

## Celebrating the Catechetical Year 2011-2012

# Do This in Memory of Me

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the Religious Education Program. We thank you for allowing us to be partners with you in the religious formation of your children. This program meets the basic level of religious instruction for children in elementary through high school as directed by the Diocese of Syracuse.

The Catholic Church believes and professes that, "The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason the family is richly called 'the domestic church,' a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity." (CCC 1666)

It is the parent's right and role to pass their faith on to their children. Our role at St. Helena's and The Church of the Holy Family is to do all we can to support, assist, and encourage you as you model a Catholic Christian lifestyle for your family by your love, discipline and example. We, therefore, urge you to make every effort to attend Mass as a family each Sunday, to maintain a Catholic Christian atmosphere in your home and to ensure that your children attend religious education classes weekly on a yearly basis.

We also encourage parents and guardians to attend adult enrichment opportunities that may be offered throughout the year..

In the handbook that follows you will find additional information that will facilitate your involvement in your

child's religious education.

Please feel free to call the Office of Faith Formation with questions or for further information. We ask you to carefully read the material in this handbook. Review the schedules and refer to them throughout the year.

This year's catechetical theme "*Do This in Memory of Me*" invites you, as a family, to a clearer understanding of the Eucharist. By your reflecting and sharing on Jesus' words, you will be opening your hearts and minds to a deeper, personal relationship with Jesus, who gives Himself to us in this ever loving sacrament.

As you journey through the year, the mystery and many aspects about the Eucharist and the directive Jesus gave his Apostles and to us will become easier to relate to, believe, to celebrate and to be lived out in your families and communities. You will begin to embrace Jesus' loving sacrifice present in the Eucharist and desire to do loving acts in remembrance of Him and receive Him frequently.

Because I have the privilege of seeing faith grow from children entering first grade to later participating as young men and women at the Baccalaureate Mass upon graduation, I am filled with much joy, hope, and love. May we "*Do This in Memory of Me*" as we love and serve the Lord and one another.

Mary LaForest  
Director of Faith Formation

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### Growing in Faith Together Mission Statement

In keeping with the mission of the Catholic Church, St. Helena's and Holy Family proclaims the "Good News" of Jesus Christ by providing catechetical instruction, special events, opportunities for fellowship and outreach service that will foster and encourage growth in knowledge and understanding of the faith, resulting in:

- a relationship with Jesus Christ
- full participation in the sacraments,
- appreciation for the traditions of the Church
- development of strong Catholic moral principles
- a spirit of community
- responsibility to love and serve others as Christ

### Goals of Growing Together In Faith

- To assist parents in passing the faith on to their children
- to provide religious instruction to children who do not attend Catholic schools
- to prepare students and families for the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion, and Confirmation
- to train catechists for our programs
- to provide a Safe Environment through training and screening of all volunteers and employees
- to involve youth in parish life
- to creating a strong sense of community

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### Family Commitment to Religious Education

Registering for Religious Education indicates a commitment on the part of your family to participate fully in the religious growth of your child. We recognize that family life can be busy, we ask that you make the religious education of your children a priority. While religious education class is important, it will not be of any value if you do not attend Mass regularly. Receiving the Word and Eucharist allows us to fully grow in God's love through Jesus Christ.

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Refer to the church bulletin for calendar updates and church event details. **Bulletins can also be found at [www.st-helenas.org](http://www.st-helenas.org)**

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St. Helena's Church	210 Primo Avenue	Sherrill, NY 13461	(315) 361-1566
Church of the Holy Family	4352 Peterboro Street	Vernon, NY 13476	(315) 829-3295

# General Guidelines

## ***Behavior:***

1. Respect and courtesy toward catechists, volunteers and classmates is required at all times.
2. Students are to use supplies and facilities properly. Tables are not to sit on!
3. Leave the facility neat and clean.
4. Love the Lord, your God with all your heart; and love your neighbor as yourself.

We expect good Christian behavior during class time. If this can not be attained, parents will be consulted to work on a behavior plan or other options for religious education.

## ***Parents:***

1. Parents should ensure that their children attend classes and special events regularly and on time.
2. Parents should communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect a child within the classroom.
3. Parents should be an active part of their children's learning through involvement in the classroom at the catechist's request, reviewing material with their children, and being role models of faith by their own active participation in parish events.
4. Mass is an integral part of faith formation. Students need to connect what is learned in class to what is most important in our faith, that of receiving the Word and Eucharist as often as possible. Please make every effort to attend weekly Mass as a family.

## ***Catechists:***

1. Individuals involved in any of the religious education programs, teaching or otherwise, shall be a role model of Christian living. He/she should be a Catholic example to students through witness and prayer.
  2. Catechists should provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that children will be able to grow in their faith.
  3. Catechists shall be provided with training and necessary resources to prepare them for teaching.
  4. All catechists, volunteers and employees who work with children and/or youth are required to attend VIRTUS training and screening as part of providing a Safe Environment.
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## ***Arrivals/Departures:***

### **ST. HELENA'S**

Elementary classes begin promptly at 8:00 am Tuesdays (grades 1-3) and Wednesdays (grades 4-6). Students are dismissed at 8:50am in an orderly fashion. Bus transportation is provided for students attending McAllister Elementary. All students being bussed are to line up quietly in the hall. Walkers with permission\* will be excused first. Students being picked up by authorized\* adults will be dismissed next. Students riding on the bus are to board single file, and proper conduct on the bus is expected. Students are subject to the same bus rules and discipline code as described in the McAllister Handbook provided by the Vernon-Verona-Sherrill School District (VVS).

Middle School classes begin at 6:30pm and end at 8:00pm on Sundays.

High School classes begin at 6:30 pm and end at 8:30 pm on Sundays.

*\*Please return the Walker/Driver Release Form.*

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### **CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY**

Elementary classes\*\* begin at 1:55 pm Tuesdays (grades 1-3) and Wednesdays (grades 4-6). Students are returned to Wettel School at 2:55 pm.

Middle School classes begin at 10:00 am and end at 11:30 am on Sundays.

High School classes begin at 10:00 am and end at 11:30 am on Sundays.

*\*\*Please return [Release Form](#).*

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## ***Cancellations:***

- Snow Days: Please pay attention to any delays or cancellations affecting VVS School District. St. Helena's and Holy Family's Religious Education classes are CANCELLED if school is not in session in the VVS district. If you belong to a school district other than VVS, and your district is delayed or cancelled, please do not venture out on bad roads. Remember: If school isn't in session at the time of your class, you are not expected to attend.

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## Curriculum

In grades 1-6, we use Christ Our Life. In addition to great textbooks and resources, Christ Our Life maintains a wonderful website, providing additional activities for catechists, a parent page, family prayers, Sunday reflections, and much more. A link will be provided on the our website at [www.st-helenas.org](http://www.st-helenas.org).

For grades 7 & 8 we uses Saint Mary's Press "Discovering" series and Faith Works. Grade 7 & 8 works together on many projects and activities to develop a junior high youth ministry atmosphere.

High School Blocks use a variety of subject materials specific for block titles. Block titles rotate in and out of catechetical years as we provide many opportunities for students to choose topics of interest to them concerning their faith, the Church, morality and liturgy. All students entering 9th grade receive a Catholic Youth Bible. Students are to bring their bibles to class for each scheduled session.

First Reconciliation and First Communion "PREP Sacraments" use a series from "Living the Good News" publishers which we find to be not so "booky." Students engage in activities, discussion, stories, and prayers to develop a friendship with Jesus Christ. Family participation is key to this program. Along with the PREP classes, we also schedule a "Family Banquet" day to show the connection between Church Sacrament and daily encounters of sacrament. This day includes baking bread, watching a movie, touring the church, and sharing a family meal.

Confirmation "PREP Sacraments" will be using resources from a book titled: "Countdown To Confirmation". Students will be focusing on the liturgical dialogue that takes place within the Liturgy of the Conferral of the Sacrament of Confirmation. There are 6 PREP sessions, an overnight retreat, World Youth Mass, and rehearsal.

Q: What is "PREP Sacraments"?

A: Partners in Religious Education Preparation for Sacraments

Growing together in faith during sacramental preparation is part of community and communion with Christ. It is by sharing faith with our young people that we pass our faith from generation to generation. Sacraments are meant to be community celebrations. It is vital to our program that parents, students, catechists and sponsors work together in the process of preparation to receive sacraments. This is a time for *everyone* to deepen their faith and relationship with Jesus.

### Children's Liturgy of the Word

Four year olds through fourth graders are welcome to attend our Children's Liturgy during the 10:45 Mass. Students will be dismissed during Mass before the Liturgy of the Word and return for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

### How To Register

- ALL registration is to be done on-line. This can be accessed at [https://www.churchdb.com/churchdb/SelfRegister.asp?PAGE=REGISTRATION\\_PAGE&iOrgzKey=86&ddlSite=630](https://www.churchdb.com/churchdb/SelfRegister.asp?PAGE=REGISTRATION_PAGE&iOrgzKey=86&ddlSite=630)
- Detailed instructions are available on the website.
- New registration will be sent to the system for approval, once approved, you will receive a password via email. The approval can take up to 48 hours.
- Each student can then be enrolled into grade level classes, Grades 1-12.
- Students enrolling in Sacramental Preparation (First Reconciliation, First Communion or Confirmation) will register for these classes as well, with an additional fee and registration on-line.
- Students requesting to receive First Communion must be in grade 2 or above and completed one year of religious education.
- Students requesting Confirmation must be in Grade 11 or above, completed two years of high school courses, and has completed the Rite of Enrollment by the DRE.

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### Fee Schedule\*

\$25 one child

\$45 two children

\$60 families of three or more

All families of students receiving sacraments **must** be parish members. Parish registration forms are available in the Faith Formation Office as well as in the Rectory Office (363-3882).

A Separate and additional fee includes:

\$10 Sacrament Preparation Fee per child for First Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation.

*\*Please note that all fees are donations. St. Helena's and Holy Family does not deny Faith Formation if payment cannot be made. Fees help cover the cost of books, materials, catechist training, publications and so much more.*