

## **FLT (Religious Education) FAQ's**

### **WHY IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CALLED FLT?**

- **FLT stands for Families Learning Together. The parish and the family form a partnership for faith formation.**
- **The parish offers structure and opportunities to gather in celebration of faith and service. The family is where faith is lived.**

### **HOW CAN I REGISTER MY CHILD?**

**It is best to register during the April/May registration period because it helps the office get a head start on ordering. If you are a registered parishioner, you will receive a registration form in the mail in April.**

**You will also save \$50 as the fee increases after May. The fee does not need to be paid at the time of registration. If you register after May, come into the FLT office during regular office hours (see FLT Home Page).**

**Fill out a registration form, available on this website or in the FLT office.**

**For fee information, call the FLT, Religious Education Office, 586-247-0098.**

**If we do not have available class space when you register, you are invited to be part of the Home Study Program (parents share faith one-on-one with materials given to you) for the present school year. No one is ever turned away.**

### **WHERE ARE CLASSES HELD?**

**Most classes are held at the Activity Center. Children attending Graebner Elementary during the school day may stay at Graebner for after school classes.**

### **WHERE IS THE ACTIVITY CENTER?**

**The Activity Center is about 1 mile north of St. Michael on the east side of Hayes. It is located between Canal Road and 19 Mile Road. There is a sign out front, "Father Jackson Activity Center".**

## **WHAT IF MY CHILD CAN'T MAKE THE CLASS TIME SCHEDULED FOR HIM/HER?**

We make every effort to find a good time for your child to attend FLT class. We are willing to switch day and time of class **BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN IN OCTOBER** as long as there is space available. Many people choose the Home Study program (parents share faith one-on-one), if no convenient class time is available.

› PLEASE REMEMBER, IN ORDER TO OFFER CLASSES, WE ARE DEPENDENT ON MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SAYING "YES" TO THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE FAITH WITH THE CHILDREN OF ST. MICHAEL.

## **HOW DO I BECOME A CATECHIST?**

If you are a faith-filled person, you love children, and you are willing to grow and learn more about your own religion, you are invited to become a catechist. Call Cathy for more information, 586-566-4488.

## **WHAT ARE SOME OTHER WAYS I CAN BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN THE FLT PROGRAM?**

Besides being a catechist there are many ways to be involved:

Building Supervisor

Substitute Catechist

Catechist Aide

Babysitter during classes

Babysitter at St. Michael

Family Service planner

Middle School activity planner

Liturgy of the Word leader

Sunday Fun for Kids leader or Helper

Education Commission member

General help as needed

## **WHAT IS THE HOME STUDY PROGRAM?**

Many parents prefer to share faith with their children on a one-to-one basis. We are happy to provide you with the opportunity to do so. You attend one meeting in mid-October and receive your textbooks and other tips for accomplishing this. The textbook must be completed and returned before registering the following year. Children in Home Study are expected to take part in all the large group activities for their grade level and are required to do so during Sacramental

Preparation years. There will be additional opportunities for gathering that the family is expected to attend. Families in Home Study are required to do a Family Service Project together during the school year.

#### IS THERE HOME STUDY DURING THE SUMMER?

Yes, but you must register BEFORE JUNE 1 and attend the Home Study meeting in June.

#### WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD CANNOT ATTEND CLASS?

Please call the catechist if your child is ill or has another important reason to miss class. S/he will tell you what you need to do to make up the missed material. If your child misses 2 or more classes in a row, the catechist will contact the FLT office and we will then call you regarding the absence.

*If your child will miss more than 3 classes due to scheduled sport or school activities, you should register for HOME STUDY.*

#### WHAT IS THE EXPECTED BEHAVIOR OF MY CHILD DURING CLASS?

Demonstrate respect at all times for the catechist as well as the other students.

Demonstrate respect for the environment.

Follow the specific class rules.

#### IS THERE AN FLT DISCIPLINE POLICY?

Because we believe that Religious Education is a privilege not a right, and because we want the volunteer catechist, as well as all the children, to have an enjoyable faith-sharing experience, we have a policy for handling discipline problems and are committed to removing any children who are unnecessarily disrupting class. Our discipline policy is as follows:

First, the catechist will speak privately with the child. If the child is disruptive a second time, the catechist will speak to Cathy. Cathy will then notify the parent(s) and discuss the specific behavior the child is exhibiting and try to help the parent form an action plan to stop the offending behavior. If the child is disruptive a third time, the FLT office will recommend that the parent(s) work with the child on a one-to-one basis for the remainder of the year.

#### **WHAT IS THE CLASS SCHEDULE?**

Classes meet weekly October through April.

The specific schedule is mailed home in September. There are monthly reminders sent home from class and in the Messenger. The class calendar is also posted on the announcement board on the FLT page of the website. You may also call the FLT office, 586-247-0098.

#### **ARE THERE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES IN THE SUMMER?**

We offer classes in the summer for middle school only. Registrations are accepted in early May and are filled as space allows. **YOU MUST BE REGISTERED IN THE PARISH BEFORE APRIL 1 TO QUALIFY FOR THE SUMMER PROGRAM.** You must commit to attending all scheduled classes plus all workshops etc. during the school year.

#### **WHAT DO I DO IF THERE IS INCLEMENT WEATHER?**

Note: Cancellation due to bad weather will not be issued from the FLT office.

- If Utica and/or Chippewa Valley schools are cancelled or dismissed early, the Activity Center and Graebner School FLT classes are cancelled, even if the weather later improves.
- If the weather is inclement, but school has not been cancelled or dismissed early, use your discretion regarding sending your child to class.
- Cancelled classes will not be made up. You are expected to share the appropriate lesson with your child.

If school is cancelled, system wide, for any reason, there are no FLT classes. This policy does not pertain to individual building problems.

### **IS IT OK TO DROP MY CHILD OFF OR SHOULD I COME INTO THE BUILDING?**

- Parking lots are dangerous. For the safety of the children, you are required to come into the building for drop off and pick up.

### **HOW DO I GET A NEW TEXT BOOK IF OURS IS LOST?**

- Contact the FLT office, 247-0098. You will be asked to pay for the new book.

### **WHAT ABOUT CLASSES AT GRAEBNER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?**

- These classes are available only to students attending Graebner during the school day.
- Graebner is the only Utica school that has enough St. Michael families to support an after school program.
- We do not use Chippewa Valley schools because rental fees are charged.

### **DOES FLT HAVE AN OPEN HOUSE/OPEN DOOR POLICY?**

- Parents are invited to visit a class any time. There is an official Open House the first week of classes. Please plan to attend.

### **WHEN IS FIRST COMMUNION CELEBRATED?**

Children prepare for First Eucharist, or First Communion, in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. First Communion is celebrated with the family, not class, during a regularly scheduled weekend liturgy in May.

### **WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?**

- Sometimes called the Sacrament of Penance or even Confession.
- We are invited to reflect on our lives and to commit to loving choices through the grace of this sacrament. Children celebrate Reconciliation for the first time in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, before First Communion.

### **WHEN IS CONFIRMATION CELEBRATED?**

Confirmation preparation is after 7<sup>th</sup> grade and is celebrated by most students during 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **WHAT IF MY CHILD ISN'T BAPTIZED OR IS OLDER THAN 2<sup>ND</sup> GRADE AND NEEDS TO PREPARE FOR EUCHARIST (FIRST COMMUNION) OR RECONCILIATION (PENANCE/CONFESSION)?**

We have a program called SPOC (Sacrament Preparation for Older Children). Parents attend several one hour sessions with their child or children. Parents will be notified regarding dates and times of these sessions.

There is home preparation for each class that is discussed and handed in at the parent/child sessions.

Children are asked to be in a regular grade-level class during this sacrament preparation time.

## **WHY IS SERVICE EMPHASIZED?**

- "We are all challenged to preach the Gospel always and, if necessary, to use words." (St. Francis of Assisi)
- "What good is it to say you have faith, when you don't do anything to show that you really do have faith? Can that kind of faith save you?" (James 2:14)
- Faith is a verb. We have to do more than just talk about faith. We need to make our faith evident by the way we live...by our actions. Children learn by what they do, by what is lived in their homes, not by simply memorizing doctrine.
- Being part of the FLT partnership of faith means getting involved in service to others. Families are provided many opportunities for service.

## **WHAT ABOUT SAFE ENVIRONMENTS?**

In 2002 the archdiocese of Detroit instituted a "Safe Environments" program. The purpose of the program is the protection and safety of our children. It consists of:

- open door policy for all parents regarding classroom visits
- windows in each classroom door
- building supervisors during class time
- emergency contact information

- special needs and medical information requests
- parent/guardian signature on registration form
- background checks and code of conduct agreements for all adults working with children
- workshops for all catechists to help with recognition and prevention of potential abuse (Protecting God's Children)
- Circle of Grace for children.

**CIRCLE OF GRACE** is part of the Safe Environment Program

Out of concern for all God's people and in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children, we have a program for the safe environment education of children supported and mandated by the Archdiocese of Detroit.

This program is called *Circle of Grace*. It is meant to supplement and be integrated into the programs and curricula for the formation of children in our school programs. *Circle of Grace* aims to equip our children by arming them with essential knowledge and skills grounded in the richness of our faith. This program helps children to understand their own (and other's) dignity in mind, body, and spirit.

*Circle of Grace* is intended to help children understand the sacredness of who they are and how to seek help through their relationships with trusted adults. It is offered through our FLT classes yearly. Parents will be notified by letter regarding the specific dates for each grade level.

For more information go to: [aodonline.org/safe environments](http://aodonline.org/safe_environments)