

St. Raphael the Archangel

Catechist Handbook

2016/2017

Following Jesus: Becoming Disciples



“As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’ Immediately He called them; and they left their father....and went away to follow Him.”

(Mark 1:20)

Table of Contents

1. Welcome and Contact Information
 2. Outline of the Year
 3. Curriculum Scope and Sequence
 4. Nuts and Bolts: Safety and Policy Procedures
 5. Catechist Toolbox
 6. Classroom Management: Keeping a Non-Anxious Presence
 7. Smoothing Out Discipline Problems: Strategies and Tools
 8. Spiritual Development of Youth
-
-

The catechist, then, is a Christian who is mindful of God, who is guided by the memory of God in his or her entire life and who is able to awaken that memory in the hearts of others...The Holy Spirit is present wherever the name of Christ is proclaimed. He is in our midst whenever we lift up our hearts and minds to God in prayer. He will give you the light and strength you need! The message you bring will take root all the more firmly in people's hearts if you are not only a teacher but also a witness. Your example should speak to every one of the beauty of prayer, the power of mercy and forgiveness, the joy of sharing in the Eucharist with all our brothers and sisters...Let us ask the Lord that we may all be men and women who keep the memory of God alive in ourselves, and are able to awaken it in the hearts of others. Amen.

Pope Francis: Address to Catechists, 2013/2015

WELCOME!

“God’s love is unbounded: it has no limits.” Pope Francis

Thank you for saying yes to being a catechist. Many of you are returning catechists and some are new. May we all remember that loving each other and our parish families as Jesus loves us will draw all of us closer to Christ! This year we focus on being “fishers of men” and following our Lord and Savior. We would like to share a few characteristics of a catechist with you:

Faithful- It is important that a catechist lives a faithful life. That he or she loves and participates in the Mass on a regular basis and lives out to the best of his or her ability the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Learner and Communicator- We are all on a life-long journey of learning and growing in the love of our Lord, together we can develop skills through a wide variety of adult learning offerings in our Diocese and parish. Two catechist in-services are conveniently offered here at the parish during the school year.

Ability to Facilitate and Engage- A Catechist needs to be able to follow and communicate the goals of each unit and make the information relevant to the students. Other qualities found helpful in teaching are to be a good listener, share your story, and ask open ended questions and show excitement for the Lord. Using a variety of prayer styles is also a great opportunity to engage students. Above all, enjoy teaching! Our excitement will transfer over to the students. *And remember, we are all here to help you!*

Religious Education Staff Contacts

920-233-8044

Jessie Adrians, Coordinator of Religious Education, jessie.adrians@raphael.org x227

Jenifer Jensen, Elementary Coordinator/CLOW, jenifer.jensen@raphael.org x232

Tanya Hielke, Gr. 9/10 Coordinator, tanya.hielke@raphael.org x 246

Fr. Edward Looney, Parochial Vicar/Confirmation Coordinator, edward.looney@raphael.org x226

Tommy Nelson, Youth Minister Gr. 6-12, tommy.nelson@raphael.org x 233

Ann Olig, RE Administrative Assistant, ann.olig@raphael.org x223






Dawn Prickett, Sunday School Coordinator for Pre-K dprickett@new.rr.com

Faith Formation Vision Statement

It is the vision of the Religious Education team and Catechists to always be present to our families as Jesus was and is present to us. We will be here to help you instruct your children in the teachings of the Catholic Church and to bring light to each child, as best we can, by living our Baptismal promise to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ!

Outline of the 2016/2017 School Year

SEMESTER 1

| LEGEND | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|  | Parent/Child classes |
|  | Catechist Events |
|  | Gr. 2 Sacraments |
|  | Special Events |
|  | High School/ Confirmation |

August 23: [Virtus Training](#)

August 29: [New Catechist In-service \(6:30-7:30pm\)](#)

August 30/31: [\(Confirmation Parent/Candidate Meeting\)](#)

September 6: [All Catechist In-service \(5-6:30, Bishop's talk at 6:30\)](#)

Sept 13/14: T/W classes meet.

Sept. 19: [Virtus Training](#)

Sept. 20/21: T/W classes meet. [\(Fire drill today\)](#)

Sept. 27/28: T/W classes meet [\(Gr. 2 Reconciliation PARENT meeting\)](#) [\(HS Fire Drill\)](#)

Oct. 4/5: T/W classes meet. [\(1st grade parent/child class\)](#)

Oct. 11/12: T/W classes meet.

Oct. 18/19: T/W classes meet. [\(1st Reconciliation Parent/Child class, Gr. 2 catechists, please attend\)](#)

Oct. 25/26: NO CLASS. [Catechist In-service in Appleton on Oct. 26](#)

Nov. 1: NO CLASS. All Saint's Masses at 5:00 & 7:00pm

Nov. 2: NO CLASS All Saints Party AT 5:30pm

Nov. 8/9: T/W classes meet. [\(Gr. 1-5 Stewardship Kick-off\)](#)

Nov. 12: [First Reconciliation at St. Jude – St. Vincent site @ 10am](#)

Nov. 15/16: T/W classes meet. [\(No class for 2nd graders, Nov. 15 -1st Reconciliation @ St. Raphael, 5pm and 7pm\)](#)

Nov. 17: [First Reconciliation at St. Mary Winneconne, 6pm](#)

Nov. 22/23: NO CLASS Happy Thanksgiving!

Nov. 27: [Advent begins](#)

Nov. 29/30: T/W classes meet. [\(3rd grade parent/child class\)](#)

Dec. 6/7: T/W classes meet.

Dec. 8: [Immaculate Conception Mass @ 6pm](#)

Dec 13/14: T/W classes meet [\(30 minutes class time/30 minutes Advent prayer service.\)](#)

Dec. 20/21: NO CLASS- Merry Christmas!

Dec. 27/28: NO CLASS- Happy New Year!

SEMESTER 2

Jan. 3/4: T/W classes Meet (4th grade parent/child class)

Jan. 10/11: T/W classes meet. (Gr. 2 First Eucharist PARENT meeting)

Jan. 17/18: NO CLASS- Catechist In service Jan. 17

Jan. 24/25: T/W classes meet (6th grade parent/child class) (*Semester 2 High School Classes begin*)

Jan. 31/Feb. 1: T/W classes Meet (Safe Environment)

Feb. 7/8: T/W classes meet (Gr. 2 First Eucharist Parent/child class #1, Gr. 2 catechists, please attend.)

Feb. 14/15: T/W classes meet (Gr. 5, 8 & 11 ACRE testing)

Feb. 21/22: T/W classes meet. (ACRE testing make up)

Feb. 28: NO CLASS - Please join us for Mardi Gras

Mar. 1: Wednesday classes meet. (Ash Wednesday Masses – 4:15, 5:30 & 6:45)

Mar. 7/8: T/W classes meet (Gr. 2 First Eucharist Parent/child class #2, Gr. 2 catechists, please attend.)

Mar. 14/15: T/W Classes meet.

Mar. 18/19: Bread Partner Weekend

Mar. 21/22: T/W classes meet. (7th grade parent/child class)

Mar. 28/29: T/W classes meet. (Reconciliation Grades 2, 4, 6, 8, High School & Confirmation)

April 1/2: First Eucharist Retreat (3-6pm) and Enrollment. Catechists welcome to attend.

April 4/5: T/W classes meet (Reconciliation Grades 3, 5, 7)

April 11/12: NO CLASS – HOLY WEEK

April 18/19: NO CLASS – HAPPY EASTER!

April 25/26: T/W classes meet (8th grade parent/child class)

May 2/3: T/W classes meet

May 7: *Confirmation Mass at 11:00am*

May 9/10: T/W classes meet (5th grade parent/child class)

May 16/17: T/W classes meet

May 23/24: T/W classes meet (End of the year Prayer Service and Social)

Spiral Curriculum: See Yourself as Part of the BIG Picture

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Now if the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.” (1 Cor 12:12-20)

Just as all members of our community work together for the good of the body, so each catechist in our religious education program is important for building the knowledge of the faith in each child. We know that there are many rich traditions in our Catholic faith, but they cannot all be covered in one year, nor can one thing be focused on every single year. Just as the entire body cannot be a hand the entire curriculum cannot be focused on the 7 sacraments or special devotions.

Christ Our Life ensures consistent progress and development, following a pattern of continuous growth in depth and scope. The core of the series, Scripture, revolves around the four fundamental themes of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: Creed, Sacraments, Morality, and Prayer. Catholic social teachings are woven into every grade level. With Scripture, doctrine, prayer, and Church teachings integrated into every lesson, the children can more easily relate Catholic beliefs, sacred Tradition, and, most importantly, their faith to their lives.

Although creativity is encouraged, it is also important that your lessons reflect the faith focus for the day. We are all needed to help build up the Body of Christ. **Please visit page OV-2** in your catechist manual to see how the spiral curriculum of the Christ Our Life Series builds up students in the knowledge and love of their faith from year to year.

Nuts and Bolts: Making Sure Things Are Operating on All 8 Cylinders

Below are the nuts and bolts of safety policies and procedures at St. Raphael. Thank you for helping us keep students safe by following these guidelines.

Need a Sub?

As soon as you realize that you must miss a class; please let us know as soon as possible, but at least one day ahead of time so we can meet the students' needs. **There are two important steps when requesting a sub:**

1. Contact Ann Olig at ann.olig@raphael.org or 233-8044.
2. Notify your grade level coordinator via e-mail or phone.

Babysitting


If needed, a babysitter will be provided for the children of catechists, beginning 15 minutes before class starts. Please contact Jessie Adrians at 233-8044 at least one day ahead of time so one can be arranged.

Confidentiality

Students will trust you with personal information. Unless you perceive a student is in danger, consider any information you hear or perceive about students to be confidential and do not repeat it to anyone other than religious education personnel.

BACKGROUND CHECKS AND VIRTUS TRAINING

The Diocese of Green Bay is committed to creating, providing and maintaining safe environments in all its parishes, schools, and other institutions so that all persons, especially children, youth and individuals at risk, will be protected as far as possible from all harm including physical and sexual abuse. VIRTUS® is the brand name that identifies best practices' programs designed to help prevent wrongdoing and promote "right doing" within religious organizations and to raise awareness regarding sexual abuse in our Church and society. The National Catholic Risk Retention Group Inc. created VIRTUS to empower organizations and people to better control risk and improve the lives of all those who interact with the Church through a continuous process of training and information.

- To view and print all currently scheduled Virtus Training Sessions, go to <http://www.gbdioc.org/protectingourchildren/virtus.html> and select [VIRTUS® workshop dates](#) 
- To register for a VIRTUS® session go to: virtusonline.org.
- To complete a background check go to www.eappsdb.com/login.asp?orgz_key=29 and register as a first time user. You will be asked for an access code. **Our access code is gbdioc04.**

SAFE ENVIRONMENT SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY FOR THE DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

Social networks and other digital communication offer individuals, groups and the Catholic Church an opportunity to connect in positive ways. We are able to encourage one another, strengthen community ties and boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While communication has technically advanced, it is at its core a human interaction. This Safe Environment Social Communications Policy creates clear standards and expectations for online and digital communication to protect children, youth and individuals at risk in virtual spaces.

All ministry representatives, including catechists, are asked to sign an agreement to abide by the Safe Environment Social Communications Policy for the Diocese of Green Bay. **This agreement, once signed, is valid until revoked, and is provided to catechists by their grade level coordinator.** To view the agreement and the Social Communications Policy for the Diocese of Green Bay visit:

gbresources.org/uploads/8/4/5/8/8458656/finaldraft_social_communications_safe_environment_policy_2_may_2015.pdf

Foundational Catechetical Training

Foundational Catechetical Certification seeks to engage the whole community in the ongoing formation of their Catholic faith and to attain a basic standard of knowledge of Christ and of Church teachings. This training is free and open to all adults in the Green Bay Diocese. Although it is not required, it is encouraged as it feeds us both spiritually and intellectually. Through a series of courses based on the U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults you are invited to:

- Profess Your Faith (Explore your faith through the Creed)
- Celebrate Your Faith (Deepen your understanding of the Sacraments)
- Live Your Faith (Learn Catholic Morality Teachings)
- Pray Your Faith (Explore Catholic Spiritualities that enrich our faith)

See <http://www.gbdioc.org/education-portal/religious-education/foundational-catechetical-certification-fcc.html> for details or to register.

SAFETY INFORMATION

In case of fire or a tornado warning, proceed with your students to the area designated below (and on the classroom wall). Remove the class list from the pocket on the prayer cabinet as you leave the room and take attendance when you arrive at the designated location.

Fire

If the fire alarm sounds, quickly lead your class out the nearest exit and gather along the sidewalk on Westhaven Dr. Stay with your class until you are notified that it is safe to return to the classroom.

Tornado.

If the tornado siren goes off, lead your classroom to the appropriate location (listed below) and assist students to crouch along the wall until you are notified that it is safe to return to the classroom. TAKE THE FLASHLIGHT in your classroom with you to the designated area.

CLASSROOMS GO TO

104 and Chapel: Go to the library

105: Go to room 107

106: Go to room 108

107, 108, Library: Stay in your classrooms

110, 111, 112: Go to the main boys bathroom

Parent Room, Nursery, 113: Go to the main girls bathroom

GENERAL CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Accidents

If a child becomes ill or is hurt, immediately send a **student** to contact a staff member. **Band-Aids, sterile wipes and latex gloves are provided in the First Aid kit inside the prayer table if needed.** Do not clean up any body fluid unless you are wearing the protective gloves from the First Aid kit.

Attendance

Take attendance immediately and put the attendance folder outside the door 15 minutes after class begins. **Please do not allow students to take attendance. There is confidential information in the folder (i.e., phone numbers and health/medical issues).** If a child arrives late, please make the correction on the attendance sheet. If the attendance sheet has already been picked up, **please send the child down to the office** so his/her record can be corrected. If a child misses three or more consecutive classes the Religious Ed staff will contact parents to see if their family needs assistance in any way. There are many reasons a child may miss class.

Cleanup

Please make sure your classroom is clean and ready for the next teacher to use when your class is finished, and that the room is set up the way you found it if you moved tables and chairs. **Catechist's totes should be returned to your coordinator's assigned shelves before leaving for the evening.** St. Raphael is a very busy place on Tuesday and Wednesday nights. Howie and the staff thank you!

Dismissal

For safety reasons, do not dismiss children early. Children in Preschool through grade 2 may only be dismissed to a family member.

Food and Drinks

As a rule of thumb, do not bring food or drinks to class. We realize that your heart is in the right place and that students may be hungry, but we need to be aware of allergies and dietary restrictions. **If you want to bring a treat for your students, check with your grade level coordinator at least one week in advance.**

Catechist Toolbox: Tips for Teachers for a Smooth Journey

- 1) **Prepare the Learning Environment:** Preparation is the key to a smooth class period. Some tips
 - a. Come 10-15 minutes early to prepare
 - b. Provide name tags or name plates
 - c. Use the white boards, they are there for you!
 - d. Clean up and return your tote before leaving, the next teacher will appreciate it!

- 2) **Focus on Learners:** Think about what your students need. Some tips:
 - a. Look over your lesson plans 2 days before class, and **follow the outline given by the coordinator** to help keep your class “on track.” It is ok if you don’t get to every part of every single lesson. Your class may have questions on a certain topic, and that is ok. 😊
 - b. Review the goals so you know what to focus on and stay true to the goals, even if students get off topic. Be sure to redirect the conversation if needed.
 - c. **Resist the temptation to talk too much**, Jesus often asked his disciples open-ended questions to see what they could come up with. (Who do people say that I am? He waited for Peter’s answer. 😊)

- 3) **Use a variety of activities that speak to all learning styles.** Be aware some children in your room may have special learning needs. They may respond better to activities such as song, role play, or games. *Please let your coordinator know ahead of time of any special supplies you may need. We will try our best to accommodate your request with your advance notice.*

- 4) **Change it up!** The kids have been in school all day and doing more than pen and pencil activities will help keep them engaged and grow their faith. Research tells us children need to move around about every 10 minutes to retain attention. Get them out of their chairs!

- 5) **Plug in the Power of Prayer:** Make prayer central to your class. Your catechist guide has many suggestions for different types of prayer integrated into the lesson. There is also a section on prayer under *What Catholics Should Know* in your catechist guide. Please refer to it for specific directions on the following prayers:
 - a. Reflective Prayer
 - b. The Rosary
 - c. Four Basic Forms of Prayer (Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, Supplication)
 - d. Stations of the Cross

- 6) **Polish your Technique:** There are many ways to keep students engaged and communicate energy and enthusiasm. If you are interested, they will be too! Try some of the following
- a. Move around! It communicates energy and enthusiasm.
 - b. Make eye contact
 - c. Vary your voice
 - d. Be aware of facial expression and body language. A smile can go a long way!
 - e. Vary your pace.
 - f. Keep a sense of humor! Remember, kids respond well to a few light moments without having to be crazy.
 - g. Involve your students in decision-making; it will give them personal investment. Be a guide on the side not a “sage on the stage.”
- 7) **Remember God is working through you in every moment! You will do amazing work through him, with him, and in him! You are your students’ greatest resource. 😊**

Smoothing Out Discipline Problems: Strategies and Tools

Tips for Smoothing out Discipline Problems

1. **Have a plan:** Set ground rules for the classroom and involve the class in setting those rules. (See Classroom Management) Set clear and concise rules that are easy to understand.
2. **Be Fair:** Students have a distinct sense of what is and what is not fair. You must act fairly for all students if you expect to be respected. If you do not treat all students equitably, you will be labeled as unfair. Students will not be keen to follow your rules.
3. **Notice and reward positive behavior:** If your class is getting overly “chatty” pick out the one student who is listening quietly and say, “I like how Michael is raising his hand, or I really appreciate how Sarah is sitting quietly and waiting for directions.” You will be surprised at how quickly the others will follow their example. 😊
4. **Deal with disruptions with little interruption:** When you have classroom disruptions, it is imperative that you deal with them immediately and with as little interruption of your class momentum as possible.
5. **Avoid confrontations:** When there is a confrontation there is a winner and a loser. Avoid confronting students in front of the class.
6. **Set High Expectations:** Start each session by telling the class what you expect from them, “I expect you to raise your hands when you have a question or comment”, always use a happy tone not demanding. Praise often when students engage in the class.
7. **Over plan:** Avoid empty space in the time you have to teach the lesson. To do this have extra activities planned you can use to engage students, use challenges, word search or other age appropriate activities.
8. **Be Consistent:** Enforce classroom rules consistently, do not change how you discipline or let things go on one day and be the enforcer the next.
9. **Start Fresh Everyday:** Be sure to start each class with a smile and the same expectations. Greeting the students and asking them how their day or week is will help you build relationships that are trusting. Be present to the students; listen to them if they need time to settle in. Icebreakers are an excellent way to shift their minds from an already busy day to a lighter mood!

St. Raphael Catechist Discipline Procedure: If the above techniques fail, follow the 3 steps below

- 1) Give the student **one warning** in a clear and direct manner. “Peter, raise your hand instead of shouting when you have something to share.
- 2) If they do not stop give them a **second warning**. “Peter, raise your hand if you have something to say so that others in the class can share.”
- 3) If the behavior continues, send another child to the front desk, or hang your “minion” tag on the outside of your door, and a coordinator will come to support you.

The Spiritual Development of Youth

Preschool

The preschool child is blessed with a wonderful imagination and creative ideas about the world and how things work. Children have intuitions about God that are different from those held by adults. Because they are pre-logical they make their own sense out of what adults say and do. Their natural sense of wonder and curiosity facilitate developing a relationship with God.

Elementary school-age

Children of this age are like little sponges, eager to soak up all knowledge. They enjoy stories about superheroes and how good overcomes evil. However, they are also very literal and often believe that there is only one right answer. They appreciate rules because rules theoretically mean that everyone is treated fairly. God is an important relationship in many children's lives. They admire God's wisdom and power, and they take literally what they read in the Bible or hear from their teachers or parents. However, when their prayers go unanswered they are confused because in their minds God is not fitting their model of friendship.

Early Adolescents (Grade 6-8 or Tweeners)

Youth at this age are between childhood and adulthood. They are experiencing great changes in all areas of their lives. This is a great time to "grab kids by the heart" with their faith. At this age youth still identify strongly with the faith models they see in their parents. They are beginning to develop their own faith identity and establish a set of religious beliefs, attitudes, and values through the experience of participating and belonging in a caring faith community. As a catechist you can guide them by helping them explore the big questions while establishing a deeper personal relationship with God. Young adolescents need the security of boundaries and structures, but also some freedom to figure out things on their own. The presence of caring adults is key. *

Older Adolescents (Grades 9-12)

Youth at this age are on the verge of being adults. They are looking forward to making decisions, growing up, and starting a future on their own. At this age, youth begin the process of owning their faith and integrating it into their lives. Youth at this age are questioning and are searching for a style of faith that is more personal, not just handed down from their families. They are starting to take a greater responsibility for their own faith life, beliefs, and attitudes. They are looking for a relationship with a God who knows, accepts and confirms the individual. As a catechist you can help by guiding them in exploring the faith gifts from their family while developing their own faith identity. You can also explore with them what it means to be a person of faith today and how to develop a personal relationship with Christ. Older adolescents need opportunities to "test their wings" supported by faith mentors in the community. *

*Taken from [Leadership for Catholic Youth Ministry](#) by Thomas East.