

**Saint Raphael
Religious Education**

**PARENT
HANDBOOK**

**St. Raphael Religious Education
153 Dunster Road
Rockville MD 20854
301-762-2143 x123 or x124**

2/6/2018

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Welcome to Saint Raphael Religious Education! We feel privileged to share with you the awesome work of forming your children in our Catholic faith. We hope that this Parent Handbook will be a helpful guide. The Religious Education staff is here to serve you. Please call on us with any questions or concerns.

Mary Beaudoin, Director of Religious Education (DRE)

Saint Raphael Parish Mission Statement

*St. Raphael Catholic community is a worshipping community of faith,
centered on the Eucharist.*

*In response to Scripture and Tradition,
we foster a personal and communal relationship with God
by reflecting the Gospel mandates to love God and our neighbor,
as well as to educate and to evangelize.*

Lifelong Faith Formation

“Faith is a gift destined to grow in the hearts of believers. Adhering to Jesus Christ, in fact, sets in motion a process of continuing conversion, which lasts for the whole of life” (*General Directory for Catechesis* #56). Faith formation seeks to help each person to recognize and develop their personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Formation in faith is central to the mission of St. Raphael Parish. The pastor, along with those he appoints as catechists, promote faith and teach the word of God in our parish and community.

St. Raphael Religious Education witnesses to the children and adults of our parish community by sharing with them the message of Jesus Christ through prayer, instruction, and example. We are dedicated, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to make each person’s faith alive and active so that they may respond to God’s call and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Faith is a precious gift which leads to an intimate relationship with God. We show our gratitude to him by loving and serving him with all our heart, mind and soul. One of the primary ways we do this is by handing on the faith passed on to us by our families. We do so within an organized setting that will promote the love of Christ within our parish, and the greater community. We go about our task under the guidance of our pastor who is the archbishop’s representative, and in union with the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

Saint Raphael’s Religious Education Program (SRRE)

Saint Raphael Religious Education Program (SRRE) assists the parents of Saint Raphael Catholic Church in providing religious instruction for their children (preschool through the high school) who attend non-Catholic schools. We do so in accordance with the Archdiocese of Washington’s *Policies for Parish Catechesis* (2013). SRRE is also responsible for providing and supervising sacramental preparation for children and teens, up to age 18, who are preparing for First Penance, First Eucharist, and Confirmation. In addition, we offer the Rite of Christian Initiation, adapted for children and teens, for those who have not been baptized.

This faith formation seeks to evoke and support a life-long relationship with the person of Jesus Christ and the Church he founded. It strives to develop this relationship with Christ through the promises and commandments contained in the Gospel message, as well as through prayer, the liturgy, sacraments, and service. This work is done within the context of the parish community and the family.

The Goal of Catechesis

A sower went out to sow . . . some seed fell along the path . . . other seed fell on rocky ground . . . other seed fell among thorns . . . and other seeds fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing, and yielding thirty fold, sixty fold, and a hundred fold.
(Mark 4:3-8).

The seed is the word of God and the sower is Jesus Christ. The seed falls on good soil when we make time in our lives for God, when we open our ears to the Good News, and when we live in solidarity with our neighbor.

SRRE exists to help children and families to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. As Pope Saint John Paul II wrote, “The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, 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.”

The Tasks of Catechesis

True intimacy with Christ is accomplished only when our faith is known, celebrated in the sacraments, lived, and translated into prayer. Thus, the “fundamental tasks of catechesis” are

- ✠ Promoting knowledge of the faith
- ✠ Liturgical education
- ✠ Moral formation
- ✠ Teaching to pray
- ✠ Education for community life
- ✠ Missionary initiation

(General Directory for Catechesis #85-86)

The four parts of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* correspond to these first four tasks. In addition to these four fundamental tasks, catechesis must prepare each person to live in community and to participate in the life and mission of the Church.

The Role of Parents

At their child's Baptism, parents undertake the responsibility of providing for their child's Christian formation. From birth, through childhood and adolescence, and throughout life, parents teach their children by word and example. SRRE exists to assist parents in that task. Each SRRE catechist works diligently to help children to grow deeper in faith, but class time is limited to approximately 35 hours per school year. The role of parents in the faith formation of their children is absolutely essential. SRRE depends on parents to . . .

- Help their child grow in understanding by talking about what he/she learned in SRRE class.
- Teach their children to pray by spending some time in prayer with them each night.
- Bring their children to Mass every Sunday and to help them to understand and appreciate its importance.
- Provide a good Christian example for their children by continually striving to live their lives according to the Gospel.

I. Guidelines for Parents

What We Expect of Parents

- a) Ensure that your child attends classes on time and regularly (at least 85% of classes, no more than four absences out of the 28 classes each year).
- b) Let us know if your child will be absent. It is important for the catechist to know ahead of time, so that lesson plans can be adjusted.
- c) Communicate with the office regarding any special needs (physical, medical, developmental, learning, home, etc.) and about any upcoming absences.
- d) Be active in your child's learning. Complete all missed lessons at home.
- e) Attend and participate in Sunday and Holy Day liturgies with your child.
- f) Be an example of faith to inspire your child.
- g) Assist the Religious Education program by contributing your time, talent, and treasure.

Parish Registration

SRRE classes are open to parishioners of Saint Raphael Parish. Children of families from other parishes can also be registered for our classes, but parents must present a letter from the pastor of

their parish indicating his knowledge and approval. Out-of-parish families will also pay an additional fee. All families who are new to St. Raphael must complete a parish registration form (blue card); these are available at the receptionist's desk and from the hospitality minister in church.

Please be sure your parish registration is current. In a community as large as St. Raphael, one means of verifying participation is through the regular use of parish offertory envelopes. If you choose not to participate in the support of the parish, or are unable to contribute at this time, please at least note your prayerful support on your envelope and place it in the weekly offertory. The rectory office will then be aware of your continued participation and you will not be noted as "inactive" on our parish roster.

Active Catholic

In order to have children baptized or to serve as a godparent for Baptism or sponsor for Confirmation, a person must be an active, practicing Catholic. To receive a letter or certificate to serve as a godparent/sponsor, one must be registered in the parish, attend Mass regularly, and be committed to a stewardship of time, talent, and treasure. Your family's participation in Religious Education is very important to us. In addition, we invite all parents to become involved in a parish ministry.

Prayer

"Parents are the primary educators in the faith" (*General Directory for Catechesis* #255). We expect parents to take this role seriously and to pray with their children at home. Appropriate prayers for each grade level are given in the back of the textbook. The Archdiocesan Curriculum Guide (available at www.adw.org) provides directives on Catholic prayers and practices for each grade level. With so many aspects of our faith to teach the children in such a limited time, it is important that parents and catechists work together. Please pray together at home; teach children traditional Catholic prayers and as well as spontaneous prayer.

II. General Information

Communication

The SRRE Office sends out most communication by email. Parents must give the SRRE office an email address the parent checks regularly. Please be sure to set email spam settings to allow SRRE correspondence into their email inbox.

Registration

Registration for SRRE classes is completed online at the St. Raphael website (www.straphaels.org). Registration opens in early June. Registration closes mid-August so that materials can be ordered. "Late registration" opens in late August and includes a fee increase to cover additional expenses. Families who are new to the parish and who arrive after classes have begun should contact the SRRE office immediately.

New to the Parish or Transferring

Students transferring from another parish's religious education program or from a Catholic school must supply the following when registering:

- an original baptismal certificate (We will make a copy for our files and return your original.)
- dates of all sacraments received (these are listed on the back of the baptismal record)
- documentation of prior religious education or Catholic school completion (report card or letter of verification, including attendance record)

Continuous Enrollment

Each year of faith formation builds on the previous years. It is important that children not have a break in their religious education. Parents should enroll their child in SRRE every year. Home schooling (using the SRRE textbook) is allowed in those grades that are not required for sacramental preparation, i.e., generally grades 3-6. Please see Home Schooling section below.

Weekly Schedule

Sunday, 10:00-11:00 a.m.: 3 and 4 year old; kindergarten
Sunday, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: 3 and 4 year old; kindergarten
Sunday, 7:05-8:20 p.m.: grades 3 through high school
Monday, 4:30-5:45 p.m.: grades 1 through 6 + special needs
Monday, 7:00-8:15 p.m.: grades 1 through high school
Tuesday, 4:30-5:45 p.m.: grades 1 through 8

Classes begin in mid-September and end in mid-May.

Tuition and Fees for 2017-2018

1 child - \$125
2 children - \$200
3 or more children - \$250

Note: An additional \$25 late fee is charged after August 15.

First Communion Fee - \$75

Confirmation Fee (includes retreat) - \$125 {other parish attending retreat only - \$75}

Out of Parish Fee - \$50 per family

Class Placement

Class lists are put together on a first-come, first-served basis. We do our best to follow the Archdiocese of Washington guidelines for class size. Any requests for a particular catechist or other special placement must be written on the registration form.

Class Attendance

According to Archdiocesan policies, all students are expected to attend at least 85% of all classes, except in extraordinary circumstances. In other words, students should miss no more than four classes out of the 28 class sessions. The student must complete all class work and homework.

If a child is ill, the parent should notify the SRRE office prior to class, if possible. Whenever a child misses a class, parents are expected to cover the lesson(s) with their child at home.

Tardiness

Please bring your child to class on time. Children who arrive late not only miss out on important information and class time, but they also disrupt the class.

Home Schooling in SRRE

Parents may choose to homeschool their child in non-sacrament preparation years, i.e. kindergarten, grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 (for children who have received First Eucharist). Tuition is the same as for regular SRRE classes.

Parents who are homeschooling their child in SRRE . . .

- will be given the child's textbook, pacing guide, Archdiocese of Washington curriculum and glossary, blackline masters for sessions and seasons, and session assessments
- may call on the Director of Religious Education to answer questions and provide resources at any time
- will set up a weekly "home class" time with their child
- will work through the textbook with their child, ideally one chapter per week
- will turn in completed session assessments (drop off at front desk)
- will bring their child to the SRRE office for unit assessments in December and April (and again, if desired)
- will bring their child to the SRRE office for Faith Knowledge Assessment
- are encouraged to bring their child to SRRE for special events such as Reconciliation in Advent and Lent

III. Weekly Procedure

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

- Drop Off -

Parents must park and walk younger children into the school building and to their classroom. Older children may be dropped off using the drop-off lane nearest the school building or by parking and having the children cross at the crosswalk. There are crosswalks directly in front of the main door (across to the island) and at the end of the sidewalk near the church (across to the island).

On Monday afternoon, Monday night, and on Tuesday afternoon, the lane of parking nearest the school building is blocked off and used as a drop-off lane. There is no drop-off lane on Sunday nights because RE classes begin immediately after Mass when the parking lot is full.

Drivers must be especially careful to stop for pedestrians at each of these crosswalks.

No one may ever park or stop in the fire lane – where the curb is painted yellow.

- Pick Up -

Parents must collect their children in the school building and, for younger children, in their RE classroom. Children will be released only to their parents or an adult explicitly authorized by the parents. Please inform the DRE of any custody situations or if someone other than the child's parent has permission to collect the child.

We expect parents to walk with their child to the car, crossing only at the crosswalks as outlined above. All drivers must move slowly and carefully, stopping at the crosswalks to allow pedestrians to cross.

If a parent needs to pick up a child before the dismissal bell, the parent must go to the SRRE office. A staff member will go to the classroom and bring the child to the office to meet the parent. This is to ensure minimum disruption of class and safety for the child.

No one may ever park or stop in the fire lane – where the curb is painted yellow.

Inclement Weather

SRRE follows Montgomery County Schools **for weather-related closings**. When Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are closed because of inclement weather, SRRE classes do not meet. When MCPS cancel after school, evening, and/or weekend activities because of weather, SRRE after school, evening, and/or weekend classes are also cancelled. See www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org or call 301-279-3673 or listen to WTOP radio (103.5 FM). If MCPS “school activities” are called off, but “community events” in MCPS buildings are taking place, we may or may not have SRRE. This is a relatively rare occurrence and the DRE will make a decision based on the time of the class and the expected weather event. **In all cases, parents and volunteers should make their most prudent decision regarding personal safety.**

IV. SRRE Classes

Catechists and Aides

To paraphrase the African proverb, it takes a parish to form the faith of a child. The *General Directory for Catechesis* calls for the parish community to be “the living and permanent environment for growth in the faith.” SRRE catechists are adults from our parish who have heard God’s call and accepted the invitation to mentor others to a deeper relationship with Christ. By echoing Christ’s teaching they grow in understanding of their faith and in what it means to be a Catholic.

Our catechists receive initial training, spend time each week preparing for class, and attend in-service workshops. Please show them your appreciation and support their efforts to assist you in catechizing your child. Class aides also receive initial training. All catechists, class aides, office aides, and child care providers who serve in SRRE are volunteers; all have completed child protection training and have been subject to a background check.

Textbooks

Pre-school

Pflaum Gospel Weeklies Faith Formation Program has two components:

1. What the Church Believes and Teaches – a booklet with all the basic teachings of our faith
2. *Seeds* – a children’s worksheet based on the Gospel and other scripture texts for that Sunday

Parents are encouraged to also bring their preschool children to Sunday Mass.

Kindergarten & grades 1 through 8

Finding God: Our Response to God’s Gifts published by Loyola Press

This series was carefully crafted to help catechists as they invite children and the significant adults in their lives into a deeper relationship with God and the Catholic Church in service to the world.

- a vision of our Catholic faith grounded in Scripture and Tradition
- Ignatian recognition of the presence of God in all things (St. Ignatius of Loyola)
- Based on our Catholic belief that effective catechesis
 - reflects the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
 - centers on the person of Jesus Christ
 - proclaims the liberating good news of salvation through Jesus Christ
 - leads the Christian into the world in mission and action
 - addresses the needs of the culture in which it is presented
 - invites believers to reflect on personal experience in light of growing in relationship with God
 - leads to full, conscious, active participation in liturgical life of the Church
 - creates a climate of prayer and nurtures a faith that is expressed in prayer

High School

Jesus Christ: God's Revelation to the World (Ave Maria Press)

- offers knowledge about how Jesus Christ is the unique Word and how God's mission of salvation is revealed in Sacred Scripture

Foundations of Catholic Social Teaching: Living as a Disciple of Christ

published by (Ave Maria Press)

- survey of Catholic social teaching from its Gospel roots; an examination of challenging social issues faced by people today, through the lens of God-given human dignity; ways to respond to injustices in today's world effectively and with compassion

Each student receives a new textbook at the beginning of the catechetical year. If a student loses his/her textbook, parents will need to purchase a new one for \$20 (gr. K-6) or \$25 (gr. 7-12).

Discipline Policy

An atmosphere conducive to learning and growing in faith is necessary for fruitful catechesis, and is at the heart of the SRRE discipline policy. Every person is worthy of being treated with care and the respect befitting one made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, classroom behavior needs to be characterized by genuine Christian care, mutual respect, and honesty. Disruptive behavior prevents learning for the whole class and can be frustrating for the catechist who is seeking the best for all the learners.

A healthy learning environment is essential for the success of any educational program. Rules of behavior are based on the children's age level and may vary slightly from class to class. If a child's behavior is disruptive to the smooth functioning of class, the child will be sent to the DRE.

- Whenever a student is sent to the DRE for discipline reasons, the DRE will speak with the child to learn more about the problem. When appropriate the DRE will contact the child's parents to brief them on the situation.
- Parents are encouraged to speak to their child's catechist in order to know what is happening in class.
- In some cases it will be necessary to hold a conference with appropriate parties: parents, catechist, DRE, child.
- Open and respectful communication among all is needed.

Performance and Assessment

It is important to assess the formation that is taking place in students and to offer feedback leading to further growth. Because children learn in a variety of ways, a variety of forms of assessment is needed. Formal assessment (written quiz) asks the question *What do you know/understand?* Informal assessment (ongoing and specific) asks the questions *What can you do with what you know, and how do you do it?* A catechist can assess a child's progress by observing his/her participation in discussions, group work, and his/her service and care for others. Catechists can also evaluate a child's verbal (oral and written) and nonverbal (drawn, crafted, etc.) expressions

and responses. The Archdiocesan Curriculum Standards for Religious Education include a yearly standardized assessment for children in grades 3-8. This “Faith Knowledge Assessment” will be administered during a class time in either the fall or spring. (Schedule is set by the Archdiocese.)

Progress Reports

Catechists complete progress reports for each of their students (grades 1-12) in January and May. These reports are meant to provide parents with information about their child’s growing knowledge and understanding of their faith. They will include:

- attendance
- behavior and attitude
- class participation
- prayers and memorization
- homework
- grasp of content or knowledge of doctrine

Special Needs

SRRE is open to all children. Parents should inform us of any learning difference, health challenge, language problem, or home situation which may affect their child’s ability to learn or participate fully in class. SRRE desires to partner with parents to provide religious education and sacramental preparation for all children. Some children with special needs can be included in regular SRRE classes with some assistance from an aide. Other children are better served in our Special Needs Religious Ed. class, which meets on Mondays afternoons.

V. Emergency, Health and Safety Information

Injury and Emergency

If a child is injured or has an emergency medical issue, the SRRE staff will call the child’s parents immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the staff will call the person designated as an emergency contact on the registration form.

Health Concerns and Medication

The SRRE registration form includes an Emergency Information and Medical Release page. It is important that it be filled out completely and accurately. Paid and volunteer staff members are not permitted to administer medications or to give medical advice to students. Therefore, it is imperative that parents provide our office with the necessary information in case it is ever needed.

Learning Differences

Parents need to inform the SRRE office of any learning differences their child has. Knowing what accommodations a child receives in their day school can be very helpful to catechists.

Custody Issues

Please notify the DRE if only one parent/guardian has the custodial care of a child during class time. We must be aware of who may or may not pick up children during or after class.

Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

Both parents have access to a child's religious education progress reports and achievement information unless one parent produces a legal (court certified) document to the contrary. Progress reports to the non-custodial parent will be provided upon request, which must be made in writing. Changes in the child's normal routine must be approved by the custodial parent in collaboration with the SRRE office; catechists will be notified of these changes. No child will be dismissed from the program to the non-custodial parent without the written consent of the custodial parent.

Archdiocesan Child Protection Policy

The Archdiocese of Washington and Saint Raphael Parish are committed to ensuring the personal safety of all children in our program. Any adult who has substantial contact with children or young people at Saint Raphael Parish or in any of the various ministries of the Archdiocese of Washington must first:

1. Complete a volunteer application form.
2. Pass criminal background checks (or fingerprinting if employed by the Archdiocese) by both federal and state agencies.
3. Take part in a three-hour training session, Protecting God's Children.
4. Read the Child Protection Handbook and sign the Acknowledgement form.
5. Read the Code of Conduct.
6. Read monthly training bulletins.

Class aides under the age of 18 do not receive this Child Protection training; therefore they must be supervised at all times by an adult who has received this training.

Safe Environment Training

The safety of children requires not only screening those who work with them, but also instructing the children on safe interaction with adults. SRRE catechists present and discuss *Circle of Grace*, with children/teens in Grades K through 12 each October. *Circle of Grace* goes beyond ensuring a "safe environment" by helping children understand the sacredness of who they are.

Weapons

Any student found with a weapon (gun, pocket knife, screw driver, explosive device, etc.) toy or otherwise, will be immediately dismissed from class and the parent/guardian will be contacted. A

student will not be readmitted until a meeting is held with the DRE and the parent. This is for the safety of all.

Emergency Events

SRRE works to train volunteers on how to respond to emergency events, such as fire, tornado, earthquake, or other imminent danger. We strive to follow the response guidelines used by St. Raphael School including lockdown, shelter-in-place, severe weather safe area, evacuation, and “drop, cover, and hold.” At the beginning of the SRRE year, catechists will review emergency procedures with the children in their classes. If children and adults need to evacuate the building, we will set up a reunification area in the church. If the church also needs to be evacuated, we will set up reunification in the priests’ residence on Kimblewick Road, next to the church, or in the pool parking lot across Dunster Road (weather permitting).

VI. Sacramental Preparation

In our parish, a child’s preparation for a sacrament is a two-year process. Generally, children begin their preparation for Penance and Eucharist in the first grade and receive First Penance and First Eucharist at the end of second grade. However, children may begin preparation for Penance and Eucharist in any grade (elementary or high school); the preparation time is still two years. In general, preparation for Confirmation begins in seventh grade and Confirmation is administered in the eighth grade. Confirmation preparation can also be completed during high school. Typically, children who arrive as second graders will be placed in first grade, and those who arrive as eighth graders will be placed in seventh grade. These children and teens will resume their normal grade level in the year following reception of the sacrament.

Children, age 7 through 18, who have not yet received the sacrament of Baptism should enroll in the RCIA Adapted for Children program (see below).

Sacramental preparation is comprised of two components: 1) ongoing grade-level faith formation in religious education class or Catholic school; and 2) parish and family-centered sacrament preparation, which includes regular Sunday Mass attendance, participation in a retreat, and at-home materials or projects. Further details about these and any other program requirements are given at sacramental preparation meetings each fall.

Sacramental preparation and celebration take place in the child’s home parish. In general, First Eucharist is administered by the pastor and Confirmation is administered by one of the bishops of the Archdiocese of Washington. Catholic schools assist with some aspects of sacramental preparation, but other aspects of preparation, as well as the celebration of sacrament itself, take place in the child’s home parish, not in their Catholic school. Parents of children in Catholic schools must complete a special SRRE registration form for their child entering grades 2, 7, and 8.

Contact the SRRE office for the Catholic School Student sacrament preparation form, or download it from the SRRE page of the St. Raphael parish website.

RCIA Adapted for Children and Teens

Children who have not been baptized and who have reached the age of reason (~age 7) are prepared for Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion through the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) adapted for children (including teens up to age 18). RCIA adapted for children is a journey of faith which culminates in the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation. This journey typically encompasses at least two years. During this time the children attend SRRE classes (or Catholic school) with their peers, as well as special retreats and meetings with their parents and the DRE. Along the journey toward the sacraments, the children participate in several rites. The first is the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens. In this rite the children express their desire for Baptism. From this point they are “catechumens,” a special class within the church. Catechumens enjoy many of the rights and privileges of those who are baptized, though not fully. A few weeks before the celebration of the sacraments at the Easter Vigil, the catechumens are sent to the Archbishop for the Rite of Election. The Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) are then celebrated at the Easter Vigil.

In the year following Initiation the children/teens prepare for the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation. Those who have been baptized or received into the Catholic Church are obligated to attend Mass each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation. It is important that each child/teen has the spiritual support of parents and godparents, as well as the physical support of a way to attend Mass.

VII. Special Events and Programs

Children’s Liturgy of the Word

Children’s Liturgy of the Word (CLW) is offered during the 10:00, 11:30, and 1:00 (Spanish) Masses on most Sundays from mid-September through mid-May. CLW is not Religious Education class. Rather, it is part of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Word, with readings and reflection in language that children can readily understand. There is no fee and no registration form for CLW. We encourage all children (ages 4-10) to come forward during Mass after the Opening Prayer. Children go with the adult leaders to the Duffy Center for about 20 minutes and return to church before the Preparation of Gifts.

2017 – 2018 Theme: Living As Missionary Disciples

This year, the Church will celebrate Catechetical Sunday on September 17, 2017, and will focus on the theme "Living as Missionary Disciples." Those whom the community has designated to serve as catechists will be called forth to be commissioned for their ministry. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each person plays, by virtue of Baptism, in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Catechetical Sunday is an opportunity for all to rededicate themselves to this mission as a community of faith. Each family is invited to consider practical ways they can and do share the Good News of Jesus Christ with neighbors, family members, friends, and those in need. Parents are their child's first catechist.

Prayer Services, Reconciliation and Mass of Thanksgiving

At the beginning and end of the SRRE year, families will gather for a special all-school prayer service. During Advent and Lent all children (grades 2 or 3 and up) will have the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Penance. At the end of the SRRE year there is a closing prayer service and a special Mass of Thanksgiving. We encourage all SRRE families to participate in these prayer services and Mass.

Service Projects within the Parish

SRRE students and their families are encouraged to participate in parish service projects throughout the year, including:

- Monthly – Stone Soup Sunday: Please bring non-perishable food items on the first Sunday of each month to stock the shelves of the St. Martin's Food Pantry. Place items in the truck parked in the parish circle.
- November – St. Raphael Parish Thanksgiving meals for families in need
- December – Giving Tree and Mother Theresa luncheon
- February – Valentine's Card Project
- Lent – Operation Rice Bowl, a Catholic Relief Services program
- Additional opportunities come up throughout the year and will be advertised through the parish bulletin (see the Social Responsibility column).

Rockville Catholic Summer Program

Rockville Catholic Summer Program is a 7 week Catholic summer camp experience that encourages both students and instructors to grow in their faith and love for Jesus Christ. This Youth Ministry initiative began in 2016. The Summer Program is open to youth ages 4-14 and is held at St. Patrick's Parish. Find information at www.rockvillecatholicsummer.com

Passing It On Religious Education Community Newsletter

Passing It On is SRRE's Parent Newsletter, which is published four times each year. Look for it in your Inbox and find it online at the parish website. *Passing It On* has important information and reminders, inspirational articles, Catholic IQ quizzes for parents, games for kids, and more.

Religious Education Advisory Board (REAB)

The purpose of this board is to provide advice and assistance to the pastor and DRE in areas affecting the Religious Education program. Areas of concern include:

- a. planning and setting of both short-term and long-term goals and objectives for the SRRE
- b. formulation of policies
- c. financial matters relating to the budget and tuition policies
- d. communication and public relations
- e. evaluation of the overall programs, as well as evaluation of the REAB's own effectiveness in fulfilling its mission.
- f. assisting SRRE with special projects and social events

VIII. Miscellaneous

Adult Faith Formation Opportunities

Parents and all adult Catholics are strongly encouraged to take part in the many Adult Faith Formation programs at St. Raphael. St. Raphael offers ChristLife, bible study groups, science & faith, and exploring Catholic spirituality; there is also a Stay and Pray program on Monday nights during SRRE classes (7:00-8:15 p.m.).

Food

It is preferable that food and drink not be brought into the school. Please try to provide your child with a snack (afternoon) or dinner (night) before arriving for class.

Important Notice: The St. Raphael school building is a nut free facility. No type of food containing peanut butter and/or nut products may be brought into the building.

Cell Phones / iPods / Other Electronic Devices

Except when being used for instruction, cell phones and other electronic devices may not be turned on during SRRE classes. Catechists have permission to take phones and other devices from students when necessary; these devices will be returned at the end of class. Occasionally the catechist may ask students in upper grades to use an electronic device as part of a catechetical lesson, but this will be done in a controlled manner.

If you need to contact your child during SRRE class time, please call the SRRE office at the phone numbers below.

SRRE Staff

Mary Beaudoin, Director of Religious Education
301-762-2143, ext. 124
mbeaudoin@straphaels.org

Pietro Lojacono, Assistant for Religious Education
301-762-2143, ext. 123
plojacono@straphaels.org

Address, Phone, Fax, and Website

St. Raphael Religious Education Office
1513 Dunster Road
Rockville, MD 20854
Fax: 301-762-4991
Website: www.straphaels.org

SRRE Office Hours

The following are the hours staff is generally in the office, but please call or email ahead of time as each day is different and some meetings are held off campus and at other times.

Mary Beaudoin (*Family Orientation & Counseling, Financial Issues, RCIA and initiation process for unbaptized children and/or children baptized validly in another ecclesial community, Sacramental Preparation, Concerns regarding catechists or children*)

Tuesday: 12:00-3:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 12:00-3:00 p.m.
Thursday: 4:00-6:00 p.m.
Also available by appointment.

Pietro Lojacono (*Student Registration, Volunteers Registration & Background Checks, Dropping Off / Picking Up Documents & Payments, General Information and Support*)

Monday: 10:30am – 12:30pm & 1:30pm – 3:30pm
Tuesday: 10:30am – 12:30pm & 1:30pm – 3:30pm
Wednesday: 1:30pm – 3:00pm
Thursday: 10:30am – 12:30pm
Also available by appointment.

Helpful Websites

Archdiocese of Washington www.adw.org

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops www.usccb.org

The Vatican / The Holy See www.vatican.va

Online Bible www.usccb.org/bible/books-of-the-bible/index.cfm

Scripture Reflection www.DailyCatholicGospel.com

Marriage foryourmarriage.org

Child Protection www.virtusonline.org/virtus

Human Sexuality www.parentsandkidstalking.com

Adult Faith Formation

Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation <http://vlc.udayton.edu>

Saints www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saint

Publishers

www.ltp.org

www.litpress.org

<http://pastoralplanning.com>

www.magnificat.com

Textbooks

www.loyolapress.com – including the daily Three Minute Retreat

<http://www.loyolapress.com/faith-formation/finding-god/finding-god-2013>

www.avemariapress.com/resources/

Parishes / Mass Times <http://discovermass.com>

Catholic News

www.americancatholic.org

www.osvdailytake.com

www.ewtn.com

I have received a copy of the Saint Raphael Religious Education Parent Handbook and I have read it.

Name of Parent/Guardian (printed):

Signature

Date
