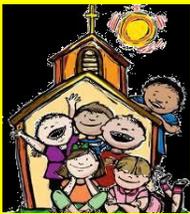


Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) Newsletter

Issue: January 2021 at St. Mary Magdalen Church



Christmas Show Rehearsal 2019



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What makes your holiday memorable? Thank God for the gifts of family and friends; ask him to close the doors of hate and open doors of love. Pray for the Salvation Army bellringers out in all kinds of weather, for the first responders who are working while we enjoy the holiday. Pray for your children to understand the true meaning of Christmas. Pray for the lonely – the widows, the invalids who would love to be at Mass but have no way to get there, especially this year. Pray for those in nursing homes who have not seen their families since all this began. Pray for the health professionals who are doing all they can to make sure that ALL of us can safely celebrate together in 2021! Pray for those who will celebrate Christmas amid oppression and persecution. And pray for our country, that we can let go of divisions and differences and again see ourselves as one nation, under God. Just pray!

From the Director's Desk

As I write this, the first snowstorm we've had in two years is preparing to hit! As if 2020 couldn't end soon enough...

I want to thank all of you parents for your patience and perseverance as we have worked through these first few months. I want to thank our students for staying with us and really giving their faith the same importance as they give their math homework! And most important, I want to thank my catechists – the volunteers who have adapted to this crazy schedule, who have learned how to use new programs and have searched tirelessly for ways to make a virtual class interesting. You have all gone above and beyond this year, and I feel incredibly blessed. Parents, you have no idea the work that goes on behind the scenes by these incredible people who just want your children to have the best possible understanding of their faith! I am constantly humbled by their gifts and their unselfish hearts.

One thing I will truly miss this year is our Christmas show. I literally started writing the 2020 show last year when we finished the 2019 show; it is one of my favorite, crazy but oh-so-fulfilling days! It will have to wait for another year, sadly; but I hope that you will do one thing at home. I began our Christmas program because as our society became more secular, I realized that children no longer knew basic Christmas carols. They'll hear Grandma got Run over by a Reindeer hundreds of times, but not O Little Town of Bethlehem, Silent Night, the First Nowell, We Three Kings – all the songs that tell the reason for the season. So no matter what you think you sound like, or how silly you feel, sit down with your children one night and just listen and learn a carol. The early church used them as teaching tools for our faith, reminders of the joy of the season and God's love for us. Couldn't we all use a little more of that now?

-Karen Yasik

Reconciliation Update

With a vaccine coming in the spring, it looks like we will be holding off on this sacrament until some of our more vulnerable can be vaccinated. Lent begins in February this year, so it is likely that we will be holding the sacrament at some point during the Lenten season – certainly appropriate as we prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Holy Week. I will continue to update as I can!

Confirmation Update

The loss of our youth minister has made pulling together a class schedule challenging. I cannot run classes upstairs and do First Communion interviews downstairs at the same time, so I am looking for a solution! In the meantime, I will be sending out a link to a video for all 8th grade students and parents to watch together in preparation for the program – so watch your emails and don't be caught short!

JANUARY CALENDAR

January 1st – Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God – *holy day of obligation*

January 3rd – virtual class for grades K-8 – Epiphany celebrated today

January 4th – Feast of Elizabeth Ann Seton, a local saint – see her shrine in Emmitsburg!

January 10th – regular in-building classes grades PK-8
Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

January 17th – Feast of St. Anthony – no classes this weekend

January 21st – Feast of St. Agnes (my patron saint!)

January 24th – regular in building classes grades Pre-K through 8 and
Feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron of our diocese

January 31st – NO CLASSES GRADES PRE-K THROUGH 8TH
8th grade is done regular classes until Confirmation classes begin

LOOKING AHEAD:

February 7th – regular in building classes for Pre-K through 7th