

**St. Benedict's Parish**  
521 MCCOSH DR., CHESAPEAKE, VA 23320

August 15, 2016

Dear Parents,

St. Benedict's Parish's Catechism Program presents preparation for children from K4 through 12<sup>th</sup> grade for reception of the Sacraments and preparation for adulthood. Each student's parents must fill out a Catechism Registration Form, available from the Parish Office, or online at:

[http://www.stbenedictschapel.org/catechism\\_registration/](http://www.stbenedictschapel.org/catechism_registration/)

Classes are offered from September through April, and meet from 8:45 a.m. until 9:45 a.m. (between the first and second Sunday Masses). Students are **allowed NO MORE THAN 5 absences during the year, and ALL students must have a completed Catechism Registration Form on file with the Parish office by the 15<sup>th</sup> of September**. There are five classes offered: K4-5, Pre-Communion Class; Ages 6-7 will normally attend First Communion Preparation; Ages 8-10 will normally attend the Post Communion Class; Ages 11-12 will normally attend the Pre-Confirmation and Confirmation Preparation Class, and Ages 13-18 will normally attend the Post-Confirmation Class. Further information on these classes is provided on the attached Catalog.

Students who will make their First Confession and First Communion or their Confirmation **must be registered members** of St. Benedict's Parish, and must have a certified copy of their Baptismal Certificate. ***The Baptismal Certificate must be issued by the parish where they were Baptized with embossed seal and dated WITHIN 6 months prior to reception of the Sacrament and turned into St. Benedict's NOT LATER THAN THE LAST DAY OF FEBRUARY BEFORE*** – the Child's First Confession/First Communion, or Confirmation.

The First Communicant must be at least 7 years old by the first day of the year that the First Communicant will receive the Sacrament. First Penance and First Communion normally are scheduled for the first weekend in May. **Attire for First Communion:** Girls wear white dresses with veil and white shoes (a white purse will be supplied by St. Benedict's); Boys wear a dark suit (or dark blazer) with a white shirt, and a white tie (tie is supplied by St. Benedict's). First Communicants will be inducted into the Confraternity of the Brown Scapular the same day they make their First Holy Communion, and a Brown Scapular will be provided to each Child by St. Benedict's.

Students who have not yet been confirmed are welcome to participate in St. Benedict's **annual Hallow's Eve celebration of All Saints Day** and the **children's annual Christmas Pageant** in the costume of their favorite saint. Signups for these events start in mid-September.

Confirmation will occur in May. A two-year preparation with an eight-week final preparation for receiving Confirmation remains a Diocesan requirement. It is preferred that the student be at least 12 years old to receive this sacrament, and their sponsor must be a confirmed practicing Roman Catholic.

Please pray for our catechists and our Catechism Program, that the Parish members may do everything according to God's Holy Will in preparing God's greatest gift to you for sainthood.

This letter, along with the Catechism Catalog are also posted on our website at:

[http://www.stbenedictschapel.org/parish\\_life/catechism/](http://www.stbenedictschapel.org/parish_life/catechism/)

Please feel free to contact me with any questions on our Catechism program.

Yours in Christ, through Mary,



Father Neal Nichols, FSSP

### **Pre-K4 Preparation Class**

Students are normally 4, 5 years old. The objective of the yearly curriculum is to introduce the students to their basic prayers (Sign of the Cross, Glory be, Hail Mary, Our Father, and Apostles Creed); basic postures (folding hands, when and how to genuflect); items in the Sanctuary (Sanctuary light, Tabernacle, etc) and Seven Sacraments, and the 10 Commandments. Focus of the instruction is to prepare the children for the next stage of instruction, First Communion Preparation Class.

**Designated Instructor:** Mrs. Mary Macera; [bride4anthony@aol.com](mailto:bride4anthony@aol.com); Phone: 757-460-2980

### **First Communion Preparation Class**

First Communion Class provides a minimum of 2 years preparation by studying the lessons in the "New Saint Joseph First Communion Catechism" book.

Students are normally 6, 7, or 8 years old, depending upon entry to this preparation class. *The objectives of the yearly curriculum* are designed to increase the knowledge of each student to learn: (1) the purpose of man's existence; (2) God and His Perfections; (3) the Unity and the Trinity of God; (4) original sin; (5) actual sin; (6) the Incarnation; (7) Redemption; (8) the seven Sacraments most especially Baptism, Penance, and Holy Eucharist; (9) Ten Commandments; (10) how to make a Good Confession; and (11) how to pray the Holy Mass.

**Requirements** include the following: (a) parental assistance with student studying catechism and prayers at home plus attending the Holy Mass in the Extraordinary Form; (b) student satisfactorily completes periodic verbal and written quizzes; (c) use of Sacramentals such as rosary, prayer book, holy cards, and brown scapular.

#### **Participants can expect the following class structure:**

- Practicing: reciting prayers aloud in class (such as: Hail Mary, Glory Be, Our Father, Apostles Creed, Angel of God, Act of Contrition; and recitation of the Ten Commandments). Opening prayer by all students (Standing) is Apostle's Creed.
  - Individual recitations / demonstrations of sign of the cross, genuflection, prayers, etc.
  - Catechism lesson (20 minutes); Holy Mass lesson (10 minutes); activity commensurate with catechism lesson may be scheduled; occasional and instructor supervised visit to the Church / Blessed Sacrament; closing prayer recited by all (select a class leader); dismissal with Holy Card
  - Parent(s) or responsible sibling must come to the classroom to escort your child's safe departure. Notify instructor with any changes. All children must be properly attended.

**Designated Instructor:** Mrs. Rowanne Stephenson; Home phone # 757.353.0670

### **Post Communion Class**

The Confirmation preparation catechism class (junior level) is appropriate for children who received their First Holy Communion and are in grades 3 to 5. Baltimore Catechism book Number One is the primary textbook for the course. The Post-Communion Class objective is to take the main point of each lesson and to show how it is illustrated or exemplified in some event of Sacred Scripture. The concrete picture language of the Bible will serve as a big help to the child in better understanding the main truths presented in the more abstract language of the question and answers of the official Baltimore catechism. This textbook presents the class material in three major parts: (1) basic Catholic doctrine as summarized in the Apostles Creed, (2) the Ten Commandments of God and the Six Commandments of the Church, and (3) Sacraments and prayers. Since the class incorporates reading and writing assignments, the children are expected to have these basic skills.

**Designated Instructor:** Mrs. Elaine Franco, [troopfranco@verizon.net](mailto:troopfranco@verizon.net); Home phone # 757.548.2380

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### **Pre-Confirmation and Confirmation Preparation Class**

The Pre-Confirmation Class is a two-year course teaching the content of the Baltimore Catechism book Number Two. Approximately one lesson is taught each week. Students are expected to complete and turn in the answers to questions contained at the end of each lesson. During the class, in addition to learning new material, students are expected to answer a variety of questions based on the material already covered.

The last eight weeks of each catechism year are devoted to the study of the "***Preparation for Confirmation***" book. All students who will receive Confirmation will study this book. This book is based on the Baltimore Catechism, and focused exclusively on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Occasionally, a student may join the class who already has a good grasp of the Baltimore Catechism, and, with the consent of his/her parents, may feel that the two-year preparation time may not be necessary. In that case, the parents may ask Father Nichols to administer a written test, verifying that the student knows the material. The test is based on the content of the Baltimore Catechism Number Two, and has approximately fifty questions.

**Designated Instructor:** Mr. Mark Srodulski [piwo1960@yahoo.com](mailto:piwo1960@yahoo.com); Home phone # 757.488.0330.

### **Post-Confirmation Class**

The Post-Confirmation Class is designed to prepare young adults for their college and adult years. Students will learn how the Church is NOT Bible-based, but how the Bible is based on the Church, and has always been an integral part of the Catholic Church. They will learn how, "ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ" – St. Jerome. They will learn how they are, as St. Paul states, "an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, and written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart" (2Cor3:3).

Students will learn how to, "Evangelize all the time, and sometimes use words" (St. Francis Assisi). Students will learn to, "...reverence the Lord Christ in their hearts, and always have an answer ready for people who ask them for the reason for the hope that is within them. But, to give the defense with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander them when they are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring" (1Pt 3:15). They will learn how their prior catechism instruction that required them to, "learn their catechism by heart," instead of, "memorize it," was designed to tune their heart and ear to the Shepherd's voice, for He said, "My sheep hear my voice: and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn 10:27)).

This year's class will use the high school textbook "Apologetics and Catholic Doctrine" By Archbishop Michael Sheehan. It is a "classic High School Text used to teach the Faith to generations of English Speaking Catholics around the world. The Structure and sequence of the argument of Sheehan's Apologetics have a unique clarity and logical force. The exposition of the deposit of the faith in Catholic Doctrine is clear and thorough. Objections are faced openly and honestly." The class will also refer to a variety of books in electronic format that will help your child build a solid library that is indispensable at college and handy throughout their life.

**Prep time needed:** 1 hour/week. Students will be expected to complete the assignments and be prepared to discuss the assigned reading in class.

**Prerequisites:** Students should have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**Designated Instructor:** Mr. Jeff Leporte [jeffleporte@cox.net](mailto:jeffleporte@cox.net); Home phone # 757.382.9103