

Dear Parents,

As Coordinator of Religious Education, I am grateful for the privilege of working with you parents in bringing your children to a closer relationship with God. You show your children the importance of religious instruction by enrolling them in our programs. Your children also see that prayer and worship are an essential part of their spiritual lives by attending Mass together. It is encouraging to see so many take their Christian parental responsibilities seriously.

Faith formation is a life- long process. Sometimes this is misunderstood because we have connected the Religious Education process to coincide with the academic year. However, we never graduate from Religious Ed/Faith Formation because our relationship with God is never finished.

To provide for the staffing of the Religious Education and Youth Ministry departments, maintaining a professionally equipped office and provide programs for your children, involves considerable expense. The financing of the office and programs is made possible partly through our tuition. Just as your expenses at home rise, so do ours. Still, a sizable subsidy from parish funds that comes from the Sunday collection will continue. A family who may be experiencing financial difficulties can request tuition assistance. No child is denied a religious education because of the inability to pay the fee.

Please know that I am grateful to you, our catechists and volunteers for all that is done to provide a solid education in our Catholic Faith for our children. May God continue to bless us in teaching the Gospel message and fulfilling God's command to teach all nations.

Sincerely in Christ,

Hilary Melander  
Religious Education Coordinator

### **CHANGES YOU WILL SEE IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**

- **No Preschool Classes:** Due to space limitations (and the addition of bathrooms to better serve the needs of our parishioners), we will no longer be able to offer classes for Preschool-aged children. Our classes begin at age 5 with Kindergarten.
- **Sacrament Class:** Children who are enrolled in Sacrament Class will attend regular Religious Education Class, according to their age and grade. The majority of preparation will take place on a weekend-day retreat with parents (one for Reconciliation; two for Communion).
- **Monthly Themes:** Each month, Religious Education classes will be centered on a theme for the month. Your children will be learning age-appropriate means about our faith and how to live it out. Furthermore, there will be more focused instruction on the Mass and Liturgy of the Word.
- **Generations of Faith:** Beginning in January, regular Religious Education classes will decrease to two per month. The first Sunday of each month will be devoted to Generations of Faith, where whole families will gather to share a meal together and learn about a topic of interest in our faith. More information on this program will become available in the fall.

### **REGISTRATION:**

Registration in the parish is required before admission to St. Michael Religious Education program. First time registrants are asked to bring a copy of the child's baptismal certificate at the time of registration. Religious Education Classes are held on Sundays from 10:00 - 11:00am. If you attend the 10:30am Mass, your child will join you for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

### **COST:**

A fee is charged at the time of registration. This provides for the resources and other materials needed for classes. However, the program is mainly subsidized by Parish funds. **Inability to meet payment should not deter anyone from being enrolled in our Religious Education Program.** Fee payment may be made in installments according to your family's financial situation. If any problems exist, please contact the Religious Education office.

### **SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION/EUCHARIST:**

**The format for Sacrament Class has changed!** Children will be registered for their regular Religious Education Class (2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) and are asked to attend regularly. These classes will teach age-appropriate foundations of our faith. Each child will receive supplemental materials to take home in preparation for the Mandatory Parent/Child Reconciliation and Eucharist retreats that will be held **November 15, February 21<sup>st</sup> and April 25<sup>th</sup>**. Reconciliation will be Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. First Communion will be held Mother's Day weekend, May 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **ABSENCE:**

Since our total program comprises about 25 sessions, students missing an excessive amount of classes may be required to repeat the class the following year, especially in terms of completing sacraments. Should a problem arise concerning absences (sickness, family problems, death in family) we ask you to contact the Religious Education Office immediately.

### **LATENESS:**

Punctuality is vital. Habitual lateness takes time away from other students. Students are asked to be in their classrooms five minutes before class is scheduled to begin.

### **DISMISSAL:**

The dismissal procedure can be enhanced if parents follow the guidelines for picking up their children. All children will be taken to the church to attend Mass. If you are not attending that Mass, please pick your child up in the covered area outside of the Narthex. For the purpose of safety, please do not park in the middle of the parking lot and honk your horn or yell to have your child go to the car. All children must be accompanied by an adult at pick up. We wish to avoid having children darting in and out between parked cars, please be careful in the parking lot!

### **CANCELLATIONS:**

If the Snohomish School Districts is off because of bad weather or send students home early, we will not have activities that day. If bad weather occurs on a Sunday and classes are cancelled, your Catechist will notify you as soon as possible or you will be able to access the website for up-to-date information.

### **TEXTBOOKS and ASSIGNMENTS:**

The curriculum in our program is recommended by the Office of Religious Education for the diocese. The cost is included in the fee. Students are expected to come to class each week with their home assignments completed. Parents are asked to help the Catechist by reviewing the Question of the Week with their child. Other supplies, such as crayons, scissors, drawing paper are provided for the class.

### **MOVING:**

If you move within the Parish, please notify the Religious Education Office of your new address and telephone number. If you move out of the Parish, please register immediately with your new Parish. We will be happy to provide a Letter of Transfer to the New Parish upon your request.