



August 17, 2020

Dear Families in Christ,

Welcome back to a new school year! I pray that your family is safe and healthy. As with everything else it will look quite different from last year. I want to thank all of you who have answered my brief survey. It seems to be a 60/40 ratio to return to class. If you have not yet registered your child for class or filled out the Participation/medical form, they can be found on our website, www.stmaryskutztown.com.

If you are registered for Online Giving you now can pay for Religious Education, there. Just be sure to click on the Rel Ed link, if it is a sacramental year for your child, the sacramental fee needs to be paid separately. If you wish, you may scan your forms to me via my email stmaryreled@ptd.net or fax to (610) 683- 7625.

We will have two options for Religious Education this year, on site, and home-school.

If your child is planning to return to class, I want to reassure you we are following the safety protocols to maintain a healthy environment for your child. We ask that you monitor your child for symptoms prior to arrival and if your child is not feeling well for any reason; please have him/her stay at home. You can find our Safety guidelines on our website.

One of the changes to our Sunday Religious Education routine is **Level 8 will be meeting now on the same nights as the Sr. High Ministry. Which is the first and third Sunday of the month.** Levels 6 and 7 will still meet on the same evenings as normal, but they will have different classrooms. Level 6 will now meet in room 120 and Level 7 in room in 117. With these changes the children will not be sharing their room with another class on the same day. This change was made to accommodate safety by not overcrowding the classrooms.

The First day for Elementary, is September 13th at 10:30 to 11:45 a.m.

The First day for Levels 6 and 7. Is September 13th at 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The First day for Level 8 will be on September 20th at 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The First day for Sr. High Ministry will be on September 20th at 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

We will continue to have Youth Masses every third Sunday of the month from October to March. Even though we will not be doing the usual ministries of mass the children will continue to create the "Prayers of the Faithful" for the Mass.

We will **not** be hosting the weekly Children's Liturgy at this time at the nine o'clock mass.

For those of you that are choosing to do the **Finding God Homeschool Program** this is what the program will look like.

- We will be using the Finding God Curriculum that we have been using. Level 2 will be using their same books from last year.
- at the Thursday August 27th Parent meeting we will go over how to use the online resources for the curriculum, and you can pick up your child's book.
- At the beginning of the Unit the Catechist or I will introduce the Unit theme, this will done be by email or another avenue that the catechist will chose to use.
- You the parent are the responsible for the follow through for the lessons. After each lesson there is an online session review that your child will do and email to stmaryeduonline@ptd.net this will be the equivalent of your attendance to class.
- Since Youth Masses are considered a part of catechetical attendance, if your family is not able to attend masses as a family you can answer that week's discussion questions from the "*Adorers of the Blood of Christ*" weekly emailed children's liturgy. Your family is encouraged to do some of the offered activities.
- Several times throughout the year I will contact you to see how your child(ren) are doing with understanding the lessons.

This time we now have can be a wonderful time for you to reconnect to your faith as you teach and strengthen your child's faith.

"Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery-the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the 'material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones.' Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them..." (Catholic Catechism of the Catholic Church 2223)

Even though the CCC states that educating your child is a "grave responsibility" , and our church life has been greatly disrupted, this can also be a time of joyous family bonding as you learn together to recognize the love our Lord has for us and develop a deeper commitment to Christ and His Church.

Our Senior High Ministry is open to all the youth of our Parish grades 9 to 12. All are welcome even if they had not been attending St. Mary's Religious Education program.

I would like to welcome Sudarshan Michael Fernando, Sudarshan who joined our parish last year. Previously he was a member St. Ann's Parish in Emmaus, he is a professor of Physics at Kutztown University.

He has been highly active in our parish and is looking forward to sharing his faith with our high schoolers.

Enclosed please find the most current class roster, the Parent Religious Education Handbook, and the Youth Ministry Participation form. *Please read all of the information included in this packet. **Please return the handbook acknowledgement form** and the **Youth Ministry Participation form on the first day of class.***

The opening parent meetings for this year are as follows:

Finding God Home-School program- August 27th 6:30 p.m.

Elementary Parent Orientation Meetings: Sunday, September 13th, social hall of REC, 10:45 – 11:10 for parents of children with last names beginning in A-M, and 11:15 – 11:40a.m. for parents of children with last names beginning in N-Z. ***Parents, please report to your child's classroom at the beginning of the first class. Catechists will be speaking to the parents for a few minutes at the beginning of class.***

Levels 6 and 7 Parent Orientation Meeting: Sunday, September 13th, 6:15pm – 7:15pm social hall of the REC.

Confirmation Meeting for all Level 8 parents: Sunday, September 20th, 6:15pm – 7:15 pm social hall of the REC.

Home-based Parent Orientation Meeting: Monday, September 9th, 6:30 – 8:00pm in the Religious Education Center.

If you are experiencing a financial challenge at this time, please contact me so that does not become an obstacle to your child's spiritual journey.

Thank you for supporting your child in learning about our Catholic Faith and growing closer to our loving God each day.

Be blessed,

Ann Pergosky

Coordinator of Religious Education
(610) 683-6454 stmaryreled@ptd.net

