

Catholic Community of Ascension & St. Augustine
Parish Religious Education Program

5839 Augustine Ave., Elkridge, MD 21075
410-796-8150 or cathy@ccasta.org (Director)
410-796-2720 or michele@ccasta.org (Administrator)
410-564-2396 or kim@ccasta.org (Administrative Assistant)

May 2, 2017

Dear Parents,

Our 2016-17 Parish Religious Education Program has finished and we are already planning for September. Partnering with you to offer a program that provides your children with opportunities to grow in their relationship with Christ as well as their knowledge of their Catholic faith is our primary goal. Our parish religious education program offers the following sessions:

PreK-4 through 7th grade on Sundays 9:10-10:20 AM at Ascension
Kindergarten through 8th grade on Tuesdays 6:30-7:45 PM at St. Augustine's
1st grade through 8th grade on Wednesdays 6:30-7:45 PM at St. Augustine's

Please find enclosed our 2017-18 PREP registration form. If you register your children now, you can already cross one item off your July-August to-do list and take advantage of the early bird discount! Early registration is very helpful to us as we assess the need for catechists.

On the registration form please note your choice of day. Children will be enrolled for a specific day and cannot attend class on alternate days if unable to attend their usual class. In order to provide appropriate size classes we ask that you note a first and second choice if you are able to do so. Please note that PreK-4 is **NOT** offered in our evening program.

Please provide all the requested information or note "n/a" where appropriate. Because this information is used for mailings and to contact you via phone and email, we ask that you print all information legibly. *If during the year, there is a change in any of your contact information, we ask that you notify our office so that we can update our records.* Information regarding allergies, learning challenges, or other special needs are very important to share with us so that the catechist team can best serve your child. **Children may only be registered by the custodial parent.** If you are transferring from another parish, please request a letter from that parish's Religious Education Program indicating that your child attended their program in good standing and include it with your registration form. **The Parish Religious Education Program is a service provided to the families who are members of our parish. Please complete a parish registration form if you are not currently a parishioner.** This can easily be done on our parish website, www.ccasta.org.

Every year we experience a need for catechists and assistants to serve the needs of our growing parish. We would ask that you prayerfully consider if God might be asking you to serve our parish families. It is not necessary to be a certified teacher in order to work in our program. We welcome men and women who want to share their gift of faith with others as a catechist or a catechist assistant (aide).

As sacraments are an integral component of your child's faith formation, an accurate record of these is important. **First time registrants must include a copy of the child's baptismal certificate.** If your child has already received the sacraments of First Reconciliation (aka First Penance or confession) and/or First Eucharist or Communion, please include the dates, name of parish, and location on the registration form. This information can be found on the certificate they received at that time.

Sacramental Preparation Guidelines

- *Preparation for First Reconciliation will begin in the fall with First Eucharist preparation following it beginning in January.*
- *Children who are in the 2nd grade or higher and have completed at least one full year of faith formation in a Catholic school or Religious Education Program are invited to preparation for the sacraments*
- *Children are prepared for the sacraments in the parish where their family normally worships. Families, who are not registered in the Catholic Community of Ascension & St. Augustine but wish to have their children prepare for the sacraments here, are required to obtain a letter of permission from their pastor of their registered parish.*
- *As sacrament preparation is a free-standing program outside of PREP or the parish school, parents and children are expected to participate in all phases of our sacramental programs.*

If you have a child of catechetical age (ages 6 and up) who is not baptized or if you have children in grades two through eight who have not had previous religious instruction and you would like to renew your commitment to the Church but are not sure how to go about it, please call the Parish Religious Education Office. We can assist you in providing your child with formal religious instruction to increase their knowledge of the faith as well as provide the base for sacrament preparation.

As an integral part of our faith formation curriculum, we will be teaching Catechesis for Family Life. This age-appropriate program about Christian living, chastity, character formation, and safe environment training promotes communication between you and your child. You are encouraged to review the program materials that the catechist will be using in the classroom, as well as the materials you will receive for home discussion. After examining the program, if you have any questions or concerns about your child participating in this program, please contact the Parish Religious Education Office.

Religious Education tuition fees vary according to the number of children being registered and the date of registration. Registration fee is to be paid at time of registration. **No child is ever denied religious education for financial difficulties.** Tuition assistance is available if for some reason you are unable to pay some or all of your tuition. Call the Parish Religious Education Office to request a Tuition Assistance Form. **Please register as soon as possible** even if you must pay at a later date.

(Please note: Sacramental Fees are also paid separately where applicable.)

Thank you in advance for registering your children in the Catholic Community of Ascension & St. Augustine Parish Religious Education Program. We look forward to assisting you in the faith formation of your children. We are here to serve you. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. Count on our prayers for you and your family every day. Be sure to rest, pray, work, and play every day this summer!

Yours in Christ,

Cathy Carlin

Director of Engagement – Families, Children, & Women