

# St. Cyprian Catholic Parish Religious Formation Handbook



Welcome to St. Cyprian Religious Formation. This handbook was designed to give parents or guardians basic information about the program. If you have any questions, including those about Sacramental preparation please do not hesitate to call Stacey Sutowski-Shurtz, Director of Elementary Catechesis at **734-283-1366 x118** or [sshurtz@stcyprian.com](mailto:sshurtz@stcyprian.com).

## **PARISH STAFF**

St. Cyprian religious education staff is entirely voluntary except for the Director of Elementary Catechesis. All catechists are encouraged to take formation classes for certification. Catechists are certified by the Archdiocese of Detroit after taking 27 topics ranging from faith development and prayer to classroom management and techniques. Anyone interested in being a catechist is invited to attend these sessions. For more information, call the religious formation office.

### **ST. CYPRIAN PARISH INFORMATION**

St. Cyprian Religious Formation  
13249 Pennsylvania  
Riverview, MI 48193  
website: [www.stcyprian.com](http://www.stcyprian.com)

**Church Phone:** 734-283-1366

**Church Fax:** 734-283-2809

**Pastor:** Rev. Dr. William Promesso x111  
e-mail [wpromesso@stcyprian.com](mailto:wpromesso@stcyprian.com)

**Director of Elementary Catechesis/Youth Minister:**  
Stacey Sutowski-Shurtz, x118  
e-mail [sshurtz@stcyprian.com](mailto:sshurtz@stcyprian.com)

**Secretary:** Sue Surcek, x121  
e-mail [ssurcek@stcyprian.com](mailto:ssurcek@stcyprian.com)

**Pastoral Minister/RCIA Coordinator:** Denise Gorski x112  
email [dgorski@stcyprian.com](mailto:dgorski@stcyprian.com)

### **Parish Office Hours**

Monday - Thursday 8:00am – 4:00pm, Friday 8:00am – noon

**MASS SCHEDULE:****Weekend Masses:**

Saturday 5:00 pm and Sunday 9:00 and 11:00 am

**Weekday Masses:**

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00 am

**Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) NO Registration**

Sunday 9:00 and 11:00 Mass (5 yrs to 4<sup>th</sup> grade)

**SEE SCHEDULE FOR RELIGIOUS FORMATION MASSES****Religious Formation Classes****Grades 1-5**

Monday 6:15-7:30 pm

**Junior High Grades 6-8**

Monday 6:15-7:30 pm

Saturday 9:30-11:30 am

**Family Program Grades 1-5**

Every Second Tuesday of the Month, Oct-May 6:30-8:00pm

**ROLE OF PARENT**

"Within the Christian family, parents are the primary educators in the faith and the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children."

(National Directory for Catechesis- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops)

"While the catechesis offered within the family is ordinarily informal, unstructured, and spontaneous, it is not less crucial for the development of the child's faith. 'In a certain sense nothing replaces family catechesis, especially for its positive and receptive environment, for the example of adults, and for its first explicit experience and practice of the faith' The catechesis of... children nourishes the beginnings of the life of faith. "God's love is communicated to children primarily through parents."

(National Directory for Catechesis- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops)

## **ROLE OF CATECHISTS**

The National Directory for Catechesis has established the ideal qualities for a catechist:

**A. RESPONSE TO CALL** Catechists are called by God through the Church to the ministry of catechesis, not only to give time and talent for re-echoing the faith but to be open to one's own deepening, understanding and living of the Catholic faith.

**B. WITNESS TO THE GOSPEL** Catechists are called to believe and witness the gospel and its power to transform life. Catechists are persons with an ongoing commitment to God's Word, in their mind, in their hearts and in their lives.

**C. COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH** Catechists are called to be ministers of the Word and representatives of the Church. They are called to teach what the teaching authority of the Church proclaims, and when teaching any subject must always teach what the Church teaches, regardless of personal beliefs or opinions.

**D. SHARES IN COMMUNITY** Our God is a community of persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Made in the image and likeness of God, we are called to be God's people a community of faith. Catechists are therefore called to foster and build a faith community in their classrooms and in all aspects of the parish.

**E. SERVANT OF THE COMMUNITY** Catechists are called to serve the Christian community in the spirit of Jesus and the prophets. This service means not only seeking to meet the needs of individuals within the parish but also in the larger local and global community. This challenges the Catechist to be aware of Church teaching and actions in terms of peace and justice. Catechists need to be open to receiving the service and care of others in order to truly be of service to others.

**F. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS** Catechists are called to prepare for this important ministry by acquiring the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to communicate gospel values and Church teachings effectively for different age groups.

### **Children's Liturgy of the Word**

CLOW meets on Sunday mornings during the 9:00 and 11:00 am Mass. The children are called forward and led out of Mass by a catechist during the Liturgy of the Word. The children will hear the scriptures and learn at their own level. The children return to Mass for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. There is no registration or fee for this class.

### **GRADE LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS**

If your child has missed a year or more, please make an appointment with the Director to determine the best course of action for your child.

#### **Grades 1-5:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes meet weekly on Monday at 6:15- 7:30 pm. The students work with the catechist using the RCL Benzinger Be My Disciples religion text. All the material in the textbooks is approved by the Archdiocese of Detroit and the catechesis of the Roman Catholic Church. The website [www.BeMyDisciples.com](http://www.BeMyDisciples.com) complements the textbook and has a section for students and parents with supplementary information and activities that can be done together at home.

#### **The Junior High program**

The sixth, seventh and eighth grade classes cover several topics important to adolescents. Classes range from Dealing with Tough Times, Exploring the Bible, Making Friends, Praying, Being a Disciple of Jesus, Church and Sacraments and Jesus in the New Testament. Each student is required to take 3 different classes of their **choosing** during the year. In effort to accommodate the busy schedules of the teenagers, the classes are offered at various times and days (summer, Saturday mornings and Monday evenings). The classes meet 3 to 7 times a session. Because of the shorter sessions we stress the importance of attendance at all class meetings.

#### **Family Program- Monthly**

Families with children in 1st through 5th grade meet on the second Tuesday of the month, October through May, from 6:30-8:00 pm. Families use the same book used in the weekly classes along with a home study guide. Parents are expected to cover one unit per month along with any supplementary assigned material. Families who want to share their faith with their children at home are invited to join us.

## **GENERAL POLICIES - ALL GRADE LEVELS**

### **All students enrolled in the Religious Formation Program will be required to:**

Children are to attend all the classes and participate to the best of his/her abilities. Please inform the office if your child must miss a session.

Be on time and attend the full length of the class session. Tardiness or early dismissal on a repetitive basis will result in an unexcused absence and will be addressed by the catechist and Director. If the child is ill or will be absent, the parents are asked to call the office before class begins. Please do not send a sick child to Religious Formation.

Provide a signed note from a parent if a student is required to leave a class early. The parent is to go to the office personally pick up the child.

Attend and participate scheduled liturgical events and class functions.

Behave in a Christian manner at all times showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students. No use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs is permitted. No weapons are allowed on the premises. All students will have respect for others and for others' property.

If the student brings any type of electronic device to class, it must be turned off and not used during the class time. Otherwise, it will be taken and put on the catechist's desk until the end of class when the student can claim it. This includes all cell phones and electronic entertainment devices.

The dress code is the same as the school districts in the area.

**Parents of students entering the religious formation program will be expected to:**

Attend Mass regularly as a family

Contact the catechist when the child is absent so material missed can be covered at home

Provide transportation both to and from any event.

Make sure that the child arrives on time for class **but no sooner than 10 minutes before class begins.** If a child is constantly late, the catechist will speak to the parent.

Pick the child up promptly after class is completed.

**Sacrament Preparation for Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation is a separate program.**

Those students who completed the requirements through our formation program will receive an invitation to participate in the sacrament program and all the details and requirements will be explained at a parent meeting.

**FORMATION REGISTRATION**

Each family is asked to complete a family form as well as a child information form for each child.

A copy of the baptismal certificate is required for each child entering the program.

All transfer student(s) are to bring a letter from their previous church stating dates the child(ren) attended class and sacraments received. This letter must be presented at registration in order for the family to register. Registration forms are available in the parish office during normal hours.

**FEES FOR Religious Formation Classes (Subject to Change):  
Tuition is as follows (includes book and supplies):**

**IN Parish**

For one child.....\$75  
For two children.....\$125  
For three or more.....\$150

**OUT Parish: Add \$50 dollar to In Parish Tuition**

**No one will be denied religious education for financial reasons.**

IF you are in financial need please let the Director know your situation and arrangements will be made.

**HOMEWORK**

Little homework is assigned. We do ask that if your child does bring home some paperwork that you, the parent, supervise its completion.

**PRAYER GUIDELINES**

Each classroom catechist will encourage the children to learn traditional Catholic prayers. Prayers said in the home will be remembered. Review of prayers is ongoing.

At home parents are asked to encourage the memorization of the following prayers:

3-5 year olds: Sign of the Cross, Grace before Meals

1st graders: The Lord's Prayer

2nd graders: Prayer of Sorrow, Glory Be, Hail Mary

3rd graders: Study of Nicene Creed, Sacraments

4th graders: Nicene Creed

5th graders and above: All children should know traditional Catholic prayers. They will be reviewed in class.

**MEDICATION**

The religious formation office does not dispense any medication even with parent permission. If a child needs medication, the parent must be here to administer it.



## **CALENDAR AND NOTES HOME**

Each family is given a calendar of activities at the beginning of the year. Reminders of activities or changes in dates are sent home with the child and sent via email. **We ask that all parents check their email regularly.** The Calendar and other information may be accessed on our parish webpage at [www.stcyprian.com](http://www.stcyprian.com)

## **CHILD SAFETY**

All catechists and assistants are required to attend "Protecting God's Children" an Archdiocesan program and submit a background check. We comply with the law to ensure the welfare of a child. Any staff member or catechist who suspects a child to be a victim of child abuse will notify the Director of Elementary Catechesis who will then notify the pastor. We are required to report suspected child abuse and we will follow diocesan policy on such matters.

## **CLASS CANCELLATION**

**If the local school districts cancel class because of the weather in the morning, it does not mean that our classes are automatically canceled. We do not cancel class until the afternoon.** In case of inclement weather and classes are canceled; an email will be sent to all parents, there will be a notice on the parish web page, a note will be posted on the entrance doors, and a message on our answering machine. If you feel road conditions are too dangerous to travel, then do not do so. Call in to let us know your child will not arrive for class.

## **DISMISSAL (At the end of class)**

We ask that parents instruct their children the proper behavior when leaving the building. We are very concerned for the safety of our children.

On Monday evenings, parents of children in grades 1-3 are asked to come in to the building to get them. The older children can go to the cars themselves, but we ask that they are extremely careful since many times it is difficult for a driver to see a darting child. We will have adult supervision out there watching as well. Once we change from daylight saving time to standard no child should walk home from class or ride a bike. We ask that parents park in the parking lot or wait for their children in a parking place.

**Do not line the cars in front of the building, waiting for your child to get out of class. This causes a great deal of problems for other parents who are also trying to pick of their children.**

**VISITORS**

Please call the Religious Formation office to make these arrangements.

**DISCIPLINE**

If a child's behavior disrupts the learning process the steps listed below will be followed:

When a student is sent to the office for class disruption or for any other conduct unbecoming a Christian student, the Director will speak to the student.

If the student is sent to the office a second time a parent/guardian will be notified.

If the student is sent to the office a third time a parent/guardian will be asked for a conference with the Director and catechist.

Measures will be taken which were decided upon by Director, catechist and parent per previous meeting.

If the first offense is of a serious nature, as determined by the Director, then the parent will be asked to make a conference with the Director and catechist. The child will be permitted to resume catechetical sessions depending on the outcome of this conference.