

# ✠ Religious Education Newsletter ✠

St. William of York Catholic Church  
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## December 2016

**CONGRATULATIONS** to the youth of our parish who were confirmed on November 12th by the Most Reverend Timothy Broglio of the Archdiocese for Military Services. Eighty-seven students received this sacrament. Please continue to pray for them as they grow in their faith.



*"Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."*

## ATTENDANCE NOTES

Regular, **on-time** attendance for religion classes is expected from all parents and students. There have been way too many students running in after the classes have left the gym and walked to their classrooms. Parents are encouraged to stay in the gym for the announcements at the beginning of each session (8:45 AM/10:45 AM/6:00 PM). Parents are discouraged from dropping their children in the gym and then attending Mass while the children are in class. The students are expected to be attending Mass weekly . . . especially those preparing to receive the sacraments of Penance and First Holy Communion.

Remember to fill out an Absence Notification Form if your child has been or will be absent (you may also call or email the office).

For security reasons, parents are only allowed in the hallway at DISMISSAL time. If your child is late, an office helper will see that they get to the right class. This is a learning environment and distractions must be limited. We reserve the right to refuse admittance to class once teaching has begun.

PLAN ACCORDINGLY!

## **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

The students have been learning about the Liturgical (Church) Year in class as our new year in the church calendar has just begun with the first Sunday of Advent on November 27th. They are learning about the different seasons in the church calendar and the colors associated with each. Some classes have even squeezed in craft activities to help the children learn about different customs and traditions. Two popular customs are the Advent wreath and an Advent calendar to countdown the days until Christmas. But there are MANY more . . . google Catholic Advent customs - maybe you can start a new family tradition this year!



## **Holy Days of Obligation**

The precepts of the Church and the 3rd Commandment instruct practicing Catholics to attend Mass on Sundays **AND** Holy Days of Obligation. In the United States, we observe six holy days of obligation. Three of them fall at the beginning of the new church year between Thanksgiving and January 1st:

**DEC 8th** - the Immaculate Conception;  
**DEC 25th** - Christmas (the Nativity of Christ); and  
**JAN 1st** - the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

Mass times are posted in the bulletin and on the purple insert in the November 20th bulletin.

PLEASE . . . Make it a priority to take your children to Mass **EVERY** Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation! You **cannot** substitute class time for Mass or Mass for class.

What greater gift can we receive than our blessed Lord in the Eucharist?!

**NOW AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE**

The 2017 St. Joseph Sunday Missal - **\$2.00 each**

## Food Donations for the Outreach

Thank you for your generosity in donating non-perishable food items to the food pantry - a simple action which allows the Outreach Program at Saint William of York to assist our neighbors in Stafford provide for the needs of their families.

### PLEASE NOTE:

1. Keep all items in their original packaging/box; the pantry cannot accept individual bags of items such as oatmeal or hot chocolate
2. Check expiration dates - items that are 6 months past their stamped expiration date are thrown in the trash and do not count in the weekly class totals
3. Do not send in open boxes of food items - these are also thrown out

Participation in this activity is always VOLUNTARY and is driven by each family's ability to give. The main goal is to educate our children in ways to incorporate the Works of Mercy into their daily lives. Supporting our food pantry is one way to practice the Corporal Work of Mercy "FEED THE HUNGRY" . . . for as Jesus said, "Whatsoever you do to these, the least of my brethren, that you do unto Me!"

Jesus said that we are called to SERVE - not to be served. As part of their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, students are asked to perform 30 hours of service. Because contributing food to the pantry falls under the Works of Mercy, Confirmation candidates are allowed to count 15 minutes of service for each week they remember to bring food items to class. There are 19 Sunday evening classes remaining (barring any snow days) which means the potential exists to earn 4.75 hours if you bring a food item each week. Consider it . . .

### LOOKING AHEAD . . .

**CLASS IS IN SESSION** December 4, 11, 18

**CHRISTMAS BREAK** December 25 & January 1

### January classes

**January 8** PENANCE/FIRST COMMUNION PARENT MEETING in the gym after students are dismissed (approximately 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM)

**January 15** MIDTERM REVIEW (*Yes . . . we know this is MLK holiday weekend, but CLASSES ARE IN SESSION TODAY*)

**January 22** MIDTERM EXAM Grades 1 - 7 (no exams in K or 8)

**January 29** SWOY Catholic School OPEN HOUSE after 2nd session to kick off Catholic Schools Week

## Midterm Exam & Make-Up Policy

Midterm exams will be given **January 22nd** for students in Grades 1 - 7. Please make every effort to have your child attend class on the day of the exam.

As in the past, if a student is absent, they **will not** be given the exam during the next class period when they are present. **Make-ups must be scheduled through the R.E. Office and must be completed within one week of the scheduled test date.** We are aware that this may be inconvenient, however, our curriculum moves forward and your child needs to be in class to receive the instruction being presented.

Students who do not score at least a 70% will be required to either retest or make corrections.

PLEASE ADVISE THE OFFICE and YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER IF YOU FEEL YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO HAVE THE TEST READ TO HIM/HER or OTHER MODIFICATIONS MADE so that he/she can be successful.

Please check your child's folder for a list of prayers which they are expected to have memorized. Prayer checks are on-going and assessment data will be provided on the progress reports in February.

## Sacrament Notes

**First Penance** will be after Easter during class time. Students should be reciting the Act of Contrition at home every night to help them learn it!

**First Holy Communion** is set for Saturday, May 13th. There will be a Mass at 9:00 AM and one at 11:30 AM. Attend the parent meeting on January 8 for more info.

**Confirmation Class of 2017** should turn in the green Declarations Page in the front of their red folder by December 11th. A **Service hour log check** will be conducted on December 11th - bring your log to class. Students should have at least 5 hours by now. If not, they need to begin immediately!

## **Let's get FORMED!**

Have you ever had a desire to learn more about our Faith but didn't know where to begin or have the time to attend a class? If so, we've got the answer for you! Try out FORMED.org!

On FORMED.org you'll find resources on our Faith from well-known Catholic publishers. FORMED has movies, books, programs such as Catholicism, and audios. There is something for kids, teens, parents...everyone!

The best part (beside learning more about our faith on our own time)...it's completely FREE! Our parish has taken out a subscription for FORMED for a year which means all you have to do to access all this free, informative material is simply create a profile and password. Here are the steps to accessing FORMED.

- 1) Type formed.org into your browser.
- 2) Scroll down and click on "REGISTER"
- 3) Enter our parish code "QKJG6Z" (capitals count!) and your email
- 4) Follow the prompts to create your profile (you should not be asked for any money)
- 5) Confirm your email by responding to the email they will send you
- 6) Enjoy the free resources!

Right now, FORMED is adding resources about Advent, Christmas, and Penance. They also just added a bunch of new material for kids.