

August 1, 2009

Dear Parents,

Hope everyone has enjoyed a relaxing summer. It is time to register for religious education classes for 2009-10. Religious Education programs are available to **all registered** parishioners. Please register for classes on one of the scheduled days or turn in the registration form with your check to me or the church office. Forms are available on our web-site (goodshepherd-smithfield.org) or at registration. Please try and register before Sept 1. Checks should be made payable to Good Shepherd. The class schedules are posted on the web-site and will also be available at registration. Schedules are also posted on the bulletin board in the commons. The first day of classes is **Sept. 13**.

Religious Education Registration Dates and Times:

Sunday	Aug. 23	after Mass in room across from kitchen
Sunday	Aug. 30	after Mass in room across from kitchen

General Class schedule:

K-5th grade classes meet on Sundays from 9:50-10:50 AM.

Limit for Kindergarten is 16 children.

6th-7th grade classes meet on Sundays from 7-8 PM.

8th and 9-12 grade will meet most Sunday evenings, please check schedule.

Family Registration Fees: \$30 for 1 child \$50 for 2 children \$70 for 3 or more

SEE BELOW IF YOUR CHILD IS RECEIVING A SACRAMENT THIS YEAR:

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist sessions will be offered during the regular second grade class time. Students in the second grade class will **not** pay regular registration. They will **only** pay the sacramental fees. Parents should attend three (3) scheduled evening sessions for each sacrament.

Confirmation is now a pullout program separate from regular religious education classes. The preparation includes 4 sessions and one retreat which will take place throughout the year. (See schedule) Candidates are now eligible for confirmation in the 10th grade. Candidates will only pay the confirmation fee but are expected to participate in regular religious education classes as well.

First Reconciliation Fee	\$25
First Eucharist Fee	\$35
Confirmation Fee	\$60

Important dates to note:

Sunday, Sept. 13, 6-7:00 – Confirmation meeting for students& parents.

Please bring child's baptismal certificate, the dates of his/her First Eucharist and First Reconciliation.

Sunday, Oct. 4, at 7:00 PM – Sponsor meeting. (All new candidates should have a sponsor by this time)

Wednesday, Sept. 23, Oct.28, Dec. 2, Feb. 10, Mar. 3, and April 14 at 7PM – 1st sacraments meetings parents only.

If you have any questions, please call me at work 365-0579, cell 870-6138 or at home, 357-3766.

In God's peace,
Jodi Stambaugh CRE

General Policy Information for Parents

1. Morning classes will be dismissed at 10:50 AM. Please come in and pick up your child/children from their classrooms. All morning children must be signed out by their parent or an authorized person. Authorization forms are available at registration.
2. Attendance will be taken each week and records maintained annually. If your child is absent more than two weeks in a row, you will be called to make sure everything is all right.
3. The back and front door can be used in the morning. The front doors will **not** be used in the evening. The emergency door in the back classroom will not be used for entrance or exit.
4. No children are to be left unattended any where in or out side of the church. If necessary, parents will be asked to stay and help out with monitoring. This includes going to the restroom.
5. Catechists should go directly to their classrooms after Mass. Morning parents should take their children to their classrooms. Please have children use the bathroom facilities before class.
6. If the catechist is not in the classroom yet, parents, please wait with your child
7. Two adults must be present in each classroom. If one is present regularly, they must have background checks and VIRTUS training. Parents may be asked to help out in classrooms if a catechist is absent.
8. We are doing everything possible to be in compliance with the catechetical norms established by the Diocese and appreciate your patience and assistance. The most important focus of these norms is the safety of our children
9. A schedule for the year will be handed out at registration, and is available on-line at goodshepherd-smithfield.org. Classes begin on September 13 for K-12. K-5 will meet from 9:50-10:50 AM and grades 6-7 will meet from 7-8 PM. Grades 8-12 will meet from 7-8:30 most Sundays. Please look at your schedule weekly since there are some days off. Confirmation is now open to all 10th graders. Confirmation classes meet separately from regular religious education classes. Candidates are expected to attend both. Classes do not meet on the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas Eve Sunday, Superbowl Sunday in the evening only, and Easter Sunday. Please follow your schedule.
10. There are required parent sessions and parent-child sessions/retreats for sacramental preparation.
11. There are 30 scheduled classes for K-7 and 24 scheduled classes for 8-12. Attendance is especially important in second grade when the sacramental material is being covered. Grade 9 -12 will meet together for each youth ministry (rel-ed) class scheduled. Confirmation candidates are expected to attend all of their confirmation sessions, rel-ed classes, and Mass to show their commitment to being confirmed. If conflicts with the schedule arise, please notify your catechist. Candidates will be called if they are missing from confirmation class without notification.
12. Please pick up your children from their classrooms at night. Our youth should not be waiting outside for a ride. Older youth who are driving will be monitored in the parking lot till everyone is gone. Parent volunteers to help monitor night activity would be appreciated. If you could help please let me know. When you drop off your children at night please make sure they enter the building before leaving. No children or youth should be outside without their parent or a catechist present.

July 29, 2009

Dear Parents of older youth (grade 8-12),

In an attempt to live out our commitment to lifelong formation, the diocese has extended adolescent catechesis through the 12th grade. Many adults and confirmands alike believe confirmation is the end of their faith development. Having our religious education program end with confirmation reinforces that idea. Instead, the diocese would like to encourage parishioners of all ages to embrace deepening their faith and spirituality throughout their lives.

To assist in obtaining this goal, confirmation will now be separate from the regular religious education program and be completed in one year. There will be four 3 hr. sessions and one retreat (see schedule) spread out through that year. Candidates are now also eligible for confirmation in the 10th grade. In this transition year, we will have the 10th and 11th grade receiving the sacrament.

Candidates wishing to be confirmed this spring are expected to attend all of these opportunities to deepen their faith. They will also be expected to attend their regular formation which will take place Sunday evenings. Students desiring to be confirmed should show a commitment to their faith by participating fully in the sacramental life of the Church. If it is determined that a candidate is not prepared, the sacrament could be delayed until preparation is met.

Please note we will have a parent & candidate meeting Sept. 13 from 6-7:00 for all youth wanting to receive confirmation this year. Our first youth gathering is also that night from 7-8:30. We will also have a sponsor meeting from 7:00-8:00 on Oct. 4. All new candidates should have a sponsor picked before then. I've enclosed a sponsor qualification hand out to help you. If you need help finding someone please let me know.

In the past, our youth group has been separate from our youth catechetical program. We will now consolidate these two ministries under one heading; Youth Ministry. Catechesis, service, community, advocacy, prayer & worship, leadership, and evangelization are all components of a dynamic program. This year we will meet 24 Sundays. 8 of these gatherings will include youth service meetings led by Michelle Lenz. Those same nights will also include music, pizza and a question/answer session where our youth can find out why Catholics do what they do. On the calendar, these nights will be denoted in bold print. We encourage all youth from 8-12 grades to attend these nights. Youth in 9-12 grades will gather as one large group on the other nights for a catechetical session. 8th graders will meet by themselves as in the past for their own catechetical session. Please note that to attend any of these events, youth must register for regular classes.

Engaging our youth is one of the most important goals for any parish. The diocese recognizes the need to keep our youth committed to their faith. With your help we hope to build an exciting program that our youth will want to attend. Please encourage and support your children in making this happen.

I am available any time to answer your questions. Please feel free to call me or see me after Mass. My home number is in the parish directory.

Sincerely,

Jodi Stambaugh, CRE