

Parish Mission Statement

The Church of the Assumption B.V.M. is dedicated to becoming a community of disciples of Jesus Christ.

As disciples, we make Jesus Christ a living reality in the lives of the members of our parish family.

By guiding and encouraging our people to discipleship through a heightened awareness of the Lord's presence in their lives, the parish community becomes a visible and active expression of the living Christ in our world today.

Assumption BVM Parish Religious Education Program Handbook

We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Living in God's Love
2018-2019



Reverend Monsignor Nevin Klinger, Pastor

Christina B. Durback, Director of Religious Education

Anne L. Chadwell-Slutz, Administrative Assistant & Registration Coordinator

Larry Durback, Adult Faith Formation Leader during PREP sessions

Religious Education Office

4101 Old Bethlehem Pike
Bethlehem, PA 18015
Telephone: 610-814-0712

Religious Education Office Hours:

Sunday: 8 – 10 a.m.
Monday – Thursday: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Wednesday: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
and by appointment

Religious Education Staff e-mails

Christina Durback: Durback@ptd.net
Anne Chadwell-Slutz: prepregcoord@gmail.com
Larry Durback: ldurback@gmail.com

Parish Website:

www.assumptionbethlehem.com

2018-2019 PREP Team

("A" groups are Sunday groups; "C" groups are Wednesday groups)

Group	Catechists	Aides	Room
Genesis A	Kim Heitzer	Peggy Brock	208
Genesis C	Lynette Martins	Claire S.	208
Good Shepherd A	Tammy Napolitano	Alex J.	206
Good Shepherd C	Jackie Russ-Harford	Jackson H.	206
Apostles A	Kathleen Paul	Grace J., Sean C.	211
Apostles C	Lindsay Albert	Kelly Spradlin	211
Faith Explorers 1A	Kyle Gangewere	Kristen Corcoran	213
Faith Explorers 1C	Lisa Niescier	Calista N.	213
Faith Explorers 2A	Barb Paluszek/Nikki Guerra	Tracy Chaffier	207
Faith Explorers 2C - 1	Donna Weston		207
Discipleship 1A	Barb Rouland	Cora H.	209
Discipleship 1C	Christina Durback	Jordan K., Sofia B.	209
Discipleship 2A	Leslie Cherry, Rose Perrelli		101
Discipleship 2B	Carla Kologie	Nicole King	101
Discipleship 3A	Rich Kolecki	Allison M., Frank Lynch (Sept. – Nov.)	104
Discipleship 3C	Nancy O'Keefe	Michael W.	104
	Wed. Office Assistants: Penelope Tervalon, Kathleen Ascani	Sunday "God Squad" (Office helpers): Conor Heitzer, Eddie J.	
Sunday Adult Religious Education	Larry Durback		Finnegan Room

Victim Assistance Coordinator Direct Telephone: 800-791-9209

The Diocese of Allentown provides assistance to anyone who, as a minor, was sexually abused by a priest, deacon, or employee/volunteer of the Diocese/Parish.

Parents, guardians, children, and survivors of sexual abuse are invited and encouraged to contact the Diocese of Allentown for more information about this program.

The fullness of compassion should be extended to these victims by the Church.

To learn more about the Diocese of Allentown's Youth Protection Programs, Sexual Abuse Policy, and Code of Conduct, please visit www.allentowndiocese.org and click on "Youth Protection" in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: Ms. Wendy S. Krisak, M.A., NCC, LPC Direct Telephone: 800 791-9209
 Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator: Sister Meg Cole, SSJ, M.S., LMFT Telephone: 610-332-0442, Ex. 19

May Our Lady of the Assumption, patroness of our parish, guide us in this new year of religious education. May she intercede for us in our ministry of catechesis, helping us to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, proclaiming His Good News with our words and our very lives. Amen.

Assumption BVM PREP 2018-2019

+ Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his mercy endures forever. (Ps. 118:1) +

Assumption BVM PREP

exists to foster holistic religious education for children and youth. The PREP community reinforces the religious formation provided first by parents as they strive to raise their children as integrated, committed, Catholic Christian people whose faith is evermore living, conscious and active. PREP offers children and youth opportunities to experience God's love, to learn about salvation history and our rich Catholic heritage, and to find and claim their places as members of God's Kingdom. Catechists and other parishioners who serve in PREP share the love of God that they have experienced in their own lives. We trust in God's grace as we commit ourselves generously to nurture the faith of Assumption Parish's children and youth.

Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) sessions are open to any children of Assumption BVM Parish in school grades 1 – 8 who wish to grow in understanding and practice of their Catholic faith.

Assumption Parish offers PREP sessions for youth in all levels on Sunday mornings (8:30 – 9:45 a.m.) and Wednesday evenings (6:00 – 7:15 p.m.).

<u>Children/youth generally in school grade*:</u>	<u>usually participate in PREP level:</u>	<u>which helps youth:</u>
1	Genesis	begin their formal religious education, learning stories and practices of our faith in a faith-filled, age-appropriate community
2	Good Shepherd	learn about and experience God's forgiving love as they prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time
3	Apostles	learn about Jesus' love & experience God's gift of his Son as they prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist for the first time
4 5	Faith Explorers 1 Faith Explorers 2	learn more about the Trinity, their relationship with God and the Christian community, the Sacraments, the stories of our faith, and their responsibilities and rights as Christians
6	Discipleship 1	learn about God's plan for His people as it unfolds throughout salvation history, studying the Scriptures focusing on the Old Testament
7	Discipleship 2	learn more about the life of Jesus, the beliefs of Catholic Christians contained in our Creed, and the meaning of these beliefs in our lives as they begin to consider the call to discipleship
8	Discipleship 3	learn about the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives while engaging in immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation
9 – 12	Guardians	Teens engage in doing community service

* Children/youth grade level may vary slightly from what is listed, depending on the child's previous religious education.

Assumption BVM PREP PREP Guidelines and Procedures

(Topics are listed alphabetically for your convenience.)

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures: Please cooperate with these procedures for families to facilitate safe arrival and dismissal. Consult your map for locations of doors mentioned below.

+ Arrival: *We respectfully ask that families be on time. Prompt arrival of all PREP members helps sessions to run more successfully. Opening prayer begins at 8:30 a.m. (Sun.) and 6 p.m. (Wed.).*

- ❖ The courtyard door will be unlocked 20 minutes and the south door (near cornfield) will be unlocked ten minutes before the opening time of the session. Both doors will be monitored.
- ❖ All are to use the south door or courtyard door to enter the building. Parents or older siblings (Faith Explorers and Discipleship) are asked to accompany younger children (Genesis, Good Shepherd and Apostles) into the building.
- ❖ Youth are to proceed to Hanlon Center and meet at their group's assigned spot for opening prayer. Parents are welcome. Catechists then lead their respective groups to the session rooms.
- ❖ *Children and youth who arrive late (5 minutes after session begins) should enter the building using the courtyard door and report to the Religious Education Office to have their names removed from the absentee lists before going to their respective session rooms.*
- ❖ Please note that for the safety of our children, only the south and courtyard doors will be open before sessions begin. No doors will be open during sessions.

Note Well: *Our dismissal policies have change anda re described below. Please comply with these procedures for the safety and well-being of all in our PREP community.*

+ Dismissal: *In consideration for all involved in PREP, we respectfully ask that parents be prompt in picking up their children. If you have regular carpool arrangements for your child(ren), please note this on their emergency cards. If you have special arrangements for pick up for a particular session, please inform his/her catechist in writing. Please be patient and cautious in departing in your vehicle, as many people are trying to exit at the same time. If everyone exercises extra caution, dismissal will run smoothly and promptly.*

On SUNDAYS: At 9:30 a.m., the Jubilee Center door will be opened; parents can wait in the Coll Room until 9:45.

Note that we will not allow anyone in the hallways until 9:45. Parents can pick up children at their session rooms from 9:45- 9:50. The south door will be opened at 9:45 a.m., if parents want to enter by that door.

- ❖ *Discipleship Groups:* At 9:45 youth can go to the south door for pick up, or out the courtyard door if meeting family in church for Mass.
- ❖ *Genesis, Good Shepherd Apostles, Faith Explorers Groups:* At the end of the session, youth line up at the door. Parents or an older sibling will pick these children up. A catechist will remain in the session room for five minutes after dismissal.
- ❖ *For car pick up, please use the south door only. Having a placard with our family name in the front window of your car will facilitate pick-up as well. Please do not pull your car onto the walking lines on the driveway.*
- ❖ Five minutes after dismissal, catechists will bring all remaining children to the south door for pick up.

On WEDNESDAYS: At 7:00 p.m., the Jubilee Center door will be opened; parents can wait in the Coll Room until

7:15. Note that we will not allow anyone in the hallways until 7:15. Parents can pick up children at their session rooms from 7:15 – 7:25. The south door will be opened at 7:15 p.m. if parents want to enter by that door.

- ❖ *Discipleship 3 youth and their siblings will be instructed to proceed to the front door of the building. Parents of Discipleship 3 youth, their siblings, and carpool buddies only will pick their children up there.*
- ❖ Parents or adults authorized by parents must pick up all other children & youth at their session rooms unless permission for an older sibling to pick up has been given (see DRE for this).
- ❖ Children of catechists may go to the room where their parent teaches following the dismissal of the groups previously mentioned.
- ❖ At 7:25, catechists will bring all remaining children to the south door. Parents can drive up to that door at 7:25 and we will bring the children out to the car. Please have your family name placed prominently in the window if you choose this option.
- ❖ **Early dismissals are strongly discouraged.** If you must remove your child early from as session, **you must come into the building and pick him/her up.** We will not allow a child to wait at a door or outside to be picked up early. Please notify us in writing before the session if early pickup is necessary.

Attendance

Children's consistent participation in religious education sessions offers significant benefits to their spiritual formation. Please ensure that your children are consistent in attending sessions, as an essential element of forming a strong community is the members' presence to and with one another.

Each PREP participant is allowed a total of 4 absences during the PREP season. Attendance at one family holy hour during the course of the PREP year is included in the total attendance record of each child/youth. Attendance at Stations of the Cross during Lent is also included in each child's attendance record. If a child/youth misses five or more sessions he/she may be expected to complete the make-up work assigned by the DRE. If a family has a special situation that necessitates multiple absences, it is suggested that parents/guardians make that known to the DRE, who will determine if absences are excused.

When children are absent from a session, parents are expected to help children/youth keep up with the faith formation process. Catechists may send periodic e-mails, updating parents about the activities and topics being covered. Catechists will keep handouts and materials for that session and give them to the young person upon his/her return to PREP. If you wish to pick up these materials before the next session, please make arrangements by calling the Religious Education Office.

Cancellation of Sessions

Sundays: If a session is cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency, we will send a group e-mail to notify you about this.

Wednesdays: if St. Michael School is cancelled or dismisses early, there will be no PREP that evening. Check wfmz.com or on the television for this information.

PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE ASSUMPTION PARISH OFFICE FOR CANCELLATION INFORMATION.

Catechesis for a Safe Environment

Because each person is precious and created in God's image and likeness, a yearly session for PREP youth helps them to learn that God wants them to experience His love through those who treat them with Christian care. Children and youth learn ways to discern safe and unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe. Lesson plans are available for parent perusal in the Religious Education Office. *Parents/guardians choosing not to have children participate in this program must submit their requests in writing to the Religious Education Office two weeks prior to their sons'/daughters' scheduled session(s).*

Child Protection Catechesis sessions for the 2018-2019 PREP season will occur November 7 & 11, 2018.

Catechists and Aides

A catechist is "one who echoes the good news." *Parents are the first catechists* of their children as they strive to be loving examples of Catholic Christian living. ABVM PREP catechists are adult parish members who assist parents in the faith formation of their children by giving their time and talent to share the Good News with parish children and youth each week. They prepare and lead sessions for children and youth, attend PREP team meetings, comply with Diocesan policies and procedures regarding clearances and safe environment training, participate in Catechist Formation Classes offered by the Diocese of Allentown, and work together to make ABVM PREP a faith community that invites young people to grow in faith. PREP aides assist catechists in various ways during sessions. We ask for your prayerful and practical support for these men, women and teens. Please express your gratitude for their efforts by ensuring your child(ren)'s consistent attendance at PREP. Please consider whether God is calling you to this ministry as well.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Children ages 4 – 9 may participate in the Children's Liturgy of the Word offered during 10:00 a.m. Sunday Masses October - May. Children join the entire congregation for the Mass, and go to another space for the Liturgy of the Word. Leaders proclaim readings from the Children's Lectionary and offer age-appropriate reflections on the Word. Please consider serving in this ministry.

Children with Special Needs

ABVM PREP welcomes all children and supports parents in their children's religious formation. Making the Director of Religious Education aware of your child's special needs enables us to make the necessary accommodations to share the Good News with your child appropriately and effectively. Each person has something to share; we endeavor to help each child share his/her gifts and experience God's love.

Curriculum and Objectives

The *Religious Education Curriculum of the Diocese of Allentown*, revised in 2009, provides objectives for children in each level of religious education. Objectives are organized in cognitive (knowledge), affective (values and attitudes) and behavioral categories to promote integrated faith formation for our children and youth. Priority topics for each level are included in this handbook (p. 10) for your information. Our program offers youth communal, age-appropriate experiences of learning about God and the Catholic faith in accord with these guidelines. For the Genesis and Faith Explorers groups, sessions focus on the Sunday Gospels and Catholic teachings connected with the readings for Mass. A weekly Gospel magazine and the supplemental text highlight important ideas and doctrine connected with the liturgical Scripture texts. Discipleship 1 and 2 youth use Sacred Scripture and supplemental material in their folders. Good Shepherd, Apostles, and Discipleship 3 sessions include instruction about and preparation for celebration of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation respectively, and the youth in these groups use materials that support sacramental preparation.

CYO: Participation in St. Michael CYO is open to all the children and youth of St. Joseph and Assumption parishes. CYO activities include various sports, drama, an academic bowl, spelling bees, and a religious award program. For more information or to register, go to www.st-mikes.com and click on CYO.

Deacon Don Visits

We are blest to have Deacon Don Elliott visiting our PREP groups throughout the season. He will present a 20 minute lesson to each group over the course of the PREP season.

Emergency Cards

Parents/guardians are to complete a family emergency card (*one card per family*). Please include emergency contact information, an authorized list of adults that can pick up your child(ren), food or other allergies or medical conditions, or anything else that we might need to know. Please submit these cards as soon as possible. These cards are kept in the Religious Education Office. Information is shared with catechists as needed and appropriate.

Faith Facts Challenges: Every year children and youth will be asked to complete a short quiz and reflection project at home to demonstrate their cognitive mastery of particular teachings of the faith that are the priority topics for their PREP level. Refer to the list in your child's folder for these topics.

Faith Formation for Adults

Formation in faith is a lifelong process. We invite parents of PREP children and other adults to participate in adult religious education sessions held concurrent with PREP sessions. Join other adults in learning more about our Catholic faith while your children attend PREP, or at any of the other adult faith formation programs offered at our parish. Consult the bulletin/ parish website for more information, or contact Larry Durback at 610-867-7424, ex. 12.

A NEW POSSIBILITY THIS YEAR! Faith-in-a-Box: PREP children, youth & parents will have the opportunity to recognize the many ways God shares His love with us. More details will come about this exciting project!

Family Holy Hours

Holy hours offered two times a year provide families with an opportunity to pray & grow in devotion to our Eucharistic Lord. Since Eucharist is the center of our Catholic Christian community, we offer our young people an experience of the valuable Catholic tradition of praying in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with family members & other parishioners.

+To help children grow in **prayerfulness and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament** with respect to their developmental needs, and to encourage them to value time spent in prayerful adoration of Jesus, we will provide brief periods of communal prayer, reflection, soft music, and/or reflection/activity sheets in keeping with the liturgical season. Quiet time will allow individuals to speak and to listen to Jesus in their hearts.

+ The holy hour is counted as a regular PREP session. Families (PREP participants and at least one parent) should attend at least one holy hour during the PREP season. Not attending a holy hour during the year is counted as one absence. Attendance at holy hours will be taken using a family sign in sheet. We recognize that younger children (preschool, Genesis, Good Shepherd and Apostles) may not be able to be attentive for a full hour. We therefore suggest that all families try to join us for at least ½ hour. Join us at any time during the holy hour or leave after an appropriate time. Faith Explorers and Discipleship youth should be able to participate in the full hour.

+Holy Hours this year are **Sunday, October 14 at 12:30 p.m.** and **Tuesday, November 6, 6 – 7 p.m.** in church. (N.B. Attendance at another holy hour may be acceptable at the Director of Religious Education's discretion.)

Friends and Guests

Friends and relatives (children) of PREP participants are welcome to join sessions. If a PREP participant is bringing more than one guest to a session, please notify the Religious Education Office in advance if possible. If an adult other than a parent wishes to attend a PREP session, permission must be given by the DRE for this.

Handbook Acknowledgement Form

In an effort to be environmentally conscientious, we publish the PREP Family handbook on the parish website. We ask all parents to read the handbook carefully and sign a form (distributed at orientation) indicating that they have read the handbook and will make a sincere effort to comply with the policies therein.

Outreach

Assumption PREP encourages youth to love and to serve others as Jesus did. Various activities help children to serve people in our parish, our local area, and our world. Outreach activities include but are not limited to:

- ✦ An ongoing **Food Drive** in which ABVM children collect food items for St. Paul Food Bank, Allentown, & Betty Lou's Food Pantry, Coopersburg. Items for each month are listed on the PREP calendar;
- ✦ Participation in the **Missionary Childhood Association**, the Catholic Church's mission organization for youth. Children make monetary donations to HCA during October (World Mission month) and Lent. We encourage children to offer prayers and sacrifices for children in mission countries at any time, and will periodically highlight this aspect of growing in missionary spirit in sessions.
- ✦ Donations to the **Sassy Massey Smiles Foundation** in memory of Jillian Massey, a parishioner who taught us much about bringing happiness and God's love to others before she went to heaven in 2017.

Parent Involvement

PREP exists to support parents in nurturing their child's faith development. Parents' active leadership in the faith formation of their child(ren) is essential to the young person's holistic development as a Catholic Christian. In our collaborative effort to help children grow and develop into Catholic Christians whose faith is living, conscious, and active, we encourage parents to:

- 📖 **Be consistent in participating in Eucharist each week as a family.**
- 📖 Ensure that your children (and you!) participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.
- 📖 Review content of PREP sessions with their children.
- 📖 Help children to memorize the prayers & teachings listed on memorization checklists in their PREP folders.
- 📖 Respectfully offer feedback and pose questions to us to keep communication lines open.
- 📖 Prayerfully support our catechists and express your gratitude to them for their assistance in your child(ren)'s faith formation.
- 📖 Cooperate with PREP policies and procedures, recognizing that they have been developed for the benefit of individual children and for the common good.
- 📖 Check the folders of their youngest/only child in PREP **every week** for communications we may have sent home. Please read these communications and respond when necessary.
- 📖 Read e-mail communications your child/ren's catechists may send to keep you informed of the happenings in your child/ren's PREP groups.
- 📖 Consider sharing your time and talents by serving as a catechist, aide, office helper, group parent, service volunteer or as an arrival or dismissal monitor.

Participant Responsibilities (with guidance from their parents)

To help our PREP community accomplish its mission, we ask all to cooperate in these ways:

- 📖 Each person is responsible for creating the best Christian community possible. Session leaders and aides give generously of their time and talents for PREP. PREP youth, in turn, are responsible for being respectful and cooperative during sessions. All are encouraged to contribute their thoughts and ideas, and talents to sessions. If a young person's actions weaken the community, the session leader will encourage his/her cooperation and positive participation. If this fails, the Director of Religious Education may intervene. Parents/guardians may be called to help the child recognize how his/her actions are detrimental to the community and to consider ways to help the child grow as a builder of Christian community.
- 📖 If a session leader requests group members to reflect on or complete something at home or to bring in certain materials, we ask that participants make a sincere effort to comply.
- 📖 Each participant receives a folder that includes all materials that are to be brought to all sessions.

Photo Agreement

When having special events at PREP, we may take photos to display around the parish or to accompany articles we may send for publication to the local newspapers or the *AD Times*. If you do not want your child/children's pictures used in this manner, please indicate that on the Handbook Acknowledgement Form.

Prayer Intentions

As a community of faith, we believe that it is important to support one another in prayer. Upon your arrival at a session, you may write your intention on the slips provided and place it in the prayer basket. At opening prayer, our PREP community will pray for your intentions.

Prayer Journals

Each child in Genesis, Good Shepherd, Apostles and Faith Explorers has a prayer journal included in the PREP folder. Children can record thoughts and prayers during a session as directed. Catechists may encourage group members to write a Scripture quote, draw a picture, or answer a specific question to help them grow in relationship with God.

Registration

PREP registration is April through June. Forms are available on the parish website or in the parish office. Prompt return of these forms increase a family's possibility of being assigned to their preferred PREP session. Those who return forms after June 30 (exceptions may be made for new members) will be charged a late fee. Anyone who requests a change of PREP session day after August 15 must submit a \$15 clerical fee for each child whose session day will be changed. Arrangements can be made for families in need of financial assistance. Consult the registration form for yearly fees. Forms can be obtained on the parish website. Send questions to prepregcoord@gmail.com.

Release Time

Under Section 1546 of the Public School Code (as amended by Act 175 of 1982), parents can request that their children be excused from school for a religious act of worship. Thus, you may request that your child be excused from school to attend the 9 a.m. or noon Mass on a holy day.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Parents are encouraged to fulfill their Catholic parental responsibilities by giving their children the opportunity to celebrate this Sacrament frequently. Consult the bulletin or parish website for times when the parish offers this Sacrament. Children and youth have the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during a PREP session at least once a season.

Sacramental Preparation Policy & Processes

*The Sacraments are celebrations of God's power and presence active in the lives of individuals and the Christian community. They proclaim, make explicit, and celebrate God's grace in the life of those receiving them. Sacraments are significant moments in a lifelong, ongoing process of growing in faith, hope and love with Jesus Christ. Processes of preparation for Sacraments are essential to the ongoing faith formation in the lives of children and youth. The goal of these processes for the young people of ABVM is not only reception of a particular Sacrament; more important is the person's continuous Catholic Christian development whose faith is maturing into the living, conscious, active belief of an adult disciple of Jesus Christ. In light of this philosophy, the ideal situation for a child to enter the process of sacramental preparation is one in which he/she is consistently attending a religious education/formation program throughout his/her youth. Thus, **Assumption Parish requires that a child entering a sacramental preparation process consistently participate in religious education sessions for at least one year prior to entering the preparation for a Sacrament.** (For new parishioners, participation in the religious education program at their previous parish is acceptable.)*

Good Shepherd group members prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time.

Apostles group members prepare to receive the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time.

Discipleship 2 and 3 youth prepare for full initiation into the Catholic Christian community as they prepare for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation during a two- year process.

For parents/guardians whose children are involved in a sacramental preparation process, two parent/guardian gatherings for each Sacrament provide theological updates, discussion, and community building. Concurrent gatherings for sacramental candidates are held. We encourage parents/guardians and candidates to attend these sessions that can enrich the whole family's celebration of the Sacrament.

Scripture Reading

PREP youth begin to use the Bible in the Faith Explorers 2 level when each participant receives his/her own Bible. A nominal fee is charged for purchase of these Bibles. (If a young person enters PREP after Faith Explorers 2, he/she should also purchase a Bible at that time.) Participants in Faith Explorers 2 and Discipleship 1, 2 and 3 are responsible to bring Bibles to all sessions.

Snacks

PREP may offer snacks in celebration of the Church's high holy days or reception of a Sacrament, and with the approval of the Director of Religious Education. We will endeavor to offer healthy snacks and be aware of any participants who may have food allergies, totally avoiding snacks with nuts and with eggs is a must.

Special Events

During the PREP season, our team offers some special events each year to engage the children in meaningful, worthwhile, age-appropriate faith formation activities. This year's events are:

MCA Dime Lines: PREP groups will collect dimes during the month of October. On **October 24 and 28** the PREP session will include laying out the dimes in the Hanlon Center to see which group collected the largest amount of dimes. Proceeds will benefit the Missionary Childhood Association. General celebration and a decade of the rosary prayed for children in mission countries will be part of the event.

Special Sacramental Preparation for Children and Youth

Some children in our community have not celebrated the Sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and/or Confirmation at the ages children commonly celebrate these rites. ABVM provides these children with the age-appropriate formation needed to celebrate any of these Sacraments. Day and times of sessions depend on the participants' and catechists' schedules. Contact the DRE for more information.

Spiritual Library

The Assumption BVM Spiritual Library in the Finnegan Room of the Jubilee Center offers books, tapes, and videos for adults and children on a variety of topics including theology, spirituality, prayer, lives of the saints, and Christian living. Visit this valuable parish resource and check out some of the materials that may be borrowed.

Technological Devices Policy

Our world today offers many exciting, instant means of communication and technological devices. We recognize the value for good of these devices, but we prefer that PREP participants refrain from bringing them to PREP. If your family practice is to have your child/children carry a communication device at all times, we will not oppose your family's policy. However, *PREP participants are to have all cell phones and any other technological devices turned off during the PREP session.* If any child or youth is found using the device or being otherwise distracted by it during a session, the device will be confiscated and kept safely in the religious education office for the remainder of that session. The parent/guardian of the child can retrieve the device at the conclusion of the session.

Technology and Faith Formation

Many websites can enhance the spiritual development of children, youth, and adults. We invite you to explore some of these sites, including www.loyolapress.com and www.pflaum.com.

Youth Ministry at ABVM

ABVM offers various ways for teens to live out their call to discipleship and to become involved in their parish in prayer, service, education, and social activities. Consult the parish bulletin and website for updates.



Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children. The catechesis given by parents with the family "precedes, accompanies, and enriches all other forms of catechesis." (National Directory for Catechesis)

Diocese of Allentown, PA
Religious Education Curriculum Priority Topics

*The object of catechesis is communion with Jesus Christ.
(National Directory for Catechesis, Chapter 2, #19B)*

Genesis (Grade 1)

God the Creator

Grace

Eternal Life

Good Shepherd (Grade 2)

Jesus

Penance and Reconciliation

Eucharist

Apostles (Grade 3)

Church

Sacraments (Basic Knowledge)

Creed

Trinity

Faith Explorers 1 (Grade 4)

The Holy Spirit

Basic Morality: The Ten Commandments, The Beatitudes, The Greatest Commandment, and
The Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy

Faith Explorers 2 (Grade 5)

Sacraments and Liturgy

Discipleship 1 (Grade 6)

Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures)

Discipleship 2 (Grade 7)

New Testament (Christian Scriptures)

Preparation for Confirmation

Discipleship 3 (Grade 8)

The Church: Its Life and History

Preparation for Confirmation

+ Preparation for reception for the Sacraments is integrated into instruction in the Good Shepherd, Apostles, and Discipleship groups.

+ Children and youth will have formulas (summarized teachings of our faith) and prayers to memorize at each level as well.

Effective catechesis also incorporates learning “by heart...” While the content of faith cannot be reduced to formulas that are repeated without being properly understood, learning by heart has had a special place in catechesis and should continue to have that place in catechesis today. “The blossoms, if we may call them that, of faith and piety do not grow in the desert places of a memory-less catechesis. What is essential is that the texts that are memorized must at the same time be taken in and gradually understood in depth, in order to become a source of Christian life on the personal level and the community level. It should be introduced through a process that, begun early, continues gradually, flexibly, and never slavishly. In this way certain elements of the Catholic faith, tradition, and practice are learned for a lifetime, form the basis for communication, allow people to pray together in a common language, and contribute to the individual’s continued growth in understanding and living the faith.

(National Directory for Catechesis, Chapter 4, #29F)

For Parents: We're supporting you in your vocation as parents!

At Baptism, we celebrate and proclaim our belief that God gifts each person with the gifts of faith, hope, and love. As these core theological virtues are nurtured in each person through the power of the Holy Spirit, with the help of the Catholic Christian community, each Christian grows as Jesus' faithful disciple, knowing and doing what is good, loving God and others. This is the heart of our Christian mission: echoing the Good News. In a most significant way we live out this vocation as parents and catechists, encouraging our precious young people to grow in that relationship of faith, hope, and love with Jesus and his Church, that each person might contribute to the ongoing revelation of God's Kingdom in our midst, by acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with God.

An awesome task? Yes. A mission impossible? No! God never calls without supplying the necessary grace to accomplish the aim. At Baptism and Confirmation, God strengthens each of us with whatever is needed to carry out our mission as disciples. In accepting the vocation to be a parent, the primary catechist of your child, you carry out your baptismal call in an exceptional way. God reassures us: "Do not be afraid – I am with you!" (Isaiah 43:5) and will not leave us alone.

The following pages can help you to expand your understanding of catechesis in general, the purpose and goals of our Parish Religious Education Program, and how we hope to support you in your vocation of Catholic Christian parenting. Let's begin with a review of just what catechesis is all about...

Catechesis: What is it? Catechesis is echoing the Good News of Jesus!



According to the **Catechism of the Catholic Church**:

CCC#4: Quite early on, the name catechesis was given to the totality of the Church's efforts to make disciples, to help persons believe that Jesus is the Son of God, so that believing, they might have life in his name, and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building up the Body of Christ.

CCC#5: Catechesis is an *education in the faith* of children, young people, and adults, which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way, with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life.

CCC #426: [Quoting *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979) (*On Catechesis in Our Time*) by Pope John Paul II]: At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, "the only son of the Father... full of grace and truth," (John 1:14), who suffered and died for us and who now after rising is living with us forever. It is Jesus who is "the way, the truth, and the life," (John 14:6) and Christian living consists in following Christ. To catechize is "to reveal in the person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfillment in that person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and of the signs worked by him." Catechesis aims at putting "people...in communion ...with Jesus Christ: only he can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity."

According to **The National Directory for Catechesis (Chapter 2, #19B)**:

The object of catechesis is communion with Jesus Christ.

From **Sacred Scripture**

Thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel. Fear not, for I have redeemed you.
I have called you by name: you are mine. (Isaiah 43:1)

I came so that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)

Jesus approached [the eleven] and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-19)

Catechesis, then, is about nurturing a RELATIONSHIP with the Holy Trinity!

What is the  of Catechesis? NURTURING A RELATIONSHIP with  the HOLY TRINITY

- + A relationship of LOVE that God intends for each person for all eternity
- + Made possible through the saving action of Jesus Christ
- + Celebrated and entered into by each person at Baptism

+ Remember: Relationships involve:

Knowledge of the other and of self
Attitudes, values and beliefs about the other, self, and the relationship
Behaviors – actions

Thus, catechesis for communion with Jesus Christ, leading us to the Father & Holy Spirit, includes:

- + **Cognitive learning:** the “*what*” of faith: an assimilation of knowledge that brings awareness, insight
- + **Affective learning:** the “*so what*” of faith: involves forming of one’s feelings, attitudes, values, beliefs that bind us as community and gives purpose, meaning to knowledge
- + **Behavioral learning:** the “*now what*” of faith: which promotes acting in accord with one’s knowledge, beliefs, and values. Many learn best by doing. What we know and believe is evidenced through what we do

In catechesis with children and youth, parish religious education programs assist parents in their vocation of...

...developing the character of a Christian and fostering lived faith in union with the Holy Trinity in their sons and daughters.



Stir into flame the gift of God. (2 Tim. 1: 6)

Catechesis: Whose Responsibility Is It? Catechesis is a responsibility of the entire Christian community, (General Directory for Catechesis, #220) and in particular ways, the mission of:

Parents

The catechesis given by parents with the family, “precedes, accompanies and enriches all other forms of catechesis.” (Catechesi Tradendae #68, Pope John Paul II)

“When children are baptized, the parents accept the responsibility to bring up their children in the practice of the faith and to see to it that the divine life God gives them is kept safe from the poison of sin to grow ever stronger in their hearts.” (Rite of Baptism of Children #56) At the same time, the Church promises to help parents foster their children’s faith and assists them specifically in their role as catechists for their children...” (NDC, Chapter 8, #54C)

The Bishop and Diocesan Staff

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the bishop is “chief catechist of the diocese.... a herald of the faith” (LG #25)

“Within the variety of ministries and services performed by the particular Church in its efforts to evangelize, catechesis occupies a place of particular importance.”

“...Part of the bishop’s prophetic ministry...a collaborative effort within the diocese...” (NDC, Chapter 8, #54A)

Pastors and Priests

*“All believers have a right to catechesis; all pastors have the duty to provide it.” (Catechesi Tradendae #64, Pope John Paul II)
The bishop’s “closest collaborators,” priests are “catechists of catechists.” (NDC, Chapter 8, #54B.1-2)*

Deacons and Women and Men in Consecrated Life

Deacons “participate in catechetical ministry as preachers and teachers.”

Those in consecrated life catechize “by witness ...within the context of lives lived with extraordinary dedication to community life and an uncommon commitment to the Beatitudes.” (NDC, Chapter 8, #54B.3-4)

Parish Catechetical Leaders

“The single most critical factor in an effective parish catechetical program is the leadership of a professionally trained parish catechetical leader....They are catechists first.” (NDC, Chapter 8, #54B.5)

Catechists

“The apostolic work of the catechist springs from the Sacrament of Baptism through which all believers come to share in the prophetic ministry of Christ and the evangelizing mission of the Church. It is strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation. The call to the ministry of catechist is a vocation, an interior call, the voice of the Holy Spirit....Christ invites all catechists to follow him as a teacher of the faith and as a witness to the truth of the faith. (NDC, Chapter 8, #54B.8)

What are the Tasks of Catechesis? (according to the National Directory for Catechesis, Chapter 2, #20)

- + **Catechesis promotes *knowledge of the faith*.**
 - Introducing hearers to Christ and inviting conversion to him
 - By action of Holy Spirit, engenders in hearer a desire to know Christ, his life and message
 - Content of God's self-revelation, found in *Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition*
 - Introducing meaning of Creed

- + **Catechesis promotes a *knowledge of the meaning of Liturgy and the Sacraments*.**
 - Prepares members for full, conscious and active participation
 - Preparing to encounter Christ in sacraments, drawing others to communion with him
 - Forming members for prayer, for thanksgiving, for repentance, for praying with confidence, for community spirit, for understanding correctly the meaning of creeds
 - Sacramental catechesis prepares for initial celebration of the sacraments, provides enrichment following their reception

- + **Catechesis promotes *moral formation in Jesus Christ*.**
 - Transmits both content of Christ's moral teachings and their implications for Christian living
 - Journey of transformation and conversion, aiming to conform the believer to Christ
 - Encouraging witness to Christ's teaching in everyday life giving "living testimony" that demonstrates the social consequences of the demands of the Gospel

- + **Catechesis teaches the Christian *how to pray with Christ*.**
 - Conversion to Christ & union with him lead us to adopt his disposition of prayer & reflection
 - Developing attitudes of prayer and contemplation
 - Understanding the Our Father, the model of all prayer, and joining Christ in praying it
 - Prayer should be the ordinary environment for all catechesis

- + **Catechesis prepares the Christian *to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church*.**
 - "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34) is basis for disciples' life in community
 - Apprenticeship in Christian living based on Christ's teachings about community
 - Spirit of simplicity and humility
 - Concern for the poor
 - Particular care for the alienated
 - Fraternal correction
 - Common prayer
 - Mutual forgiveness
 - Fraternal love
 - Making daily conduct a shining testimony to the Gospel
 - Recognizing and celebrating each one's gifts
 - The Ecumenical Dimension: Openness to and appreciation of other Christian denominations and ecclesial communities
 - Need to know that other traditions share with us elements of our faith
 - Developing a true desire for unity
 - Affirming Catholic identity while respecting the faith of others

- + **Catechesis promotes a *missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society*.**
 - Helping lay faithful to fulfill their Christian vocation
 - Equipping persons to be present as Christians in society in their professional, cultural and social lives
 - Nourishing evangelical attitudes of Jesus (found in Beatitudes)
 - Developing capabilities for meaningful, respectful interreligious dialogue and communication with people of other religions

How do Parents and Parish partner in effective catechesis for children and youth?

Daniel S. Mulhall, Director of Catechist and Professional Development for RCL Benziger Publishing Co. states:

The sociological research that appears in *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* by Christian Smith and Melina Lundquist Denton (2005) reveals that the beliefs and values of teenagers reflect their parent's beliefs and values. The most effective way to shape the beliefs of children and young people is to shape the beliefs, attitudes, and practices of their parents.

While parents send their children to us [religious education programs] to educate, their responsibility doesn't end there. Instead, by sending us their children, they enter into a partnership with us. On our side, we promise to provide the best instructional and formation experiences. On the parent's side, they promise to raise their children in a Catholic home, where the faith is lived and God is loved. As part of this agreement, parents need to understand that what we teach will only be learned "by heart" if they help the children practice their faith at home, especially the practice of prayer and worship.

Catechists ... complain that parents have developed a consumer understanding of what a parish or school should do. In reality, education and faith formation don't work that way. The parents' role is too essential. (Benziger e-newsletter, "Partnering with Families," 9-7-10)

What does a Catholic home look like, sound like, feel like in the twenty-first century?

It looks like:

- ✦ A space graced by crucifixes, a Bible, and religious art in the various rooms of the home;
- ✦ A family gathered at mealtime around a table (not a TV), talking to one another, sharing stories, modeling what we do as Christian community gathering around the Eucharistic table each week.

It sounds like:

- ✦ Parents and children praying together throughout the day: in the car, before meals, at bedtime;
- ✦ Voices discussing the Christian response to events of each day: when the children report stories from the school day, discussing the Christian responses to difficult situations; when television shows and commercials promote messages in conflict with the message of Jesus, considering together what the true path to happiness is, etc.

It feels like:

- ✦ A place where all are respected and loved as precious sons and daughters of God, encouraged in developing and using their talents to make the world more loving, peaceful, and just;
- ✦ A home where the mercy of God is evident in family members forgiving one another and calling each other to more faithful discipleship each day.

Practically speaking, what are some things parents can do to foster faith at home?

- ✦ **Go to Mass every Lord's Day and Holy day of Obligation.** Nothing, absolutely nothing can replace this weekly celebration. The celebration of Eucharist is the heart of Catholic living. All we do each day flows into and out from Mass. Don't miss the opportunity for yourselves or your children!
- ✦ **Pray individually.** Throughout the day, ask for God's help to live out your Christian vocation, thank Him for the many blessings in your life, praise Him for the wonders of each moment, express your sorrow for your sins and failings. God listens. And he speaks. Open your mind and heart to him.
- ✦ **And pray with family members.** Remember to say grace before meals. Remind your spouse and children that you are praying for them, and ask them to pray for you. Join your children in prayers at bedtime. While in the car, ask your children to lead everyone in some of the prayers in their PREP folders. Let them choose the prayer and pray it aloud. (N.B. Those prayers are to be memorized at each level of PREP, but there is no way that catechists, given the short time they have with the children each week, can ensure that the children have them memorized. Ensuring that the children know their traditional Catholic prayers is a parent's responsibility.) Invite children to pray to God in their own words, too!
- ✦ **Use the PREP folders and books at home.** Too often we hear that the PREP folders have a special, safe place in the car for the week, and are only removed when the children come to the PREP session. Have a special place for them *in the house!* Review what the children have learned in a PREP session. Check your children's folders for communications from the PREP staff or your children's catechists. Consult the parish website for PREP updates. We will do our part in the religious formation of your children, but your part as parents is just as, *indeed, more* important.
- ✦ **Celebrate the liturgical seasons and feasts of the Church:** Light an Advent wreath. Put up the Nativity scene piece by piece during Advent. Choose Christmas cards with religious messages. Discuss Lenten works of prayer, sacrifice, and deeds of charity as a family. Attend Stations of the Cross as a family during Lent. Consult the calendar the parish distributes each year for the feasts of saints.
- ✦ **Use technology to nurture your Catholic faith.** Explore Catholic websites for information about weekly Mass readings, the saints, and other ways to learn about and grow in faith. Start with the *parish website* and go from there. Some recommended websites are: www.usccb.org, www.pflaum.com, and www.loyolapress.com.

Assumption BVM PREP 2018-2019 Calendar

SUNDAY SESSIONS

All sessions Sunday 8:30 – 9:45 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

Food collected each month will be donated to

St. Paul’s Food Bank, Allentown PA and Betty Lou’s Food Bank (Southern Lehigh Ministerium) Coopersburg, PA

September

+Food Bank Collection: macaroni and cheese, peanut butter

- 16 – Orientation session, begins in church; **Catechetical Sunday** – pray for our PREP catechists and aides!
- 23 – Regular session
- 30 – Regular session

October:

+Dime Collection for **Missionary Childhood Association** (the Catholic Church’s “child to child” mission society)

+Food Bank Collection: toilet paper and bar soap

- 7 – NO PREP (Columbus Day Weekend)
- 14 – Regular session
- 14 – Diocesan Holy Hour after 11:30 Mass (counts as one of the Family Holy Hours*)
(in church)
- 21 – Regular session
- 28 - Regular session and **Celebrate the Saints and Dime Lines Day!**

*Participation in one Family Holy Hour during the PREP season is considered part of the PREP schedule. We recommend that all PREP families attend at least one holy hour.

November

+Food Bank Collection: canned vegetables and stuffing mix

- Thurs.* 1 – *All Saints’ Day – Holy Day of Obligation*
- Sun.* 4 – Regular Session (also ABVM Spaghetti Supper in afternoon– join us for a good meal!)
- Tues.* 6 - Family Holy Hour*, 6 – 7 p.m. in church
- 11 – Regular session: **Child Protection Catechesis Session**
- 18 – Regular session
- 25 – NO PREP (Thanksgiving Weekend)

December

+Food Bank Collection: coffee, tea, and hot chocolate mix

- 2 – Regular session; First Sunday of Advent (*Discipleship 3 only no PREP because of Confirmation retreat on 12/1*)
- Sat.* 8 – Immaculate Conception (holy day of obligation in the United States)
- 9 – Regular session
- 16 – Regular session
- 23 & 30 – NO PREP (Christmas Season Holidays)

January

+Food Bank Collection: soup (canned or package) and crackers

- 6 – Regular session
- 13 – Regular session
- 20 – Regular session
- 27 – Regular session

February

+Food Bank Collection: pasta and sauce

- 3 – Regular session
- 10 – Regular session
- 17 - NO PREP (Presidents’ Day Weekend)
- 24 – Regular session

March

+Lenten **Quarters for Water** collection for **Missionary Childhood Association**

+Food Bank Collection: canned tuna

- 3 – Regular session
- Fri.* **8 – PREP Night at Parish Stations of the Cross**, 7pm (*counts as a PREP session*)
- 10 – Regular session
- 17 – Regular session
- 24 – Regular session
- 31 - Regular session

April

+Food Bank Collection: noodles and rice

- 7 - Regular session
- 14 - NO PREP (Palm Sunday)
- 21 - NO PREP: **Easter Sunday – ALLELUIA**
- 28 – Closing session

Lent/Easter Season
2019 Dates:
March 6: Ash
Wednesday

April 14: Palm Sunday

April 18: Holy
Thursday

April 19: Good Friday

April 21:
EASTER SUNDAY!

May 30: Ascension
(holy day of obligation)

June 9: Pentecost

Please consult the Sacramental Preparation page for information regarding the celebrations of Sacraments with youth at ABVM.

WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

All sessions Wednesday 6:00 – 7:15 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Food collected each month will be donated to

St. Paul’s Food Bank, Allentown PA and Betty Lou’s Food Bank (Southern Lehigh Ministerium) Coopersburg, PA.

September +Food Bank Collection: macaroni and cheese, peanut butter

12 - Orientation session, begins in church

Sun. 16 – **Catechetical Sunday** – pray for our PREP catechists and aides!

19 – Regular session

26 – Regular session

October: + Dime Collection for Missionary Childhood Association (the Catholic Church’s “child to child” mission society)

+Food Bank Collection: toilet paper and bar soap

3 – Regular session

10 – Regular session

Sun. 14 – Diocesan Holy Hour after 11:30 Mass (counts as one of the Family Holy Hours*)

17 – Regular session

24 – Regular session and **Celebrate the Saints and Dime Lines Day!**

31 - Vigil of All Saints’ Day – Mass at 6:30 p.m. NO PREP

*Participation in one Family Holy Hour during the PREP season is considered part of the PREP schedule. We recommend that all PREP families attend at least one holy hour.

November +Food Bank Collection: canned vegetables and stuffing mix

...Thurs.1 – All Saints Day – Holy Day of Obligation

Tues.6 – Family Holy Hour*, 6 – 7p.m., church

7 – Regular session: **Child Protection Catechesis Session**

14 – Regular session

21 - NO PREP (Thanksgiving holidays)

28 – Regular session

December +Food Bank Collection: coffee, tea, and hot chocolate mix

5 – Regular session

Sat. 8 - Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (holy day of obligation in the United States)

12 - Regular session

19 - Regular session

26 - NO PREP (Christmas Season Holidays)

**Lent/Easter Season
2019 Dates:**

March 6: Ash Wednesday

April 14: Palm Sunday

April 18: Holy Thursday

April 19: Good Friday

April 21:
EASTER SUNDAY!

May 30: Ascension (holy day of obligation)

June 9: Pentecost

January +Food Bank Collection: soup (canned or package) and crackers

9 - Regular session

16 - Regular session

23 – Regular session

30 – Regular session

February +Food Bank Collection: pasta and sauce

6 - Regular session

13 – Regular session

20 – Regular session

27 – Regular session

March — +Lenten Quarters for Water collection for Missionary Childhood Association

+Food Bank Collection: canned tuna

6 – Ash Wednesday – NO PREP

_Fri. 8 - **PREP Night at Parish Stations of the Cross**, 7pm (counts as a PREP session)

13 - Regular session

20 – Regular session

27 – Regular session

April +Food Bank Collection: noodles and rice

3 – Regular session

10 – Regular session

17 – NO PREP - Holy Week

24 - Closing session

Assumption BVM Parish Sacrament Preparation Processes for Children and Youth

The seven Sacraments are celebrations of the power and presence of God active in the lives of individuals and in the Christian community. They proclaim, make explicit, and celebrate the grace of God in the lives of the persons receiving them. Sacraments are significant moments in the lifelong, ongoing process of growing in faith, hope and love with Jesus Christ.

Processes of preparation for Sacraments are essential to the ongoing spiritual formation in the lives of Catholic Christians. The goal of these processes is not only our young people's reception of a particular Sacrament; more important is the continuous development of the person as a Catholic Christian whose faith is maturing into the living, conscious, active belief of an adult disciple of Jesus Christ. The ideal situation for a child to enter the process of sacramental preparation is one in which he/she is consistently attending religious education/formation sessions (either in a Catholic school or a parish program) throughout his/her youth. Thus, Assumption Parish requires that a child entering a sacramental preparation process be a consistent participant in religious education sessions for at least one year prior to entering the preparation for a Sacrament. For new parishioners, participation in the religious education program at their previous parish may be acceptable as determined by Assumption's Pastor and Director of Religious Education.

Children in grade 2 may prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time.

Children in grade 3 may prepare to receive the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time.

Youth in grade 7 may enter a two-year process to prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

For parents/guardians whose children are involved in a sacramental preparation process, parent/guardian gatherings for each Sacrament provide theological updates, discussion, and community building. Concurrent gatherings for sacramental candidates are held. We encourage parents and candidates to attend these sessions that can enrich the whole family's celebration of the Sacrament.

2018-2019 Sacrament Preparation Processes: Dates to Remember

FIRST RECONCILIATION

SMS Grade 2, PREP Good Shepherd

Tuesday, 2 October 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Gathering for Parents/Guardians (childcare available)

Celebration of First Reconciliation: Saturday, March 9, 2019, 10:30 a.m. (Snow date: TBD if necessary)

FIRST EUCHARIST

SMS Grade 3, PREP Apostles

Tuesday, November 13, 2018, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. : Gathering for Parents/Guardians (childcare available)

Saturday, March 9, 2019, 1:30 – 6 p.m. Afternoon of Reflection for candidates
(Parents return at 4:45 p.m. to attend Mass with children as the culmination of the retreat.)

May 8, 2019: 5 – 6:30 p.m. **Liturgical Preparation Session for children celebrating First Communion**
6 – 6:30 p.m., Parents please join us for preparation and prayer

Celebration of First Eucharist:

Saturday 11 May 2019, 10:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

SMS GRADES 7 & 8, PREP Discipleship 2 & 3

Year I Activities/Events (SMS Grade 7, PREP Discipleship 2, those to be confirmed in 2020)

Ordinary Time 2018: Year 1 Orientation Gatherings **25 September** and **1 October 2018**, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

***candidate and parent/guardians should attend one of these meetings**

Basic Catholic Knowledge Test

Spiritual Development Activities and Service Hours (**explained at Yr. 1 Orientation**)

Ordinary Time 2019: Year 2 Orientation Gatherings **5 February** and **11 February 2019***, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

***candidate and parent/guardians should attend one of these meetings**

Year II Activities/Events (SMS Grade 8, PREP Discipleship 3, those to be confirmed in 2019)

Sunday, 9 September, 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.: **Gathering for parents/guardians and candidates; sponsors also welcome**
(PREP youth have a regular session on Sept. 12 & 16. Parents with no other PREP children need not attend orientation.)

Saturday, 1 December 2018, 1 – 6 p.m. Afternoon of Reflection for Candidates (includes 5 p.m. Mass)

Other events as presented at Yr. 2 Orientation, described in Candidates' "Quest for the Spirit" Manual

TBD, 6:30 – 8 p.m.: **Liturgical Preparation Session for Candidates and Sponsors**

Celebration of Confirmation 2019: TBD