

**Annunciation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary
Parish & School**



**Religious Education/
Faith Formation
Faculty/Staff Handbook
August 2011-June 2012**

513-861-1295

www.annunciationbvmparish.org



Annunciation Parish



Established in 1910

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August 15, 2011

Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Dear Annunciation Parish & School Catechists & Faculty,

Thank you for your commitment to the Catechetical/Faith Formation Ministry at Annunciation Parish and Annunciation Parish School. Whether you are a parish catechist, a school catechist/faculty member, or are involved in both aspects it is crucial that we all - both paid employees and volunteers - work together towards the one common goal of fostering Catholic identity at Annunciation, assisting all those with whom we minister to grow in their love of God and their knowledge and understanding of our Roman Catholic faith, and their full, conscious, and active participation in worship.

This Catechist Handbook, along with the companion Parent/Student Faith Formation/Religious Education Handbook, provide the guidelines you will need to fulfill your catechetical and teaching ministry here at Annunciation.

All parish and school catechists/faculty and catechetical staff, both paid and volunteer, are expected by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and Annunciation Parish to read this handbook and the companion Parent/Student Handbook. Please do so, and sign and return the agreement form found on page 23 no later than August 22, 2011.

Any questions or concerns regarding your catechetical ministry and/or religious education/faith formation at Annunciation Parish and School should be addressed to me at 861-1295 or at faithformation@annunciationbvmparish.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sandra Chakeres

Director of Faith Formation

Annunciation Parish/Annunciation Parish School

Annunciation Parish Pastoral Council Vision/Mission Statement

Vision Statement

Annunciation Parish is a Catholic Christian faith community that exists to be an inviting and transforming sign of God's healing, reconciling and empowering presence to the Clifton neighborhood of Cincinnati. This vision has guided our efforts in our first one hundred years in the Clifton community, and we renew our commitment to this vision for the next one hundred years.

Mission Statement

We will be the sign of God's presence by our commitment to faithful worship, by our commitment to sharing and handing on our faith through formational and educational efforts, by our outreach and service to those in need within our community and neighborhood as well as by our witness to peace and justice, and by our being a gathering place for significant events in the larger community.

Religious Education/Faith Formation Philosophy at Annunciation

Our Catholic Christian faith is about relationship - relationship with Jesus Christ and Christ's Body, the Church. Catholic Christians are formed in faith through Word (Scripture), Sacrament, and Calendar (the Church or Liturgical Calendar). Faith formation is intergenerational and ongoing, with full, conscious, active participation in our faith as the goal.

Annunciation Catechetical Team

Catechesis is comprehensive formation into a Christian life of faith. The **Catechist is one who facilitates communication between a person and the mystery of God.*

Pastor: Rev. Todd Grogan

Director of Faith Formation: Dr. Sandra Chakeres

Director of Music: Mrs. Mary Malloy

Principal: Ms. Cindy Hardesty

Sacramental Preparation Catechists:

Baptism & RCIA: Rev. Todd Grogan & Dr. Sandra Chakeres

Eucharist & Reconciliation: Rev. Todd Grogan, Dr. Sandra Chakeres, Ms. Melissa Booth

Confirmation: Rev. Todd Grogan & Dr. Sandra Chakeres

Liturgical Catechesis Catechists: Rev. Todd Grogan, Dr. Sandra Chakeres, & Mrs. Mary Malloy

Sunday Sowers Catechists:

Mrs. Angie Smith & Mrs. Meredith Turner

Annunciation Parish School Catechists:

Preschool: Ms. Stephanie Phair

Kindergarten: Mrs. Amy Vogele

1st Grade: Mrs. Mary Ann Gemmell

2nd Grade: Mrs. Jean Ann Tucker

3rd Grade: Mrs. Allison Hader

4th Grade: Mrs. Kelly Berger

5th Grade: Mr. David Schuster

6th-8th Grades: Mr. Eric Froese

Catechist Responsibilities

Curriculum and Resources

Annunciation Parish is a Roman Catholic Parish in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. “*All catechetical efforts in the archdiocese must comply with archdiocesan curriculum guidelines.*” (Archdiocese of Cincinnati Religious Education Policy 2101.01.) The textbooks and/or resources provided for each component of religious education/faith formation are to be fully utilized by the catechists responsible for that component. (See pages 18-23 of the Parent/Student Handbook.) Any supplementary catechetical resources/materials utilized in the parish/school are to be approved in advance by the Director of Faith Formation.

Preparation for Class

All catechists at Annunciation Parish, whether in the parish or school setting, are expected to fully prepare all lessons for which they are responsible, and to do so utilizing the Catechetical Process. It is expected that the entire curriculum for which a given catechist is responsible will be completed during the course of each year.

At those times when the Director of Faith Formation and/or the Pastor might provide catechists with supplementary materials (i.e. for seasons, feasts, liturgical catechesis, or service projects), it is the responsibility of the catechist to incorporate these materials into his/her catechetical sessions.

Service Projects

Service to others is an important aspect of Chris-

tian living. Christians serve others in Jesus' name - we are Christ for others. Throughout the year, in both the parish and parish school, there are designated parish-wide and school-wide service projects (see pages 28-33 in the Parent/Student Handbook for description and dates). It is the responsibility of each catechist and faculty member to prepare his/her students for these projects and to carry out all required aspects of these projects. When there are parish-wide/ school-wide service projects, such as the Thanksgiving Food Drive and Operation Rice Bowl during Lent, it is expected that all catechists and students will participate in this one single project. There are to be no other "individual group/class" projects to compete with these projects. It is at such times that we have a wonderful opportunity to show our unity as Annunciation Parish and School.

*Please note that at Annunciation Parish School, all Religious Education/Faith Formation service projects are to be coordinated by each full-time faculty member for their students. This is not a task for only those school teachers who are also catechists. This is an aspect of the overall Catholic identity of our parish school.

Record Keeping

*All school and pre-school catechists are expected to keep records according to the stated policy of Annunciation Parish School. Any questions in this regard should be addressed to the school principal.

*All Sunday Sowers catechists are expected to complete weekly attendance records and leave this

information in their Sunday Sowers file cabinet each week.

*All other faith formation record keeping, unless specifically designated otherwise by the Director of Faith Formation (DFF) will be handled by the DFF.

Homework

*All Annunciation Parish School catechists are expected to assign religion class homework to their students, the type and amount to be commensurate with the age of the students. The *Finding God* textbook series used at Annunciation School does have an excellent family component to it, and the DFF does refer to specific family pages and text information in correspondence with parents. It is therefore expected that school students do take their religion texts home with them at various times each week as designated by their catechist.

*The Sunday Scriptures proclaimed at Mass is the basis for our Sunday Sowers Catechesis. The resources utilized do include take home materials. Sunday Sowers catechists are to consistently reinforce with their students and their students' parents the importance of full, conscious, active participation in the liturgy.

*Sacramental preparation at Annunciation Parish is family-centered, with parents directly involved in the preparation process. The resources utilized are geared towards family involvement together in the home.

Catechist Certification

“Teachers of religion, whether full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, in parish religious education programs, Catholic elementary schools or the RCIA process are to comply with the ‘Process of Becoming Certified As a Catechist’.” (Archdiocese of Cincinnati Religious Education Policy 2001.03.)

All catechists at Annunciation Parish and School, both employees and volunteers, are required to actively pursue and achieve, in the time allotted by the Archdiocese, Catechist Certification in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. There is no exception to this policy. The Director of Faith Formation will maintain all Catechist Certification records for both parish and school catechists. It is the responsibility of the catechist to provide the DFF with copies of any certificates of completion for approved courses/workshops, and any other documentation regarding Catechist Certification. All questions regarding Catechist Certification are to be directed to the DFF, who oversees this process for the parish and the school.

Discipline Procedures

Please refer to pages 15-16 in the Parent/Student Handbook. Please note that at no time may a child be disciplined corporally or corrected with abusive language.

Copyright Laws

All catechists of the parish and school are expected to be aware of and adhere to copyright laws regarding both print and media materials. Contrary to popular belief, copyright law **does not** allow ministers and educators to make copies of materials that are used for a “good” purpose. (For further details, see page 15, #17, in *Religious Education, Parish and Youth Ministry: Legal Issues for Catechetical Leaders and Youth Leaders*, written by Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, J.D., Ph.D., by the National Catholic Educational Association, Washington, D.C.

Field Trip Procedures

All school catechists must follow the stated policies of Annunciation Parish School regarding field trips. Any parish catechist interested in pursuing a field trip with children must first submit, in writing, at least six weeks in advance of the field trip date, a request for the field trip. This is to be submitted to the Director of Faith Formation. If the field trip is approved, the DFF will provide the catechist with all necessary requirements, release forms, etc. Only those students who turn in, in advance, signed parental permission forms and release forms will be permitted to participate, and all policies included in the Decree on Child Protection of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati will be strictly followed.

Safety and Emergency Procedures

Please refer to pages 17-18 of the Religious Education/Faith Formation Parent/Student Handbook.

NCEA/ACRE Assessment

The National Catholic Education Association Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (NCEA ACRE) is administered to Annunciation Parish School students in fifth and eighth grades. This is a requirement of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for all Catholic schools. It is the responsibility of the 5th grade and 8th grade school catechists, in conjunction with directives provided by the DFF, to administer this assessment. Any change to, or exemption from, the policy of administering the NCEA/ACRE Assessment will be announced by the DFF when and if she receives word from the Archdiocesan Director of Religious Education.

Child Protection

Annunciation Parish, including Annunciation Parish School, follows the policies of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati regarding child protection. The Pastoral Staff is required by the Ohio Revised Code and the Archdiocesan *Decree on Child Protection* to report suspected or actual child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Each catechist, paid and volunteer, as well as all others volunteering in programs involving minors, must undergo a background check and attend an Orientation on the De-

Decree on Child Protection prior to beginning their ministry.

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati Decree on Child Protection most recent revision became effective July 1, 2008. Each catechist is required to agree to abide by all policies stated therein, including those matters related to transporting children, prior to signing the agreement that they have read this handbook.

Supervision of Catechists

All Annunciation Parish and School Catechists are directly supervised by the Director of Faith Formation as regards their catechetical ministry. The DFF will meet regularly with various groups of catechists, as noted in the schedule in this handbook, and will also conduct classroom observations, visits, and catechist conferences so as to assist the catechist with growth and professional development in his/her ministry, and ensure the overall cohesiveness and quality of all religious education/faith formation efforts at Annunciation Parish and School.

Personnel Policies

*Annunciation School Catechists are to follow all personnel policies of Annunciation School.

*If an Annunciation Parish Catechist is going to be absent on a day he/she is scheduled to be a catechist, the catechist is to inform the Director of Faith Formation and his/her catechetical col-

leagues, in advance.

*If the absence of a Sunday Sowers catechist necessitates the cancellation of a Sunday Sowers gathering, the DFF and the parents of all children enrolled in the gathering must be contacted at least one hour in advance of the scheduled gathering (preferably at least one day in advance).

*Sunday Sowers is scheduled Sunday mornings from 10:10-10:50 a.m. Catechists should make certain that they conclude their gathering on time, so that all children and catechists involved have the opportunity to arrive at least five minutes early for the 11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass.

Communication

*Every catechist, whether involved in the parish or the school, paid or volunteer, is expected to follow the same procedures regarding communication.

*Each catechist is to provide the Director of Faith Formation with his/her contact information: name, address, phone number(s), e-mail address, etc.

*The Director of Faith Formation is responsible for overseeing all catechetical efforts in both the parish and the parish school. She is the Pastor's delegate in these matters, and is accountable to him. Any questions or concerns a catechist has regarding any aspect of faith formation/religious education is to be directed to the DFF. Any questions or concerns a parent raises with the catechist regarding any aspect of faith formation/religious education is also to be directed to the DFF.

*All catechists in both the parish and the school are to be addressed by their students at all times by their title (Ms., Mrs., Dr., Father, etc.) and their last name. No student may address a catechist or catechetical staff member by his/her first name.

*A Parent Faith Formation Newsletter, written by the Director of Faith Formation, is published the first and third Wednesday of each month during the academic year, and occasionally over the summer months. This newsletter is sent via e-mail to every parish and school catechist and faculty member, to the parent/legal guardian of every student enrolled in Annunciation Parish School, pre-school through 8th grade, and to every registered household in Annunciation Parish. In the case a school family does not have an e-mail address, a hardcopy of this newsletter will be sent home with the youngest child in each family. It is the responsibility of the school teacher to see that these hardcopies are sent home in a timely manner.

*Any additional communication with school parents that needs to be sent via hard copy will be sent home with the youngest child in each school family. It is the responsibility of the school teacher to see that this communication is sent home in a timely manner.

*All Annunciation Parish and Annunciation Parish School catechists and faculty are encouraged to make full use of our Annunciation Parish web site, www.annunciationbvmparish.org, which is rich in resources for catechists. This web site is updated several times each week so as to be current with all

Church teachings and policies.

*Catechists are ministers of the Church, and serve at the commissioning of the Pastor. All e-mails, letters, phone calls, etc., concerning the ministry of catechesis at Annunciation Parish and School are to be initiated by the Pastor, or his delegate in these matters, the Director of Faith Formation.

Prayer/Worship

Catholic Christians are formed in faith through full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy of the Church. The faithful celebration of Sunday Eucharist is central to Catholic identity. Catechists, as ministers of the Church, are to be role models in this, not only being present at Sunday Eucharist, but actively participating by listening, responding, singing, and entering into the gestures and rituals of our Roman Catholic worship. Catechists are also called to help form their students in this same full, conscious, active participation in the liturgy.

School catechists and full time school faculty are to accompany their students to Thursday morning Morning Prayer and Liturgical Catechesis each Thursday, as well as to other liturgies as scheduled. (The schedule of these liturgies is included in the calendar pages of the Religious Education/Faith Formation Parent/Student Handbook, pages 35-52.) School catechists are also to remind their students daily that worship is central, and that for Catholic Christians this means being at Mass each Sunday, and for other Christians gathering with

their faith communities each Sunday, and students of other faiths gathering with their faith communities at the times their communities gather for prayer.

Sunday Sowers catechists are to make certain that their gatherings end in time for children (and catechists) to arrive at Sunday Mass on time. Sunday Sowers catechists should have as their goal their students actively listening and participating in the Mass. Review appropriate ritual and gesture with students, prepare them for the spoken and sung responses, and help enable them to listen attentively to the Lector/Presider proclaiming Scripture, rather than following along in a book or missalette.

Calendar

At Annunciation Parish and Annunciation Parish School, the calendar we adhere to is the Roman Catholic Liturgical Calendar. All parish and school faculty and catechists are expected to follow this calendar. In planning classroom celebrations, projects, bulletin board displays, etc., Catholic identity is central. For example, we do not celebrate Christmas during the season of Advent, nor do we celebrate Easter during Lent. Classroom resources and decorations should be chosen accordingly.

It is expected that Annunciation Parish School catechists and faculty will highlight their class's Patron Saints, and celebrate these Feast Days appropriately.

Interconnected Catechetical Components

The very word “religion” means to “re-connect.” No one component of religious education or catechesis stands alone. Both parish and school catechists are expected to support all Annunciation catechetical efforts in the parish and school. Both school and parish catechists are to strive to involve their students and their students’ families in the various intergenerational catechetical gatherings and celebrations of feasts and seasons which are scheduled throughout the year at Annunciation Parish. This is done through positive reinforcement and constant encouragement regarding faith formation at Annunciation Parish and Annunciation Parish School.

Each grade level class at Annunciation Parish School, as well as our multi-age Sunday Sowers gatherings at Annunciation Parish, is expected to become involved in the planning and coordinating of at least one Annunciation intergenerational, seasonal gathering during each year.

Faith Formation Room

The Faith Formation Room at Annunciation Parish School is accessible to catechists, parents, parishioners, and students during regularly scheduled Annunciation School office hours. Parishioners and parents who are not on the school staff must sign in as a visitor at the Annunciation School Office. Students/children are not permitted in the

room without the supervision of their parent, catechist, or Parish Pastoral Staff member.

The Faith Formation Room is used on a regular basis for Sunday Sowers catechetical gatherings, for school catechetical sessions, for parish catechetical meetings, for School Liturgical Choir, for RCIA and sacramental preparation gatherings, etc. It is expected that Annunciation Parish School catechists conduct at least one of their grade level catechetical sessions in the Faith Formation Room each week. A sign-up book is available in the Faith Formation Room to aid scheduling.

The Faith Formation Room may be used for prayer, storytelling, a resource room for catechists, and other appropriate catechetical activities. It is NOT to be used as a time out room for students, a study hall, a lunch room, tutoring room, or a workspace for school volunteers.

Catechist/Faculty Meetings

Annunciation Parish School Catechists & Full-Time School Faculty

All full-time Annunciation School Faculty, those who teach religious education and those who do not, are required to attend Faith Formation Faculty Meetings at the following dates and times:

Thursday, August 18, 2011, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 13, 2011, 2:45-4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 11, 2011, 2:45-4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 8, 2011, 2:45-4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 13, 2011, 2:45-4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 31, 2012, 2:45-4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 28, 2012, 2:45-4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 27, 2012, 2:45-4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, April 10, 2012, 2:45-4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 8, 2012, 2:45-4:00 p.m.

*Other meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Pastor and the Director of Faith Formation.

Annunciation Parish Sunday Sowers Catechists

All Sunday Sowers Catechists are required to attend Sunday Sowers Catechist meetings at the following dates and times:

Thursday, November 10, 2011, 6:00-6:45 p.m.
Thursday, February 9, 2012, 6:00-6:45 p.m.
Thursday, May 10, 2012, 6:00-6:45 p.m.

*Other meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Pastor and the Director of Faith Formation.

Blessing & Commissioning of Catechists & Faculty

All Annunciation Parish School catechists & faculty will be Blessed at prayer on Thursday, August 25, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

All Annunciation Parish and Parish School Catechists and Catechetical Staff will be commissioned for their ministry for this year at our 11:00 a.m. Mass on Catechetical Sunday, September 18, 2011.

Catechesis on the Mass

During this academic year, there are the following opportunities for adult catechesis on the Mass:

Wednesday, October 5, 7:00-8:30 p.m.:
“Understanding the Revised Mass Texts:
Part I”

Wednesday, November 9, 7:00-8:30 p.m.:
“Understanding the Revised Mass Texts:
Part II”

Thursday, February 2, 7:00-8:00 p.m.: “The Mass:
What We Do and Why We Do It: Part I”

Thursday, March 1, 7:00-8:00 p.m.: “The Mass:
What We Do and Why We Do It: Part II”

Thursday, March 29, 7:00-8:00 p.m.: “The Mass:
What We Do and Why We Do It: Part III”

Policy Changes

Catechists will be notified in writing if any policies are added or amended.



Catechist & Faculty Signed Agreement

All Annunciation Parish and School Catechists & Full-Time Faculty are required to sign the statement below and return it to the Director of Faith Formation no later than August 22, 2011.

I have read, understand and accept the terms specified in the following documents:

___Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish & School Religious Education/Faith Formation Faculty/Staff Handbook August 2011-June 2012;

___Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish & School Religious Education/Faith Formation Parent/Student Handbook August 2011-June 2012;

___Archdiocese of Cincinnati *Decree on Child Protection Summary Brochure*, revisions effective July 1, 2008.

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Date: _____







