



**2018 - 2019
Christian Formation
Family Handbook**

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St. Agnes Christian Formation 2018-2019

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another exciting year of Christian Formation!

I hope this letter finds you having a blessed, safe and enjoyable summer. Enclosed you will find the Christian Formation Handbook with schedules for your child(ren) for the 2018-2019 school year.

We begin the year for ALL families K3 - 12th grade on Sunday morning, **September 9** from 9:00 - 10:15 AM in Kemp Hall which will include our potluck breakfast and a kickoff orientation meeting.

Class session for ALL students will begin on Sunday September 16 from 9:00 - 10:15 AM except the Confirmation students who will have a parent/student/sponsor orientation meeting in Kemp Hall. See calendars in this handbook for details.

We thank you all for your past support and involvement and look forward to another year of working together to provide our children and youth with opportunities to learn and grow as more committed followers of Christ and more engaged members of the church.

His Peace,

Shelly Fellin
Christian Formation Coordinator

Note: There are Youth Board activities starting Friday September 7th.

Foundations for Child and Youth Ministry Grades K-3 through Confirmation

Jesus entrusted his mission, his Good News, to the Church. Through formation and education, the Church prepares its members to proclaim the Good News and put it into action in their lives. The efforts of the Church form persons in community. Our educational ministry includes these dimensions:



- ❖ **Word** the message revealed by God
- ❖ **Worship** prayer and sacramental life
- ❖ **Community** fellowship in the Holy Spirit
- ❖ **Service** within the community and to the whole human family

Within the Christian Formation program, students are taught religious concepts for each grade level. Using texts approved by the Church, students learn about: doctrine, creeds, moral values, scripture, sacraments, liturgical seasons of the Church year, Mary and the saints. Students are helped to integrate what they learn about their faith with their lives. The learning that takes place also provides a readiness for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

Sunday Mass is the most important gathering of the Christian community. At Mass, Christian Formation happens for all ages, especially during the homily and during the Liturgy of the Word for children. More worship experiences are provided through: prayer in classrooms, prayer services, reconciliation services, retreats and family programs.

“Community is at the heart of Christian education not simply as a concept to be taught, but as a reality to be lived.” Children and youth will learn the meaning of community through education and by experiencing it. Ways to experience community could include the following examples: participation in parish activities, the Sam Beres Memorial Walk/Run, CROP Walk, Drama Club, youth outings, athletics and Mission trips. Formed by their experiences, children will be able to build community in their families, their places of work, their neighborhoods, their nation and the world.

The experience of Christian community leads naturally to service. *At the Last Supper Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. He said, “You call me ‘teacher’ and ‘master,’ and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.” (Jn13:13-15).* Parents are encouraged to include younger children in service opportunities. Youth (grades 6-11) are expected to complete service hours (see page 16, no. 4).

Sacramental Preparation

From the moment of Baptism a child becomes a member of a new and larger family, the Christian community. This community follows Jesus who is: *"the way, the truth, and the life."* Joined to others in common faith, hope and love, the child grows within the Body of Christ. Families preparing for the Baptism of an infant should contact the parish office to register for a parent session. Once baptized, faith is fostered especially by the *Eucharist*, *"which is at once sign of community and cause of its growth."* Linked with the other sacraments of initiation (Baptism and Eucharist), Confirmation seals a young person with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Preparation for Reconciliation and Eucharist

When children reach second grade the Church invites them to approach the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. A child's formation for these sacraments takes place within their family and the parish community. Children are prepared not only for their "first" experience of these sacraments, but for a lifetime of being forgiven in the sacrament of Reconciliation and being fed at the Eucharist.

Sacramental Programs for First Reconciliation and First Communion are celebrated in Grade 2 but because there is so much material to learn and study, student preparation starts in Grade 1. All children in Grade 1 must participate in the program in order to receive the Sacraments in Grade 2.

Registration materials for the Sacraments will be sent to all parish families with children in second grade. Parents attend one Parent Meeting, which provides them with: a renewed understanding of the sacraments, materials to use with their children and suggestions for family activities. Parents and children gather on a Saturday morning in Lent for "Mercy Day" to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. Then, on a Saturday before First Eucharist, parents and children gather again on "Jesus Day" for prayer, preparation and rehearsal for First Eucharist. The celebration of First Eucharist takes place at parish Masses during the Easter season. On the third Sunday in May we have May Crowning in the St. Agnes Grotto. The First Eucharist children and their families are invited to join the procession immediately following the first Mass. The children will be given flowers that will be gathered into vases at the grotto. The children are encouraged to wear their First Eucharist attire and to bring their religious gifts to be blessed after the service.

Parents of older children who are in need of preparation for sacraments (Baptism, Reconciliation or Eucharist) are asked to contact the Christian Formation Office. Sacramental preparation will be designed according to the guidelines of the church as well as the needs of the family.



Youth Confirmation (Grades 11 or 12)

Within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Confirmation is normally celebrated during the junior year of high school. Students in 11th or 12th grades are invited to participate in this process. The candidates are challenged and called to make a commitment to life as a disciple of Christ. This process provides a framework for the candidate to explore their beliefs and questions regarding faith and the church. Specific requirements and guidelines are gone over at an annual orientation meeting.

Confirmation Eligibility Policies

Archdiocese of Milwaukee guidelines state that students preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation must be in their junior year of high school and/or 16 years old at the time they are confirmed. In order to be confirmed, they should have one year of "immediate" preparation for the sacrament as well as two years of "remote" preparation. The "immediate" preparation would be the program you register for in your junior year of high school that leads directly to the celebration of the sacrament. The "remote" preparation would be two previous years of religious instruction, or their equivalent. That means that students who wish to prepare for Confirmation should be involved in their parish Christian Formation programs or in theology classes in a Catholic high school for their freshman and sophomore years.

Current St. Agnes registration policies outline the following options for implementing the archdiocesan guidelines:

Students who wish to enter the "immediate" preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation must have achieved "Complete" status for each of the four semesters of Christian Formation during their freshman and sophomore years. Students with "Incomplete" status must do the required make-up work either prior to or during the early stages of the "immediate" preparation."

If you have not attended Catholic high school theology classes nor participated in a Christian Formation program either at St. Agnes or another parish for either of grades 9 or 10, or both, and you want to get confirmed before you finish high school, here are your options:

1. You could complete the necessary makeup work for the "remote" preparation in the summer before you enter your Junior year of "immediate" preparation; OR
2. You could complete the necessary makeup work for the "remote" preparation during your junior year of high school and postpone the "immediate" preparation until your senior year."

For students who choose not to be confirmed during their high school years, most parishes and college campus ministry centers offer adult Confirmation programs.

Confirmation 2018-2019 (Grades 11 & 12)

†Sponsor's attendance expected

August

24-26 St. Agnes Festival
25 Sam Beres Walk/Run 9:00 AM

September

8-9 St. Vincent de Paul Bundle Weekend - need help loading festival rummage on truck Saturday and then
Sun 8AM - Noon for parishioners to drop off items.
9 *Family Program (All Family Potluck), 9:00 AM,
15 Hunger Task Force - Food Sort 9AM - Noon
16 †Sponsor/Candidate/Parent Meeting, 9:00 -10:15 AM Kemp Hall
30 Small Group Meeting Session 1, 9 - 10:15 AM

October

7 Small Group Meeting Session 2, 9-10:15 AM
14 **CROP Walk Service Outreach, 12:30-4:30 PM Milwaukee Lakefront
28 Church of the Great Spirit (Worship)

November

3-4 Retreat @ St. Joes Saturday 6 - 9 PM and
Sunday Noon - 8:30 @ St. Joes gather @ 10:30AM Mass at St. Agnes
18 Small Group Meeting Session 3, 9:00-10:30 AM Mass

December

2 *Family Program (All Family Potluck), 9:00 AM, Kemp Hall (K-11)
9 Small Group Meeting Session 4, 9:00-10:30 AM Mass
16 †Sponsor/Candidate 10:30 AM Mass and potluck then Christmas Caroling, at Birchwood 1-4 PM

January

6 Small Group Meeting Session 5, 9:00 - 10:15 AM
13 Small Group Meeting Session 6, 9:00 - 10:15 AM
27 St. Stanislaus (Worship)

February

3 Small Group Meeting Session 7, 9:00 - 10:15 AM
17 Small Group Meeting Session 8, 9:00 - 10:15 AM

March

3 *Family Program
6 Ash Wednesday Mass times: 8:15 AM and 7 PM
10 †Small Group Meeting Session 9
31 Small Group Meeting Session 10 Labyrinth & Reconciliation, 6:00-8:00 PM

April

7 *Family Program (All Family Potluck)
14 †Palm Sunday, Sponsor/Candidate Meeting, 8:30 AM Mass/Breakfast/Program, Kemp Hall
16 **Mass of Chrism - Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist - Milwaukee 7PM
21 Easter
27 †Confirmation Practice @ St. Agnes 11AM- Sponsors and Candidates
28 †Confirmation Mass - @2PM St. Agnes
May 16 †Confirmation Mass - @7PM St. Agnes

June

9 †Pentecost - Confirmation Confirmands and Sponsors - Rite of Recognition for Newly Confirmed at 10:30AM
Mass, followed by lunch and Confirmation Orientation Meeting until 1:00 PM, Kemp Hall
**As a part of Confirmation preparation students will be required to attend 4 of 6 services during Holy Week (April 14 -
21)

SERVICE: 35 hours of Service Ministry is required.

2018-2019 Children's Liturgy OF THE WORD

Sundays, 10:30 AM Mass (Grades K3 - 4th)

September

9

16

23

October

7

14

21

November

4

11

18

December

2

9

16

January

6

13

20

February

3

10

17

March

3

10

17

24

31

April

7



Child Ministry Calendar 2018-2019 (Grades K3-5)

September

- 9 **Family Program (All Family Potluck)*
 15-16 ****Catechist Commissioning at all Masses**
 16 Class Session 1
 23 Class Session 2
 30 Class Session 3 **Family Program*

October

- 7 Class Session 4
 14 Class Session 5
 ****CROP Walk Service Outreach, 1:00-3:30 PM Milwaukee Lakefront**
 21 Class Session 6

November

- 4 Class Session 7 **Family Program*
 11 Class Session 8
 18 Class Session 9

December

- 2 **Family Program (All Family Potluck)*
 9 Class Session 10
 16 Class Session 11

January 2018

- 6 Class Session 12 **Family Program*
 7 or 12 ****Grade 2 Reconciliation and Eucharist Parent Meeting, Hafford Hall: Monday, Jan. 7, 7:00 PM, or Saturday, Jan. 12, 9:00 AM**
 13 Class Session 13
 20 Class Session 14

February

- 3 Class Session 15
 10 Class Session 16
 17 Class Session 17

March

- 3 Class Session 18 **Family Program*
 6 **Ash Wednesday**
 9 ****Sat. Reconciliation for Grade 2 - students and parents, 9:00-11:00 AM, Church**
 10 Class Session 19
 17 Class Session 20
 24 Class Session 21

April

- 7 **Family Program (All Family Potluck)*
 21 **Happy Easter**
 27 ****Sat. 1st Eucharist practice for students and parents, 9:00-10:30 AM, Church**

May

- 4-5 First Holy Eucharist
 12 Mother's Day
 ****May Crowning, immediately following the 8:30 AM mass**

Regularly Scheduled Classes – Sunday, 9:00-10:15 AM

**Family Program – These sessions are geared toward adult and/or family formation. Older students (grades 9 & 10) and all parents meet in Kemp Hall while younger students (grades K3-8) go to their classrooms. (EXCEPTION: For the months of September, December and April, the whole family stays together in Kemp Hall for potluck breakfast and program.)*

****Other special events**

Youth Ministry Calendar 2018-2019 (Grades 6, 7 & 8)

September

9 **Family Program (All Family Potluck)*
 15-16 ****Catechist Commissioning at all Masses**
 16 Class Session 1
 23 Class Session 2
 30 Class Session 3 **Family Program*

October

7 Class Session 4
 14 Class Session 5
 ****CROP Walk Service Outreach, 1:00-3:30 PM Milwaukee Lakefront**
 21 Class Session 6

November

4 Class Session 7 **Family Program*
 11 Class Session 8
 18 Class Session 9

December

2 **Family Program (All Family Potluck)*
 9 Class Session 10
 16 Class Session 11

January 2018

6 Class Session 12 **Family Program*
 13 Class Session 13
 20 Class Session 14

February

3 Class Session 15
 10 Class Session 16
 17 Class Session 17

March

3 Class Session 18 **Family Program*
 6 **Ash Wednesday**
 10 Class Session 19
 17 Class Session 20
 24 Class Session 21
 30 6th - 8th Retreat Hafford Hall 1:00 - 6:00 PM

April

7 **Family Program (All Family Potluck)*
 21 **Happy Easter**

May

4-5 First Holy Eucharist
 12 Mother's Day
 ****May Crowning, immediately following the 8:30 AM mass**

SERVICE: 10 hours of Service Ministry is required.



Regularly Scheduled Classes – Sunday, 9:00-10:15 AM

**Family Program – These sessions are geared toward adult and/or family formation. Older students (grades 9 & 10) and all parents meet in Kemp Hall while younger students (grades K3-8) go to their classrooms. (EXCEPTION: For the months of September, December and April, the whole family stays together in Kemp Hall for potluck breakfast and program.)*

****Other special events**

2018-2019 Youth Board Activities and Open Gym
1st Fridays & 3rd Saturdays 7 PM – 9:30 PM

*Other Youth Board Activities noted. More events may be added throughout the year.
We need four chaperones per Open Gym night or we will have to cancel.

September

7 Open Gym
15 Open Gym

October

5 Open Gym
20 Open Gym
26 *Friday: Spook-ghetti Dinner/Dance
27-28 Scavenger Hunt / Lock-in

November

2 Open Gym
17 Open Gym

December

7 Open Gym
15 Sunburst Snow Tubing
22 Open Gym

January

4 Open Gym

February

1 Open Gym
23 Open Gym

March

1 Open Gym
16 Open Gym

April

5 Open Gym
13 Youth Dance

May

10 *Friday: St. Agnes Mission Party
11 Youth Outing – Brewers Game??

St. Agnes Youth Board Open Gym Nights are open to students in Grade 6 through High School.
A permission form must be completed and returned before a student will be admitted.

Youth Ministry Calendar 2018-2019 (Grades 9 & 10)

Notes To Parents Of Grade 9 & 10 Students: *The 9th and 10th grade regular Sunday morning classes will meet throughout the year.* All students along with their parents will still be expected to attend all the Family Programs listed in the calendar as well as choose five events from the Social Justice and Worship options. This year's retreat for the 9th and 10th grades will be the St. John Bosco Youth Day on October 6th at Holy Hill with Mass 7:30 AM- 6 PM.

September

- 9 *Family Program (All Family Potluck)
- 15-16 **Catechist Commissioning at all Masses
- 16 Class Session 1
- 30 *Family Program – All parents and Grade 9 & 10 students

October

- 6 Retreat **St. John Bosco Youth Day @ Holy Hill, 8 AM-6 PM
- 14 Class Session 2
- 21 Class Session 3

November

- 4 *Family Program – All parents and Grade 9 & 10 students
- 11 Class Session 4
- 18 Class Session 5

December

- 2 *Family Program (All Family Potluck)
- 9 Class Session 6
- 16 Class Session 7

January 2018

- 6 *Family Program – All parents and Grade 9 & 10 students
- 13 Class Session 8
- 20 Class Session 9

February

- 10 Class Session 10
- 17 Class Session 11

March

- 3 *Family Program – All parents and Grade 9 & 10 students
- 6 Ash Wednesday
- 17 Class Session 12
- 24 Class Session 13

April

- 7 *Family Program (All Family Potluck)
- 21 Happy Easter

June

- 9 Pentecost - **Grade 10 Only** - Parents and Students – Rite of Recognition for Newly Confirmed at 10:30 AM Mass, followed by lunch and Confirmation Orientation Meeting until 1:00 PM, Kemp Hall

SERVICE: 20 hours of Service Ministry is required.

Grade 9 & 10 Social Justice/Worship Options

Permission slip provided with registration materials for these events is due the first week of class Sunday, September 16. Choose 5 options from the following Social Justice (SJ) and Worship (W) opportunities

Sept. 8-9	Sat.-Sun. – Bundle Sunday (SJ): Load the St. Vincent de Paul truck after all Masses
Sept 15	Sat - Hunger Task Force – food sort (SJ): 9AM – Noon Meet at St. Agnes 8:30AM
Oct. 13	Saturday – Fr. Gene’s Center (SJ): 5919 W. National Ave., Milwaukee Meet at 8:30 AM at St. Agnes, return 12:30PM
Oct. 28	Sunday – Native American Catholic Mass - Church of the Great Spirit (W): 9:00 AM-Noon (Mass at 10AM) 1000 W. Lapham St. Milwaukee, WI.
Nov 13	Tue - St. Bens Meal Program with St. Joe’s (SJ): 4:00-7:00 PM
Jan 27	Sunday – Latin Tridentine Mass – St. Stanislaus Parish (W): 9:00 AM-Noon; (Mass at 10 AM) 524 W Mitchell St, Milwaukee, WI.
Feb. 2 & 3	Sat/Sun – Souper Bowl Sunday (SJ): Collect money after all Masses
Feb 9	Sat - Hunger Task Force – food sort (SJ): 9AM – Noon – Meet at St. Agnes 8:30 AM
Mar 12	Tue - St. Bens Meal Program with St. Joe’s (SJ): 4:00-7:00 PM
Apr. 16	Tuesday – St. John Cathedral (W): 6:00-9:30 PM (Chrism Mass)
May 10	Friday – St. Agnes Mission Party (SJ): 5:30-8:00 PM, Kemp Hall

Some services are subject to change. If other opportunities are scheduled during the year, they will be publicized to all families.

Parents interested in helping drive or chaperone for any events, contact the CF office @ 262-781-6998. This could be an interesting and fulfilling way to earn your Stewardship service hours...

Christian Formation Policies and Procedures

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in the programs listed in this Family Handbook are primarily for the registered, active members of St. Agnes Parish who enjoy a preference of membership. Others wishing to register for a program are welcome on a first-come, first-served basis as long as we have staff to support the programs. Most of the programs rely on volunteer teachers for the faculty and staff. The parish reserves the right to cancel any program if we cannot recruit sufficient staff.

STEWARDSHIP REQUIREMENTS

All families enrolled in Christian Formation are expected to be listed as "Active" members in the parish database. This means that they are officially registered as parish members and are current with submitting the annual parish pledge card fulfilling their Stewardship commitment of "treasure" to the parish. Families that do not fulfill this status are charged a higher, non-parishioner registration fee for Christian Formation enrollment.

In addition to fulfilling the "treasure" commitment of Stewardship toward the parish, the parents of each family enrolled in Christian Formation are expected to fulfill a minimum of 10 hours of service within the parish per year as a way of fulfilling their "time and talent" commitment. All parents of youth who are participating in sports are expected to help in concessions or collect money at the door.

The hours can be fulfilled by helping in any parish activity, function, ministry or organization that occurs within normal parish life. It is the family's responsibility to report their service hours in writing to the Christian Formation office either with their own written description or via email. **Please report all hours served, not just the minimum, so the parish gets an idea of how many volunteer hours sustain our programs.**

Families that do not complete the minimum number of hours within the school year will be assessed a fee of \$10.00 for each incomplete hour. This fee will be added to their CF Financial Agreement for the next program year. Regular mailings of financial statements from the CF office will also include a running record of the respective family's service hours.

ATTENDANCE & DISCIPLINE

Participants in the Christian Formation programs are expected to attend all sessions. Participants are expected to be prepared to begin on time and stay for the entire session. Parents should call the Christian Formation Office to inform us of any absences – anticipated or unexpected. Missing class limits what the individuals can gain from the program and greatly affects the other participants in that class.

Students in Preschool through Grade 11 who fail to actively and positively participate in the scheduled classes will receive a grade of "Incomplete" for that class. Credit will not be given until the missing work is completed. Positive participation includes completion of homework assignments, being a contributing part of any class discussion, and showing Christian respect for both the teacher and the other students in the class. The parents of any student showing inappropriate behavior will be contacted by the teacher by phone or mail. If a student is dismissed from the class due to inappropriate behavior, he/she will be restricted from returning until the parents have contacted the teacher or Christian Formation staff member in charge. Students who are dismissed from their room a second time will be suspended until the parents have shown that the student can become a positive addition to the class during a conference with the Christian Formation staff member in charge. Christian respect for others includes basic good manners! Teachers will expect good manners in all activities. Disruption of class, abusive language to anyone or destruction of property will not be tolerated. Any student participating in any illegal activity will be referred to municipal authorities.

CLASS COMPLETION & PROMOTION

It's difficult to understand 2nd-grade math if you have not yet mastered 1st-grade math. For the same reason, students who have not completed the coursework involved at their grade or for a class will not receive "Complete" status until that work is completed satisfactorily. The decision of the student's teacher, in consultation with the Christian Formation staff member in charge, will be final in this matter. Students will be invited to show their completed work to the Christian Formation staff member.

SPECIAL POLICIES FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

We have a very special concern for students in these grades. Because of their age, they are very vulnerable and easily confused. We need to limit the distractions during class and ensure the safety of the child at all times. These procedures will help serve these needs:

1. Parents need to introduce themselves to the teachers! The volunteer catechist needs to be able to put a face with a name. That way they will be able to keep you up to date on your child's progress and know which child belongs to which parent!
2. Parents are to bring their child to the door of the classroom and pick the child up at the classroom. If an older child is going to regularly help with this task, the parents should introduce that child to the teacher. If anyone else is going to be picking up the child, the parent is responsible for informing the teacher ahead of time. This is simply to ensure that no child is left behind or leaves with a person without the parent knowing.
3. Parents or others should not linger in the hallway before or after classes. Preschool children can be easily distracted by a parent waiting for them. In order for the catechist to maintain good order in the room, please wait at the end of the hall until the classroom door is opened.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

If severe weather or another emergency causes classes to be canceled, the announcement will be made over television Channel 4 and radio stations WTMJ - 620 AM & 94.5 LAKE FM. These stations require a code word to include the cancellation on their lists – so if you hear it there, it's a fact!

Students With Special Needs

St. Agnes Parish, on its own, has very limited resources available to assist students with special needs. By working with neighboring parishes and with close cooperation with parents, we have been able to serve those families who would not be appropriately served by our regular programs. Please contact the appropriate Pastoral Staff member to begin a discussion that will help your family.

SPECIAL POLICIES FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

1. Retreat activities offer a special opportunity for formation that is diverse, unique and creative. All Christian Formation students are required to attend their grade level retreat. If a student does not participate in their scheduled retreat experience, they will be expected to attend another retreat experience or complete a make-up assignment. It will be their responsibility to coordinate the scheduling of a make-up retreat.
2. Active participation in all class sessions is expected of all students. If a student is unable to attend class, they are to check with their teacher to find out what they missed and complete the make-up work. An excessive amount of absences and unfinished work will lead to "Incomplete" status for the class. Students are not credited with "Complete" status unless they have satisfactorily completed the required work.
3. Students may be prohibited from participation in the St. Agnes Drama Club and any St. Agnes athletic programs if they do not maintain the academic and behavioral standards outlined in those organizations' guidelines or if they do not achieve "Complete" status on their Christian Formation progress report for a prior semester of the program, including from one program year to the next. If requested, parents must verify that the students are maintaining the minimum grade point average that the Drama Club guidelines and the Athletic Code require by providing a copy of a current/most recent report card to the Christian Formation office.
4. Students are expected to complete a certain number of service hours: Grades 6-8 – 10 hours per year; Grades 9 & 10 – 20 hours per year; Confirmation – 35 hours. Students should report their hours to their catechist/Christian Formation Office once per semester. The service hour requirement is considered a component of the required work for each grade level. Therefore, students must fulfill the required number of hours to merit "Complete" status for that year. The number of hours completed will be recorded on each semester progress report.

Safe Environment Education Session



Parents and parishioners who plan to volunteer in the future to work with children and youth are required to receive this training BEFORE beginning. Future coaches, playground supervisors, Scout leaders, mission trip chaperones, Drama Club volunteers, Christian Formation catechists, VBS volunteers, etc., must complete the *Safe Environment Education session*, sign off on a related document and undergo a background check in order to be involved.

Our parish is hosting one of these sessions on THURSDAY, August 30, 2018, in Kemp Hall, beginning at 6:00 PM. Other sessions are offered around the archdiocese. Interested persons can register in advance on the archdiocesan website: <http://www.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding.htm>

If you are interested, want more info or need help registering for the session here or elsewhere, call the Christian Formation Office.

Christian Formation Committee

It is the mission of the Christian Formation committee to provide Catholic Christian Formation processes that invite all members of our parish community to grow in their Baptismal Commitment. The Christian Formation committee supports a lifelong commitment to spiritual growth through community interaction, study, prayer, sacramental celebrations and service. We strive for productive relationships between students, families, catechists and staff.

The Christian Formation Committee is responsible to:

- Assist in the development of the long-range plans for Christian education/formation of the parish, providing for a comprehensive approach for all ages and stages in life.
- Identify parish needs regarding Christian education/formation programs.
- Develop and recommend to the Pastoral council educational/formational policies that are consistent with Archdiocesan policies and guidelines.
- Determine budget priorities in the areas of the committee's responsibilities and make recommendations to the Finance council.
- Develop sources of revenue for the operations of the educational/formational programs in conformity with parish policies and in collaboration with program administrators.
- Advise the pastor/administrator in defining the roles, responsibilities and relationships (job descriptions) of the educational administrators and regarding educational/formational programs. Committee members may serve on search, grievance or conciliation committees.
- Facilitate communication and coordination among all educational/formational programs for the parish by reporting to the Pastoral council, the parish community, the district and the Archdiocese.

Christian Formation Ministries

Christian Formation Programs for Preschool through Grade 5 (Child Ministry)

The preschool program starts at age 4 for the children of St. Agnes Parish. Through stories, music, prayers, crafts and other experiences, the children learn what it means to be special members of God's family.

The Christian Formation program for grades K4-5 offers formal classes in religion that focus on the child's faith development with emphasis on Catholic Tradition, sacramental preparation and scripture. The Child Ministry program meets weekly from September through April. (See calendar in this handbook.)

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) is offered to children ages 4 through Grade 4, during the 10:30 AM Mass, two to three Sundays per month, from September through April. (See calendar in this handbook.) Sacramental Programs for First Reconciliation and First Communion are celebrated in Grade 2. Because there is so much material to learn and study, student preparation starts in Grade 1. All children in Grade 1 must participate in the program in order to receive the Sacraments in Grade 2.

Christian Formation Programs for Grades 6 through 10 (Youth Ministry)

All students from public schools are offered religious education to provide catechetical and formational experiences, enabling growth in personal faith, religious knowledge and parish involvement. From September through April, each grade level meets according to the specific format that will accomplish its curriculum. (See calendars in this handbook.) Youth who wish to participate in parish-sponsored extra-curricular activities (including sports) must maintain regular attendance and a passing grade in Christian Formation classes throughout the year.

Youth Confirmation

Students preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation experience a special emphasis upon the commitment to faith required for their final sacrament of Initiation. They focus heavily on the Catholic Christian lifestyle, which includes personal prayer, regular participation in the Eucharist, service as a way of following Jesus, and living a life morally consistent with the Gospel and church teachings. A weekend retreat or its equivalent is required. Students must participate in Christian Formation sessions in their freshman and sophomore years. Those who go to Catholic high school are excluded until junior year.

This program also relies heavily on the involvement of Confirmation sponsors. The students meet two to three times per month from September through April. (See calendar in the handbook.)

Our goal in Youth Ministry is to lead young people to live as disciples of Jesus in our world today. Youth are provided with opportunities for fellowship, service, ministry, liturgy, and leadership in our parish and the wider community. We accomplish this through social events, service projects (including summer mission trips), retreats and youth helping at Masses.

Adult Ministry

Opportunities for Lifelong Christian Formation

In the words of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, the goal of all catechetical efforts is to make a person's "faith become living, conscious and active through the light of instruction." (Discipleship from Age to Age)

Formation includes both being informed about our faith and our church and developing spiritually as a Catholic Christian. This personal spirituality and understanding within the Catholic tradition are what adults rely on when they teach children about God. It is also what we rely on to help us grow through the many stages of life in preparation for our ultimate goal: the attainment of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

The Adult Ministry program seeks to assist adults with their task of knowing, loving and serving God. Efforts are made to offer an increased understanding of Scripture from a Catholic perspective; to share a Catholic perspective on the Sacraments and prayer; and to present the challenges of living a Catholic Christian life as we walk through a world that is often anti-Christian.

Adult Ministry program formats and schedules will vary, depending upon the purpose, need and topics. Examples include single-session presentations, 4- to 6-week series, monthly series, weekly round-the-year meetings, or even college-level courses and/or degree programs.

Adult programs are announced periodically in the parish bulletin and newsletter. Programs may use both formal education methods and small-group discussions to help increase the individuals' understanding of their faith. Special opportunities for prayer and reflection are offered occasionally through adult retreat experiences. Some Adult Ministry formation experiences are offered specifically within the St. Agnes Parish community. Others are collaborative efforts with our cluster group and/or neighboring parishes, still other opportunities are offered through the archdiocese as well as local Catholic universities.

For specific information on current or upcoming programs, check the bulletin or call the Christian Formation Office.

Adult Confirmation Preparation

Adults who have been baptized and raised Catholic but have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation are prepared for this sacrament through a series of small-group meetings. The meetings seek to refresh or update their understanding of scripture, sacraments, worship and the Church.

Preparation normally begins in January, with the Sacrament celebrated at the Easter Vigil. For specific details, please call the Christian Formation Office.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

After the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI issued a declaration on the renewal of the Catechumenate – the process that leads us all to become fully initiated Catholic Christians. Most Catholics enter this process as infants and grow up in the Church. More and more frequently, children over the age of 7 and adults are seeking to belong to the Catholic Church.

Children over the age of 7 are prepared individually by working closely with their parents and using the resources of the Parish School and Christian Formation programs. Because this is such an individual program, each family involved needs to contact the Christian Formation Office to begin the process.

Adults who have never been baptized or who were baptized in another Christian denomination and are interested in becoming Roman Catholics can participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). This process can last from six months to a year or longer, depending upon the background and needs of those participating. The process involves the individual and a sponsor in a small-group setting with other interested adults. The process is also marked by frequent rituals in connection with the parish's regular celebration of Sunday Eucharist throughout the different church seasons, and it culminates in the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist within the Easter Vigil liturgy.

For more information or to enroll in the RCIA, please contact the Christian Formation Office.