



St. Philip's Religious  
Formation  
Handbook  
2009 - 2010

Helping our children and  
youth  
Learn and grow in our  
Catholic faith

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Philip's Religious Formation!

We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with you in your responsibility in helping your child grow in their understanding of the Catholic faith and their relationship with Jesus Christ. **Parents, you are the most IMPORTANT person in your child's Faith Formation! They receive their faith formation first and primarily within their family. 75 minutes for Elementary children and 90 minutes for Middle School and High School youth once a week for 20 weeks in no way compares to what you teach by word and example the other minutes of their lives.** What we do in our Religious Formation programs has little to no impact on those who are not living faith in the home. Yes, our lives are busy but let us try to take more time to be aware of God's presence in our everyday family life. Parents, you are the most important part on your child's journey to and with God. Parents, we strongly encourage you to consider what role you are going to undertake in your child's faith formation.

The Religious Formation Handbook (updated from last year) contains a wide variety of information – registration, drop-off/pick-up instructions, Youth Ministry (LIFE TEEN), cell phone use, contact information, cancelation information, program information, class dates, etc. Please take the time to read through the Handbook and keep the Handbook in an accessible location. Please check the Church bulletin and the Church Website for any updated information.

We are very grateful to our catechists, small group leaders, assistant catechists, substitute catechists/small group leaders, office help, preschool Sunday school coordinator, and all who generously give of themselves in helping our children and youth learn and grow in their Catholic Faith. Our catechists and small group leaders, in addition to their weekly commitment spend many hours preparing for their classes. They are not paid but willing to volunteer their time and energy. We ask you to be kind to them, support them, pray for them and express your appreciation whenever possible. We invite you to join our ministry team, give us a call if you would like to be a part of this wonderful ministry.

Religious Formation is here to assist you in the faith formation of your child. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. Although we may not be able to accommodate your requests, we want to give you the opportunity to share your comments with us. Let us all work together to ensure that we faithfully pass on the Catholic faith to our children and youth.

May God bless our program, our children, our families, and our community as we celebrate, pray, and grow in our knowledge of the Faith together.

God's blessings on you always,

Fr. Vincent Miller

Kris Jensen

Abbie Kohler

## RELIGIOUS FORMATION STAFF

Fr. Vincent Miller  
Pastor  
444-4262

Fr. Antony Fernando  
Parochial Vicar  
444-4262

Kris Jensen  
Religious Formation Director  
Preschool Sunday School, Children's Liturgy of the Word, Elementary and High School  
Sacraments: First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation  
444-5849 e-mail [kjensen@stphilipsbemidji.org](mailto:kjensen@stphilipsbemidji.org)

Abbie Kohler  
Youth Ministry – LIFE TEEN and The EDGE  
Religious Formation – Middle School  
444-4262 ext. 107 e-mail [akohler@stphilipsbemidji.org](mailto:akohler@stphilipsbemidji.org)  
[stphilsyouth@stphilipsbemidji.org](mailto:stphilsyouth@stphilipsbemidji.org)

St. Philip's Religious Formation  
(located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the school, south end of the hallway)  
620 Beltrami Avenue Northwest  
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

St. Philip's Youth Ministry  
(located in the Parish Offices)

St. Philip's Parish Office  
702 Beltrami Avenue Northwest  
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

Parish Website – [www.stphilipsbemidji.org](http://www.stphilipsbemidji.org)

Diocesan Website [www.crookston.org](http://www.crookston.org)

Religious Formation/Youth Ministry Committee

Stephen Pflieger – Chair  
Tamara Ripplinger – Vice-Chair  
Cathy Lalli – Secretary  
Pearl Cervenka  
Clark Chambers  
Kari Gregg  
Angie Nistler  
Mark Studer

Preschool Sunday School  
class sessions are held  
on Sundays during the 9:00 a.m.

Mass

at St. Philip's School

See page for 18 class session dates

## Elementary Religious Formation

class sessions are held on  
Wednesday evenings, 6:30 - 7:45  
p.m.

at St. Philip's School

See page 18 for class session  
dates

## the EDGE (Middle School) and High School

Religious Formation class sessions  
are held on

Wednesday evenings, 6:30 - 8:00  
p.m.

at St. Philip's School and Social  
Hall

See page for 18 class session  
dates.

## LIFE TEEN Mass and LIFE Nights

are held once a month  
at the 5:30 p.m. Saturday night  
Mass

See page 18 for dates

### Religious Formation Registration

Children/youth will not be permitted to class unless a parent/guardian registers him/her. Keep in mind that late registration may result in a child/youth not being able to enter a classroom due to lack of space. Registrations will be taken on a first come first serve basis.

### Class Fee and Sacrament Material Fee

#### The Religious Formation Fees

\$45.00 for each child before September 15

\$50.00 for each child after September 15

#### The Sacrament material fee is \$35.00

for each sacrament that will be received this year 2009 - 2010

(First Reconciliation, First Eucharist & Confirmation – 11<sup>th</sup> grade)

Checks should be made out to St. Philip's Church. Fees may be paid all at once or in monthly/quarterly payments. The fees pay for materials used in either Religious Formation class and/or sacrament preparation (student books, family guides, activity morning, support programming materials, parent sessions, etc.).

Scholarship funds are available if needed (please contact the Religious Formation Office). A Scholarship Form is required. Families requesting scholarship funds are expected to volunteer in the Religious Formation Programs. Volunteer opportunities will be discussed with the Religious Formation Director. No one will be denied access to the Religious Formation classes or Sacraments because of inability to pay the fee.

### Arrival

Elementary

Drive-by drop off for children in grades 1 – 5 is not permitted.

Religious Formation classes for Elementary, Middle School and High School are all held on Wednesday evenings. It is very exciting to have all of us meeting at the same time, but it can also be a little intimidating for elementary children. In order to ease the congestion, Elementary children and parents, should use the Church entrance on Beltrami Avenue, if possible, when arriving and leaving (door number 3). The Beltrami Avenue entrance to the school is locked (door number 4). Please park your vehicle and personally escort your child to his/her classroom. Middle School or High School siblings may escort Elementary siblings his/her classroom. In order that we might provide adequate supervision for the health and safety of each child, we ask that you do not bring your elementary child to his/her classroom earlier than 10 minutes before the start of class. If a catechist is not present in the classroom, please wait quietly outside the door to their classroom, until the catechist arrives. Do not leave your child alone in the hallway.

Please Note – if we are able to staff the school hallways with regular scheduled (volunteer) Hall Monitors, parents will be able to drop off their Elementary children at the Church entrance on Beltrami Avenue. Parents will be notified if they are allowed to do so.

#### Middle School and High School

Middle School and High School youth should not be gathering earlier than 10 minutes prior to the start of class, unless approved by the Religious Formation Director, Youth Ministry Director, or Small Group Leader.

Middle School youth will be gathering in the school gym. They should use either the Church Beltrami Avenue entrance (door number 3) or the Church parking lot entrance (door number 2). Upon arriving Middle School youth should go to the school gym (not the cafeteria/old gym). Youth should not be in the school, unless escorting an Elementary sibling to his/her classroom.

High School youth should arrive using the Church parking lot entrance (door number 2). High School youth who are driving should park in the Church parking lot. Please be aware that many people are using the parking lot. Drive slowly and safely!! High School youth should gather in the Narthex area and wait to be dismissed to class. Youth should not be in the school or in any classrooms until dismissed to class, unless escorting an Elementary sibling to his/her classroom.

#### Late Arrival

Please make the effort to have your child here on time. Make your child's Religious Formation class a priority and have them here on time! We understand that some sports and extracurricular activities have practices until 6:00 p.m., however how many practices or time spent devoted to the sport/extracurricular activity does your child attend each week compared to one Religious Formation class held during the week. If a child enters a class just five minutes late, valuable time is lost. It is recommended that if your child will be more than 15 minutes late that they should not come to class. Contact the Religious Formation Office if your child will be late.

## Dismissal

### Elementary

Drive by pick-up for children in grades 1 – 5 is not permitted.

Please park your vehicle and personally escort your child out of the classroom/Church. Class time ends at 7:45 p.m. for Elementary children. Children will not be allowed to leave their classroom or the Church unless a parent physically comes into the classroom to retrieve them. This is done to ensure the safety of our children. It also gives parents the opportunity to talk with Catechists. If you are involved in a carpool, please contact the Religious Formation Office to notify us who you are giving your child permission to leave with.

Elementary children will gather most Wednesday evenings for prayer at 7:30 p.m. at the Church. Following the prayer service parents will have to come into the Church to pick up your child. Children will not be allowed to come and find you. Children not picked up by 7:50 p.m. will be waiting in one of the following areas: the Church, at the Church's Beltrami Avenue entrance area or the second floor of the school by the Religious Formation Office. Please be on time to pick up your child.

Please Note: With Middle School and High School classes ending 15 minutes later, we expect parents to come and pick up their Elementary children at 7:45 p.m. and wait for their Middle School or High School child. On the first night of class look for signs for locations in the building where you can wait with your Elementary child for your older child or you may wait in your car.

Elementary children who are riding home with a High School sibling will wait either at the Church Beltrami Avenue entrance, Church or on the second floor of the school by the Religious Formation Office. The High School sibling must pick up the Elementary sibling. Please note this location may change depending upon the number of children waiting.

### Middle School and High School

Middle School and High School youth when dismissed from class may leave. For their safety, we would prefer if youth would wait inside of the Church for parents to pick them up. Please be on time to pick up your youth.

### Early Dismissal

We strongly discourage parents from taking their children from class time for athletic/arts/extracurricular events before the class has ended. We applaud parents who recognize that when their son/daughter is in Religious Formation class, he or she remains there without interruption. All else wait! It puts a priority where a priority needs to be in a world where "God things" often become second class!

With that being said in the event your child needs to leave class early, the parent must call the Religious Formation Office prior to the child leaving class, so we can notify the catechists. This is true for all grade levels – Elementary, Middle School or High School. If a child leaves early without prior parent permission it will be counted as an unexcused absence.

Children in grades 1 – 3 who find it difficult to be up late, can leave class at 7:30 p.m. Please notify the Religious Formation Office if your child will be leaving early, before class begins.

### Class Cancellation

Religious Formation classes will be cancelled whenever the Bemidji School District #31 schools are closed, dismissed early, or have cancelled evening activities due to weather. If the weather is bad and the Bemidji School District has not closed early, the decision to cancel Religious Formation classes will be made by 4:00 p.m. The Cancellation Announcement will be listed on the Parish Web Site and local radio stations. Contact the Religious Formation Office or the Parish Office if you are unsure. Parents you have the decision to keep your child home if you feel the weather is too bad.

Preschool Sunday School will be canceled if there is a major snow/ice storm or if the temperature or wind chill is 30 degrees below or colder. At 7:00 a.m., the temperature is checked on the Weather Channel, that temperature is used to determine if class will be held or not. Preschool Sunday School parents may or may not be notified by their child's catechist of the class cancellation. It is not publicly announced

### Attendance Policy

Attendance is essential for a child/youth to experience growth in their faith. Children and youth (grades 9-11) who are preparing for a sacrament, who are habitually absent from class may have the sacrament delayed. The Pastor and Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director will make the determination. If you know your child will be absent, please call the Religious Formation Office at 444-5849.

#### Three Excused Absences allowed

Religious Formation Office must receive a phone call from a parent to excuse the child

#### Two Unexcused Absences

(unexcused absence – no notification received prior to class)

will result in a meeting with the Pastor and the Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director.

Parents of High School youth will be notified of an unexcused absence.

### CONDUCT

All children/youth are expected to exercise self-control and conduct themselves properly at all times. Children/youth are expected to respect the authority of the catechist/small group leader and the rights of other children/youth. They are expected to respect the property of the school/Church, the classroom/meeting area reserved for their use, and the teacher and student materials within the classroom/meeting area. No knives of any kind are allowed. Chewing gum is not permitted either in the school building proper or anywhere on the premises.

Catechists/Small Group Leaders are instructed that any child/youth that is continually disruptive is to be sent to the Religious Formation Office/Youth Ministry Office. The Religious

Formation Director and Youth Ministry Director will work to resolve classroom situations in a Christ-like manner.

The first time a child/youth is sent out of class, the parents will not be contacted, the child/youth may be allowed to return to class that evening after a period of time. The Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director will establish an alternate learning environment for the child/youth, for that class time, if the child/youth does not return to class.

The second time the parents will be contacted to explain that there has been a problem; the child/youth may be allowed to return to class that evening after a period of time. The Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director will establish an alternate learning environment for the child/youth, for that class time, if the child/youth does not return to class. Should the child/youth not cooperate with this secondary learning environment, the Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director will call the parents to pick up the student and continue the educational process at home.

The third time, the child/youth will be removed from the classroom; the parents will be contacted to come and get the child. A meeting will be held between the parents, child/youth, Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director and the Pastor to discuss removal from the classroom learning environment.

### **Bullying**

Every child/youth is expected to treat each other with respect. Any act of harassment or bullying, which has the effect of insulting or demeaning a child/youth or group will not be tolerated and will be handled as seen fit by the Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director with consultation of the Pastor.

### **Learning Information and Health Information**

It is essential that parents indicate on the registration form or communicate to the Religious Formation Director/Youth Ministry Director; Learning Information (Does your child have an IEP through the School District) or Health Information (example – food allergies). We are then able to attempt to meet the needs of the child and Catechist/Small Group Leader in advance. Most of our Catechists/Small Group Leaders are not professional educators and will need your assistance in working with your child with special needs; this may include having a parent assist with their child in the classroom. We appreciate the information that you provide that will help us in providing the best possible faith formation for your child. This information will remain confidential and will be shared only with adults that have contact with your child.

### **Class Lists**

Great care goes into dividing children and youth into classes. Once Religious Formation class begins there will be no changing of classes or small groups. So if your child would like to be with a friend, call Kris or Abbie by September 15, 2009 and we will take your requests into consideration.

### **Illness**

If your child stays home from school due to illness, do not send him/her to the Religious Formation class in the evening. Do not send a child with a fever, if he/she has vomited in the past 24 hours, or any other contagious illness. Please be considerate of the other

children/youth and the Catechist/Small Group Leader. Remember to call the Religious Formation Office to excuse the absence.

### Not sure who's who in Religious Formation?

Religious Formation staff and Catechists/Small Group Leaders will be wearing name tags. You and your child/youth should look for people wearing name tags if they need assistance.

### Pictures

From time to time, your child/youth's photo or work may appear in various St. Philip's Catholic Community publications such as Web pages, communications to parents, bulletins, *OND*, newspapers, videos, bulletin board, worship aids or other media. Please note that the weekly bulletin is posted on [stphilipsbemidji.org](http://stphilipsbemidji.org). Pictures of children/youth do not include first and last names (they may if published in *the Pioneer*). If you do NOT want to have your child/youth's photo or work appear in such publications, please complete and return the form at the end of the handbook by mail or to the Religious Formation Office.

### Communications

The preferred method of communication will be through email and the Parish Website ([www.stphilipsbemidji.org](http://www.stphilipsbemidji.org)). Information will be mailed or sent home through Religious Formation to families that do not have email access. In an effort to be good stewards of our resources, Religious Formation will email, post information and announcements on the Parish Website and in the Parish Bulletin. It is important that the Religious Formation/Youth Ministry is informed of any change of address or email account. Phone calls are kept to a minimum. Occasionally memos and letters will be sent home with the child/youth or mailed. We do not send frivolous mail or email therefore it is important that letters from the Religious Formation Office or Youth Ministry be viewed immediately. Youth Ministry also has a Bulletin Board by the Church parking lot entrance where information is posted.

### Cell Phones

The use of cell phones is not allowed during Religious Formation class time (no text messaging or allowing the phone to vibrate). Cell phones will be asked to be turned off and possibly turned in to the Catechist/Small Group Leader at the start of class to be returned at the end of class. Cell phones used during class will be confiscated and returned at the end of class. Parents if you need to reach your child during class time, please contact the Religious Formation Office at 444-5849.

### Personal Items/Electronics/Toys/iPods/etc.

Children/Youth are not to bring personal items, electronics or toys to class unless instructed to do so by their Catechist/Small Group Leader. Items will be confiscated and returned at the end of class.

### Off Campus Functions

Permission forms are required for all forms of activity off campus (field trips, service projects, retreats, etc.). A child/youth without the proper permission form signed will not be allowed to participate in the activity.

### Mass Attendance

An integral part of our children's faith formation is participation in Sunday Liturgy. While attending classes is important for the practical knowledge that is learned, faith should also be experienced. To be part of the parish family, to worship together each Sunday is to be part of faith in action. We expect that you will give your child both experiences – classroom and Church – so that he/she will be encouraged to practice and live his/her faith.

### Dinner/Snacks

Dinner/snacks are not provided for the children/youth at Religious Formation. Please be sure that your child eats dinner or a snack before class. Sometimes Catechists/Small Group Leaders may bring in a snack or ask children/youth if they could provide a snack for the class. We prefer that snacks be commercially made. Children/youth providing a snack is optional. If your family is unable to do this, please contact your child's Catechist/Small Group Leader, Religious Formation Director or Youth Ministry Director.

### Dress

All children and youth are to attend class respectfully dressed as the Religious Formation classes are an extension of the Church and classes may be relocated to the Church or Chapel for (activities and prayer) special programs at any time. Clothing or accessories such as those depicting violence, profanity and/or are, suggestive, offensive or too revealing, advocate illegal or unhealthy behavior are not permitted. Hats of any kind should not be worn inside of the Church/Social Hall/School. The decision as to appropriateness of dress rests with the Pastor, Religious Formation Director or Youth Ministry Director.

### Classroom Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit/attend their child's classroom, but first must notify the Religious Formation/Youth Ministry Office prior to class.

### Friend in the Classroom

Children/youth are allowed to have one friend attend Religious Formation one class session with them. The Religious Formation/Youth Ministry Office must be notified prior to the class of the friend attending. If the friend wishes to attend another class, the friend must register for Religious Formation classes. Religious Formation/Youth Ministry reserves the right to deny a person's admittance to class.



Luke 9:48

The children and youth who are in our Religious Formation/Youth Ministry Programs need you to share your faith with them.

Our gift of passing on the faith is a blessing to the children and youth of our parish. You will make a great difference in their lives.

All of our volunteers at Religious Formation/Youth Ministry are High School Youth (Preschool Sunday School), High School Seniors and Adult Volunteers with a heart for teaching and sharing faith with the children and youth of our parish. Without their time and commitment, we would not have a faith formation/youth ministry program. We are always in need of people to help. Catechists and Small Group Leaders don't need to be theologians, you just need to have a desire to help our children and youth learn about our Catholic faith and grow in their relationship with Christ. Please consider helping in any capacity. Many teaching options are available – team teach with another parent/friend, that way you can take turns teaching lessons and have someone else in the class; be an assistant catechist – help the catechist in the classroom, you don't have to teach, just be an extra hand in the classroom; All volunteers must complete the Diocese of Crookston's Safe Environment Training. Catechists and Small Group Leaders receive a discount on their Religious Formation class fee.

## Elementary Religious Formation

- † Catechists (teachers), and Substitute Catechists - High School Seniors and Adults can teach Elementary Religious Formation – Experience needed - a desire to share our faith with the elementary children of our parish. An easy to use catechist manual and great web site helps the catechist in preparing and presenting a lesson. The curriculum that is used provides an easy to use teacher manual and a great web site to assist the catechist in presenting a lesson. The Elementary Program provides a variety of creative experiences aimed at nurturing our Catholic Christian faith, a sense of community and awareness of God's presence in prayer.
- † Assistant Catechists – High School Seniors and Adults - will assist the elementary catechist in the classroom. You don't have to teach (unless you are willing to as needed), just be an extra hand to help out the catechist.

## The EDGE ~ Middle School Religious Formation

- † Edge Leaders – Adults and High School Seniors are invited to serve on a team of people who, together as a team, prepare & lead large group activities, prayer services, large group discussions, etc. Most team members will also be asked to serve as a small group leader, facilitating discussion in a group of 5-6 youth. These small groups meet weekly during class time and will be an assigned group of youth that changes 2 -3 times per year. Leaders will need to do some reading prior to each class session and be available for bi-monthly meetings. Leaders need to be living out the basic teachings of the Catholic Church and have a desire to lead middle school youth closer to Christ and His Church.

## High School Religious Formation

- † 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Small Group Leaders – Adults are needed to lead groups of 6 youth in discussions following a teaching session lead by one of the priests or a guest speaker or small group leader. Adults work in teams of two. Leaders will need to do some reading prior to each class session and help lead a prayer service twice a year. Discussion questions will be provided. Leaders should be able to relate to young people and have a desire to help them travel on their faith journey. Leaders have the opportunity to lead a teaching session if they choose.

Hall Monitors – Adults are needed in the hallways of the school from 6:15 – 6:45 p.m. to assist parents and children in the school. Time commitment can be for the year or a month.

Office Assistants – Adults are needed to help in the Religious Formation Office from 6:00 until 8:00 p.m. Commitment should be for the entire year.

Cooks – Adults are needed to help prepare, serve and clean up a light meal for catechists and small group leaders on Wednesday evenings. The time frame varies depending upon what is being served. The meal is served starting at 5:30 until 6:15 p.m. Commitment can be for the year or a month.

Chaperones/Drivers – Adults are needed for Service Projects or Special Events. Time commitment is for the event.

### Preschool Sunday School

- † Catechists (teachers) and, Substitute Catechists - High School youth and Adults can teach Preschool Sunday School. An easy to use catechist manual assists the catechist in preparing and presenting the lesson.
- † Assistant Catechists – Middle School youth and older can be Assistant Catechists in the Preschool Sunday School Program. You don't have to teach, just be an extra hand to help out with the children.
- † Preschool Sunday School Coordinator(s) – Adults are needed to coordinate the Preschool Sunday School Program. Responsibilities include: being on site when Sunday School is held, from 8:30 – 10:15 a.m.; assisting Sunday School Catechists; and other various duties relating to the Preschool Sunday School Program. Commitment preferred for the entire year. This is a stipend position.

### Children's Liturgy of the Word

- † Leaders – Leaders will be grouped in teams of two and will be assigned a weekend a month (or less depending upon how many leaders we have) to lead a group of Kindergarten and First graders who attend the 9:00 a.m. Liturgy in making the Sunday Scripture Readings relevant to their lives and experiences. CLOW leaders must be available at the beginning of Mass to lead the students out of Mass following the opening prayer and return the children to Mass after the Prayers of the Faithful.

EDGE Youth Ministry ~ Ministry cannot happen without the time & energy of willing & able parents. If you are interested in chaperoning one of our events throughout the year, or if you would be interested in helping to plan & prepare for an in-parish youth group gathering, please contact Abbie.

LIFE TEEN Youth Ministry ~ Our Life Teen Ministry has two main components to it: our monthly LIFE TEEN Masses & Life Nights, and our annual events that happen throughout the year (Diocesan youth rally, LIFE TEEN Retreat, D-week, etc.). Our ministry would not work without the support & help of parents & other adults who are willing to get involved & serve our youth. We've designed our program to allow you to get involved when you are most able, so Please consider serving in one of the following ways this year:

- † Life Night Planning Teams: For each monthly Life Night we pull together a team of 8-12 people to brainstorm & choose an activity for our night. As a team we will then plan, prepare, and promote our monthly youth group. Teams start meeting 1-2 months before their designated Life Night, and usually 2-4 meetings are involved throughout the entire process.
- † Life Night support: Outside of the planning teams, we still need people to be the "hands & feet" of Christ to our youth by being present for the Life Night itself through: set up, clean up, cooking team, drivers, etc. This commitment is usually the night-of only. So if you want to get involved but feel crunched for time, this might be for you.

- † LIFE TEEN Event Chaperone / Driver: Anytime we travel parents & adults are needed as chaperones, and possibly drivers. These are often one-day events.

Vacation Bible School – Children who have completed fifth grade through adult are needed to help with Vacation Bible School in many areas: Bible Story; Crafts; Games; Snacks; Music; Childcare; Photos/Slideshow; Crew Leaders; and Preschool Catechists. Contact the Religious Formation Office in April for more information to help during this fun, faith-filled week!

Consider sharing your faith with the  
children and youth of our parish!  
For more information on opportunities to  
share your faith,  
contact

Kris at Religious Formation - 444-5849  
or Abbie at Youth Ministry - 444-4262 ext.  
107

## **To Keep the Faith, We Have to Share the Faith!**

### Religious Formation/Youth Ministry Program Information

#### Preschool Sunday School

The Sunday Preschool Program is for children ages three (by September 1, 2009) and four years old. Preschool classes meet during the 9:00 a.m. Mass in St. Philip's School, October through April, approximately three times a month. Children will learn about a loving and caring God, develop Catholic and Christian attitudes and be introduced to prayer.

#### Children's Liturgy of the Word

Children Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> grade gather during the Sunday, 9:00 Liturgy to hear the Gospel reading and reflect on the reading at their age level from September through May. Registration is not necessary. Children's Liturgy of the Word does not take the place of Religious Formation Classes.

## Elementary Religious Formation

The Elementary Program will be using the curriculum series, *Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts*, Loyola Press. Lessons will be sent home each week. All five grade levels follow five overarching themes of God, Jesus, the Church, the Sacraments, and Morality, each grade level has its own general focus.

Grade 1 – God is our Creator and loves us as our Father

Grade 2 – We prepare for the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist

Grade 3 – God calls us to live in community as members of the Church

Grade 4 – God calls us to lead a moral life

Grade 5 – Through the Sacraments we live more fully in the Holy Spirit

Each lesson engages the children by starting from typical moments in their own lives and inviting them to join in a prayer of petition. The children then explore Scripture and Tradition, they discuss their faith and extend their relationship with God through reflective prayer. Each lesson ends with a discussion of how to act upon what they have learned, and children join in a prayer of gratitude for God's gifts.

On the last page of the lesson is a parent page – to nurture parent's spirituality and awareness of God and ideas for family activities. It is important to review the lesson with your child at home. This will give you a way to connect religion class with home. Sometimes you may find that your child did not "fill in the blanks" on the lesson, this could mean a variety of things – instead of writing the class discussed the questions, another activity was planned, ran out of time, etc., that is why it is so important that you go over the lesson with your child.

The *Finding God* Web site is a great resource for parents, check it out – [www.FindingGod.org](http://www.FindingGod.org)

## Elementary Prayer Service

Elementary children will gather most Wednesday evenings for prayer at 7:30 p.m. at the Church. Parents you are invited to attend. Children in grades 3 – 5 will take an active role in leading the prayer services. A Prayer Service schedule will be sent home twice a year with the children.

## Home Study for Elementary Children

Every child and family situation is different. If for some reason the traditional classroom setting does not meet your needs, you may consider Home Study. Home Study is an option for children in first grade and for elementary aged children who absolutely cannot attend on Wednesday evenings. Children preparing for a sacrament cannot take part in the Home Study option; he/she must be enrolled in Wednesday evening Religious Formation classes. The registration fee is the same for the Home Study as for children in the classroom. Register for the Home Study option at the Parent/Registration Night. Home Study curriculum is the same curriculum used in the classroom.

## The EDGE~ Middle School

The Middle School Program is for students in grades 6 - 8. Each night we will gather as a large group for a time of prayer and learning on a topic of faith. Students will also break into small

groups for further exploration of the topic in an age-appropriate manner. Our curriculum will run in a three-year rotation and will include topics such as: exploring people of the Bible, reflection on Jesus' life ministry and teachings, discovering what it means to be Catholic, and reflection on the Sacraments. This year we will start the year off studying the Liturgy: its history and the different parts of Mass. Each year we take class time to explore the truths of Catholic morality, and providing opportunities to act on social justice issues (service projects).

### High School Religious Formation

The High School Program is a three year Confirmation program for students in grades 9 - 11. It is very important for High Schoolers to attend each year of Religious Formation. The High School youth will be using the curriculum – *Total Catechesis*, St. Mary's Press and *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*, St. Mary's Press. *Total Catechesis* comprises of four catechetical manuals/sessions (Christian Morality, Christian Prayer, Liturgy and the Sacraments and the Creed) which address the four pillars of the Catholic faith as outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. All four sessions will be covered during the three year preparation period before Confirmation. High School youth are taught mostly by the priests in grade level large group settings and then broke into small groups for small group discussions led by small group leaders.

High School Youth will receive *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*. This book will be theirs to keep and will be used in Religious Formation class all three years. Some outside reading may be assigned and the youth will be expected to come to class prepared. If a youth should lose their book, it will be the responsibility of the youth/parents to replace the book at a cost of \$20.00.

### Confirmation Guidelines (see Confirmation Guidelines)

Youth are required to complete the Confirmation Requirements for their grade level in order to receive Confirmation in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The Confirmation Requirements Form must be turned in by the last Religious Formation class time in grades 9 and 10. Please note that some requirements are the same for all grade levels and specific requirements for different grade levels, especially in 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

## Youth Ministry ~ EDGE

Various events are offered throughout the year for our middle schoolers.

- † Passport Party (Summer):
- † NET Retreat (Fall): A team of young adults from the National Evangelization Team (NET Ministries) visits our diocese once a year to host retreats for the youth of our parishes. Their mission is to spread the word of God & Christ's love for each of us to the youth and families they encounter. Each year we invite the NET Team to visit St. Philip's and lead a one day retreat for our 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders. The theme of the day changes each year but always includes testimonies by team members, Mass, small group sharing, music, games and lots of fun. This year the team will be visiting us sometime in November. The date will be available closer to that time.
- † Diocesan Middle School Youth Rally (Spring): It is good that we gather as a community of believers, and so our diocese sponsors an annual rally for middle school youth to come together, share their faith, grow in their relationship with God, and have a lot of fun while they do it. The Youth Rally is a one day event filled with interactive prayer services, engaging speakers, Mass, music, games, dancing and so much more. This event is open to all 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders.
- † Camp Corbett (Summer): Each summer we spend 3-4 days at a diocesan owned summer camp: Camp Corbett, on Big Elbow Lake, near Waubun, MN. This camp is open to all students who will enter 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade the following Fall & is a great chance to hang out with your friends in a faith-filled environment. Everyone at camp shares in the responsibilities of cooking & cleaning up after all the meals (Dishes, too!). But we always have plenty of time to be in the lake & spend around the campfire. Summer 2010 tentative dates are: July 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>
- † Diocesan JP II Middle School Leadership Camp (Summer): This event is only 3 years old & is open to youth going into 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall. This camp, named after Pope John Paul II, was created to build up young leaders in their faith. Held at a beautiful summer camp on fish hook lake near Park Rapids, campers at JP II will participate in: Daily Masses, small groups, interactive prayer services (planned by the small groups), talks & faith sharing testimonies led by team members, music, games, lake activities, and service projects in the Park Rapids area. This camp is staffed by High School Students, young adults, and youth ministers from around our diocese. The tentative dates for 2010 are: July 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>.

## Youth Ministry ~ LIFE TEEN

Life Teen Mass, featuring St. Philip's Life Teen band leading contemporary worship, will be once a month throughout the 2009 – 2010 school year at the 5:30 p.m. Saturday night Mass.

Mass will begin at 5:30 p.m. Youth are invited to serve in the Mass Ministry roles for this Mass; greeters, ushers, lectors, altar servers, and gift bearers. Confirmed youth and adults are invited to serve as Eucharistic ministers. If you are interested in serving at a LIFE TEEN Mass please contact Abbie in the youth office.

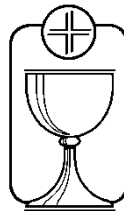
After each LIFE TEEN Mass, all youth in grades 9 – 12 are invited to participate in our monthly LIFE Night's. These gatherings are a social & faith-filled time for our youth & volunteer adults to get together in a positive and Catholic environment. Check your mail, listen for announcements at Mass, and check the youth bulletin board each month for more details on what's to come.

## Safe Environment St. Philip's Parish

The job of ensuring children's safety is a challenging undertaking. The prevention of child sexual abuse requires more than adult awareness, education, and training about the nature and scope of the problem. We must also give our children the tools they need to overcome the advances of someone who intends to do them harm. St. Philip's Parish is using the safe environment program *Protecting God's Children* by VIRTUS for elementary aged children and Praesidium *Called to Protect* program for Middle School and High School. A safe environment lesson will become a part of the Religious Formation curriculum in Elementary, Middle School and High School.

## Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is a fun, faith filled week that will be held in June 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for children who are three by September 1, 2009 through 4<sup>th</sup> grade (2009 - 2010 school year).



## Sacraments – First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation

Celebrations of First Eucharist, First Reconciliation, and Confirmation will be once a year. Preparations for these sacraments will be coordinated through the Religious Formation Office regardless of whether the child attends St. Philip's School or Religious Formation. It is recommended that children who are at least in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade prepare for both the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. The child preparing for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation and/or First Eucharist must be enrolled in St. Philip's Religious Formation or St. Philip's School. Parents are the primary educator in preparing their child to receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist under the direction of the Religious Formation Director. Confirmation is a three year formation program beginning in 9<sup>th</sup> grade with the reception of the Sacrament in the spring of 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Youth are required to attend Religious Formation class during this time. Guidelines on the First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation will be available to parents at Sacrament Parent Sessions and Parent Information/Registration Sessions.

## SACRAMENT DATES

### Confirmation

Wednesday, September 16, 6:30 p.m.

- Parent/Candidate/Sponsor Session

Sunday, January 31, 12:00 p.m.

- Candidate/Sponsor

Wednesday, April 14, 6:00 p.m.

- Confirmation Rehearsal and Mass

Sunday, April 18, 2:30 p.m.

- Confirmation Celebrated at St. Philip's Church

We will be celebrating God's presence of 100 years in the Diocese of Crookston in our Deanery with a Deanery Confirmation with the following Parishes: Bagley, Red Lake, Wilton, Nebish, and Blackduck.

### First Reconciliation

Wednesday, September 30, 6:30 p.m.

- First Reconciliation Parent Session

October 3 and 4 - First Reconciliation Prayer Partner

Weekend

Saturday, November 21, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- First Reconciliation Activity Morning

Saturday, December 5 - First Reconciliation Celebrated

- 9:00 a.m. all day on the hour until 4:00 p.m.

### First Eucharist

Wednesday, January 27, 6:30 p.m.

- First Eucharist Parent Session

February 6 and 7 - First Eucharist Prayer Partner Weekend

Saturday, April 24, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- First Eucharist Activity Morning

Sunday, May 2 - First Eucharist Celebrated at 2:00 p.m.

In celebration of the Diocese of Crookston's 100 years, we will be celebrating First Eucharist with all the children and their families of our parish together at one joyful Mass.

### Religious Formation Class Schedule

Preschool Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.

October 4  
October 11

October 25  
November 1

November 8	February 21
November 22	March 7
December 6	March 14
December 13	March 21
December 20	March 28
January 24	April 11
January 31	April 18
February 7	April 25

Elementary-Middle School-High School  
 Elementary Class Time ~ 6:30 - 7:45 p.m.  
 Middle School-High School Class Time ~ 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

October 28	February 10
November 4	February 17
November 11	March 3
November 18	March 10
December 2	March 17
December 9	March 24
January 6	March 31
January 13	April 7
January 20	April 21
February 3	April 28

LIFE TEEN MASS ~ Saturday 5:30 p.m.

September 5 <sup>th</sup> '09	February 20 <sup>th</sup> '10
October 3 <sup>rd</sup> '09	March 13 <sup>th</sup> '10
November 21 <sup>st</sup> '09	April 24 <sup>th</sup> '10
December 19 <sup>th</sup> '09	May 15 <sup>th</sup> '10
	(Baccalaureate)
	June 12 <sup>th</sup> '10
January 30 <sup>th</sup> '10	

## Safe Environment

Volunteers are essential to the working of St. Philip's Parish, St. Philip's Religious Formation and St. Philip's School. As part of our church family, we strive to create and maintain safe environments for all who are here. To ensure that the children and youth who worship, study or participate in activities we sponsor do so in the safest and most secure setting possible, we are requiring the volunteers complete the Volunteer Acknowledgement and Consent form and receive Safe Environment Training. A background check will be done on all volunteers.

Religious Formation volunteers who need to complete the Volunteer Acknowledgement and Consent form and receive Safe Environment Training are: catechists (teachers), substitute catechists, Small Group Leaders, EDGE team members, LIFE TEEN volunteers, classroom aides, Religious Formation

Office aides, drivers, adults that help with a service project, chaperones, Children’s Liturgy of the Word leaders and any adult who volunteers in any capacity that may have direct or indirect contact with the children/youth who are attending Religious Formation classes or LIFE TEEN activities. If you have completed the form and training because you volunteer in another capacity in the Parish (school volunteer, etc.) you do not have to complete the form and training. Every year volunteers will have to complete the Acknowledgement and Consent form and do training whether you have volunteered in the past or not.

Volunteers need to do the following to receive Safe Environment Certification from the Diocese of Crookston – Office of Safe Environment:

Complete the Volunteer Acknowledgement and Consent form (every year)  
Return this form to the Religious Formation Office or the Parish Office

Receive Safe Environment Training  
– Component A and pass a quiz. The passing of a short quiz is required in order to earn a certificate of compliance, necessary to complete the training.

Through one of these methods:

on-line training – [www.crookston.org](http://www.crookston.org) Safe Environment Training  
read the training on line and take the quiz on-line  
– make sure to print a copy for your self

attend a group training session  
training as a group and take the quiz

visit the Religious Formation Office, School Office, or Parish Office  
pick up a “hard” copy of the training materials and quiz to do at home or on site

Your participation, cooperation, and assistance are most appreciated.

Questions, please contact Kris Jensen 444-5849 Safe Environment Coordinator

**Photo Permission Denial**

St. Philip’s Catholic Community Publications and Web Pages

\_\_\_\_\_ I do NOT give permission to use my child’s photo and/or work in St. Philip’s Catholic Community publications and/or Web pages.

Child’s Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Dates when release is intended – September 2009 – September 2010