

Dear Parent(s),

Our new Religious Education/RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation) classes will begin on Tuesday, September 4, 2018. The classes will begin at 6:45pm until 8:30pm. This program is designed to prepare people to receive one or more of the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Communion, and/or Confirmation.

1. Those children who have already spent **one year in the First Holy Communion preparation program** will be eligible to receive the Sacrament after one more year of preparation only if the pastor finds them sufficiently prepared.
2. Those children who have already spent **one year in the Confirmation preparation program** will be eligible to receive the Sacrament after one more year of preparation only if the pastor finds them sufficiently prepared.
3. **Anyone over 7 years of age who has not been in a sacramental preparation program at St. Mary's Parish is eligible to enter the two-year RCIA program.**

It is important to understand that this Tuesday night program is the only opportunity to prepare to receive Communion and/or Confirmation at St. Mary's Parish. **There will be no more classes held on Sunday and Monday for regular classes and Wednesday for Sacramental classes.** It is also important to note that any student participating in the program will be required to have one parent in attendance with him/her at the Tuesday night classes. Mass attendance for both students and parents is also mandatory. The student will be responsible for bringing a bulletin to class every Tuesday evening when they come to class to show that they attended Mass, as well as the bulletin will contain the material that will be covered in the Tuesday night class.

There will be an expectation that certain basic prayers and facts will be memorized and that the parent and child are able to discuss basic aspects of the Faith with the pastor or his representative. It may be that for some, the time of preparation will need to be longer. If you are interested in preparing yourself and/or your child for the reception of the sacraments, please come to the Religious Education Office to register. **There is no fee for this program and all needed materials will be provided by the parish.**

Explanation of the New Faith Formation Program:

Fr. Ringley hopes to merge three different models of formation in the Faith: 1. the typical RCIA format that is used for adults who wish to receive their sacraments, 2. the traditional religious education classroom model, and 3. a small faith community model.

1. **There will be no fees for this program.** This will eliminate the expectation that because one has paid a fee the desired sacrament(s) will be received.
2. **Each participating family must be registered at St. Mary's Parish and using either their envelopes or online giving to support the parish financially (see CCC 2043).**
3. **Class attendance with one parent together with their child(ren) every scheduled Tuesday is mandatory. If a student has more than 3 absences, they will not receive any sacraments that school year**
4. **Mass attendance every Sunday is mandatory (See CCC 2042). Remember that if one freely chooses to skip Sunday Mass, one must go to Confession before receiving Holy Communion again.**
5. **Punctuality is essential. Anyone arriving more than 5 minutes late to class will be considered absent. Those with multiple absences will not be permitted to continue the program. Catholicism is, among other things, a commitment to a way of life.**
6. The Catechist will take attendance as well as Mass attendance by checking to see if the student has their bulletin with them. **All sacramental records and sponsor certificates must be in by January 14, 2019.**

Plan for the Class:

We will all gather in the main church at 6:45pm and we will take class and Mass attendance.

1. The first 20 minutes of the evening will be a devotional exercise, namely Rosary, Divine Mercy, Stations of the Cross, Adoration, Mass music practice, etc.
2. Fr. Ringley will present the topic for the evening (20-30 minutes).
3. Small groups will then proceed to the school classrooms for discussion, etc. with the catechists until 8:30pm.

There will be periodic assessments to ensure that parents and children are assimilating the material. Memorization of prayers (e. g. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be, grace before and after meals, Act of Contrition, Nicene Creed, Mass parts, etc.) will be expected.