

April 2011

Dear Religious Education Families,

Please read this letter carefully – there are several important items and changes of which you should be aware. As always, please contact me any time if you have questions or concerns. **Early Bird deadline for \$5/child discount is June 1.**

- **Options for Religious education:** You will notice that there is a column on the form to note which program option you are choosing. Options are the **Family Program** which involves one Adult Education meeting monthly (required) and one monthly Community meeting, usually held after a Sunday Mass. Two lessons are taught at home each month. The **Sunday Program** option involves classroom learning with volunteer catechists (teachers) held Sunday mornings from 10:45-11:45 AM at St. Joseph School. If you want more information about either option, please check our website at www.swnhcatholics.com or call or email me any time.

- **EDGE - for Sunday program grades 6-8:** If you have a child entering grades 6-8, our parish offers the EDGE program for religious education. We started EDGE last year for Middle school students and it was very well received. EDGE is held from 4:30-6 PM on Sundays.

- **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd:** New this year is Catechesis of the Good Shepherd level 2, for ages 6-9. If you have a child aged 3-6 or 6-9 and would like them to participate in this Montessori method religious education program, please indicate this on your registration form and contact Joy about the required parent orientation meeting. **Deadline to register for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is August 1.**

- **Confirmation Program:** In conformity with diocesan guidelines, our religious education program for high school students will be changing this year. The biggest change for all of you is that class will ONLY be offered from 4:30-6 PM on Sundays and the format will be changed, utilizing a team approach as we have done with the EDGE program for Middle School. The other change is that this program is open to ALL high school students, including those already confirmed. The format is very interactive and geared toward high school students, their learning needs and learning styles. Students who are in the final stages of preparation for Confirmation (usually, but not always in the spring of their 10th grade year) will have a special, 6 week program just prior to the sacrament which will take the place of their usual class.

- **Adult classes:** As we did last year, parents of children attending the Sunday Program will be asked to attend one adult education class, during the time in which you child is in class on Sunday morning, during the year. The schedule for the adult classes (based on your child's grade level) will be indicated on the 2011-2012 Religious Education Calendar, which you will receive in August.

- **Finally, just a word on Mass attendance.** Many of you attend weekend Masses faithfully, but many do not. It is a precept of the Church that Catholics attend Mass on Sundays (or Saturday vigil) and Holy Days of Obligation. Religious education classes on a weekly basis without practice of the faith and follow-up at home will not be sufficient to help your child develop a relationship with God

and teach him/her the faith. If you haven't been coming to Mass, please come back. If you have issues or questions that are keeping you away, please let us know – maybe we can help. Please feel free to call or email me or one of the priests any time.

Peace in Christ,

Joy Davis, DRE 352-2861, stbernardyouth@myfairpoint.net