of contact information. This will help us keep in contact with you about opportunities or items of importance to you or your family.

CHILD SAFETY

In order to help ensure the safety of our Faith Formtion participants, all preschool and elementary-aged students need to be picked up at their classrooms at the end of each sessoin. This allows for proper supervision of your children from the time you drop them off with us until you have picked them up.

COMMUNICATION

We will communicate with you primarily through Flocknote (see more under "Flocknote.") Updates are also in our parish bulletin and on our website. Handouts may occasionally be sent home with children. You may at times be contacted by a catechist, youth leader, or director to share good news, express a concern or to pass on special information. Feel free to call with any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

COVID

Please visit our website for the most up-todate information regarding Covid and the parish's mitigation policies.

CRIME-FREE POLICY

Illegal activity will not be tolerated at Blessed Sacrament Parish or sponsored events. Weapons (including but not limited to guns, firearms, daggers, knives with a blade over three inches, pocket knives, iron bars, clubs, brass knuckles, explosive devices, or facsimiles of weapons used in a threatening or frightening manner) are not permitted on Blessed Sacrament property or sponsored events. The administrator (Pastor, Faith Formation Director, or Program Coordinator) reserves the right to determine what constitutes a weapon. A child/youth that violates this may be subject to explusion from Faith Formation.

CURRICULUM

All curricula are from a Diocesan-approved list. If you have questions about the curriculum, please contact the appropriate Program Coordinator.

D

DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary actions will convey basic Christian values. Discipline methods will include modeling and encouraging expected behavior, involving children/youth in setting clear and consistent rules, redirecting children/youth to acceptable activities and meeting with individual children/youth to discuss concerns. If a child/youth has difficulties, parents will be consulted to discuss the problem and solution.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIALS

The Program Coordinator shall determine the suitability of any printed materials for distribution within the classroom.

DRIVING CHILDREN/YOUTH

Adults driving children must submit a driver information sheet annually requiring minimal acceptable liability limits for a privately-owned vehicle of \$500,000 combined single limit. The driver shall have no more than six points on his/her driving record. A copy of a valid driver's license is needed.

The booster seat law requires all children to be in a booster seat until they are 8 years old or 4' 9" tall. All other passengers are required to wear seatbelts.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

The possession or use of legal or illegal drugs or alcohol by children/youth is strictly forbidden except in accordance with a physician's direction, i.e. asthma inhalers. A child/youth who violates this may be subject to expulsion from Faith Formation.

FAITH FORMATION AT HOME

Although we encourage children/youth to attend Faith Formation sessions and activities within the community, we understand that, at times, a child must be home-schooled. Please contact the appropriate Program Coordinator to see if it is possible to complete a specific program within the home.

FIELD TRIPS

F

Parents must submit formal written permission before children/youth are allowed to participate in field trips. We cannot accept permission by phone.

FLOCKNOTE

Flocknote is the program that we use to send out email newsletters to various church groups. Elementary Faith Formation, Middle School YM and High School YM (as well as these programs' sub-groups) have their own Flocknotes that are emailed each week. To sign up for these emails, scan the QR code on the respective group page in this handbook.

FUNDRAISING

The entire parish community, through its stewardship program, supports Faith Formation. Fundraising projects are kept to a minimum and must follow parish guidelines.

G

H.

HARASSMENT & BULLYING

Persons who engage in harassment, bullying, or threats of violence are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and explusion. Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Michigan Elliot-Larson Civil Rights Act.

. J K L

LOST & FOUND

Blessed Sacrament's "lost and found" is located in the west entrance of the Parish Center. Any lost articles may be reclaimed in this location. After a reasonable period of time, unclaimed articles will be given away to charitable organizations.

m N N

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

The Church recognizes that parents have the primary right and obligation to educate their children. Parents should, therefore, view this program as an extension of the religious training received at home--not as a substitute for it.

The goal of the parish staff is to assist parents in this awesome responsibility. The Catechism of the Catholic Church #2226 states: "Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. Family catechesis preceeds, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents."

As Catholics, we have an obligation and opportunity to attend Mass each weekend and teach our children about the Mass by word and example. It is the parents' right, responsibility and opportunity to ensure their children attend Mass weekly. Faith Formation does not take the place of Mass nor does it fulfill the obligation and opportunity of participating in the Mass.

PARISH RESOURCE CENTER

The center includes sections devoted to: Catechesis, Youth Ministry, Liturgy, and the Parish Circulation Library. Reserve books, magazines, and other periodicals may not be taken from the resource center. Books may be borrowed from the Circulating Library for 30 days, videos and audio materials for seven. All new materials must be approved by the Faith Formation Team Leader.

PUBLICITY & RELEASE INFORMATION

If you do not want your child's work or photograph to appear in publicity materials, please contact the Faith Formation office.

Q

R

REGISTRATION

Registration is required to participate in Faith Formation programs. Registration generally begins in the spring for the following school year.

Our registration fee is \$45 per child and \$120 maximum per family. Registration fees cannot be pro-rated through the Faith Formation calendar year.

No one will be denied registration due to financial difficulties. Please mark "scholarship" on the registration form or contact one of the Program Coordinators if the registration fee is a financial burden for your family.

Children must be four years old by September 1 to register for the four-year-old program. Youth Ministry students are able to request a friend that they would like to be with in small group. We try our best to honor all friend requests for students who register by the established deadline.

S

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms are celebrated at Sunday liturgies throughout the year. Baptismal preparation sessions are required for parents. Parents are encouraged to complete these sessions before the birth of their child.

Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA): Adults interested in becoming Catholic enter the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

RCIA Adapted for Children: Children over the age of six, who ask for baptism or at the discretion of their parents or guardians, are prepared for initiation similarly to the adult process. This process can also accomodate baptized children who have not celebrated Confirmation or First Eucharist. The process is centered on forming the entire family. All sessions are for all ages.

Confirmation for Adults/Youth: Baptized Catholics who celebrated their First Eucharist but have not celebrated Confirmation should call the Faith Formation office.

Reconciliation, Confirmation, First Eucharist: Children who wish to complete these sacraments are expected to complete two consecutive years of Catholic school or Faith Formation, the second of which is the year of preparing for the sacraments. (For example, a second grader in sacramental preparation needs to have participated in Faith Formation or Catholic school in the first grade.)

Students follow the requirements prepared by the parish for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Arrangements for reception of these sacraments are made through the Faith Formation office. Our sacramental preparation programs require parents and children to attend instructional sessions in order to effectively prepare at home for reception of the sacraments. Also, all children receiving these sacraments are required to attend a morning retreat. The dates, time, and place of these sessions are publicized in advance in the Sunday bulletin and Flocknotes.

SEVERE WEATHER

If Midland Public Schools are closed because of inclement weather, then all daytime (before 6 PM) parish events, including Faith Formation and parish offices, will be closed. A decision will be made by 3 PM for evening meetings and activities. Either all evening meetings and activities will take place or all will be canceled.

On Saturdays, Sundays, and weekdays when school is not in session, a decision to cancel all events (daytime and evening) due to inclement weather will be made by 7 AM.

When Midland Public Schools announce the early dismissal of students due to weather conditions, Blessed Sacrament's Faith Formation is included. On weekdays, when school is not in session, the school day policy will apply with a decision on evening meetings and events by 3 PM.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Blessed Sacrament Parish is a welcoming and faith-filled community. We shall provide a supportive and caring learning environment to all Faith Formation children, including those with special needs. Together, parents, catechists, youth leaders, and staff, will determine how best to meet each child's needs, which may include special arrangements. The Faith Formation team shall be cognizant and respectful of families' rights of confidentiality.

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is time, talent, and treasure. It takes all of us working together to make these wonderful programs succeed. We ask you to share your time or talent with us in some capacity. Please call the office if you can help us in any way.

SUPPORT A YOUTH

The youth at Blessed Sacrament are truly blessed to have many ministry opportunities. We provide scholarships to any youth with a financial need. Please consider supporting a youth financially in a parish-sponsored event. Your gift will make it possible for a youth to participate in a conference (\$600), a social event (\$10-75), a retreat opportunity (\$10-60) or an extended service trip (\$440). "Sponsor a Youth" envelopes are available in the Faith Formation office. Your donation is taxdeductible.

V V

VOLUNTEERS

Catechists and youth leaders must be Catholics who actively participate in the life of the church. They must agree to communicate authentic Catholic teaching and traditions as outlined by the present curriculum. Our catechists continue life-long formation through the diocesan basic formation program.

To keep our children safe, volunteers who work with children must participate in VIRTUS, have a background check, and sign the "Standards of Ministerial Behavior Acknowledgement" form as outlined by the diocese.

W

WEBSITE

Check out the website blessed-midland.org for the latest happenings and upcoming events. All Youth Ministry permission slips and other forms will be posted on the site so you can print them at home. Forms are also available in the office.

y

Ζ

χ