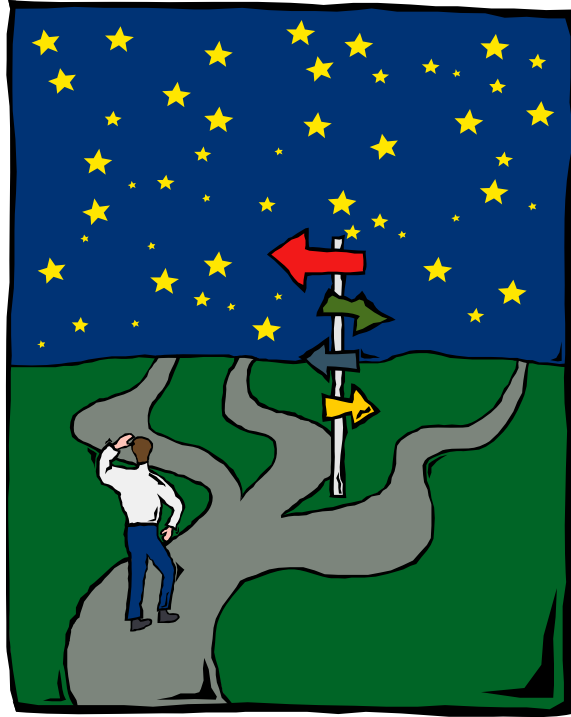


ST. WALTER PARISH



CONFIRMATION PROGRAM LEVEL ONE 2007-2008

FAMILY HANDBOOK & REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To report absences:

Before classes	630-539-3553
During classes	630-529-1721
Parish Center	630-894-5880

www.stwalterchurch.com

LEVEL ONE: PRE-CONFIRMATION

Students entering the first year of the Confirmation Program are expected to complete the following requirements. Outstanding requirements must be completed in the second year. Failure to do so will result in a delay of reception of the sacrament by one year.

- **Eight two-hour workshops, usually held during the last week of the month.**

Two Being Catholic workshops

Creed. Students will learn how a creed is a public statement about life. Students will explore how a creed is developed, and learn the major tenets of the Apostle's Creed.

Mary and the Saints. Devotions to Mary and the saints are distinctive Catholic traditions. Students will learn the history of the saints, and develop an understanding of the canonization process.

Eucharist. The Eucharist is the center of the Catholic Faith. Students will explore the importance of the Incarnation and how the Eucharist can become a focus for daily living.

Sacraments. The sacraments are celebrations of our relationship with God, through actions and words. Students will discover insights to these encounters, and learn how to integrate them into daily life.

Two Lifestyles workshops

Teen Esteem. Students will learn dimensions about their own personalities, and discern the direction of their potential.

Choosing Wisely. Decisions can have irreversible consequences. Students will learn how certain behaviors can prevent these consequences, especially when dealing with sexuality.

Creating a Just Society. Pope Paul VI said, "If you want peace, work for justice". Students will study the Church's stance on basic human rights, and develop a personal code of ethics.

Stewards of God's Creation: Bioethics. . Students will explore bioethical issues within the Catholic context, and begin to define a personal code of ethics.

Two Prayer workshops

Advent. Students will explore the various dimensions of the Advent Season and its spiritual journey.

Discovering My Personal Prayer. Students will explore how music has served as a medium for prayer. Students will also experience meditation as an ancient Catholic prayer form.

Exploring Sacred Spaces. Students will explore how art and architecture have played an essential role in understanding God in the human experience. This overview focuses on various church architectures.

The Lenten Journey. Lent is a season full of various traditions and practices. Students will delve into the Lenten spirituality, and develop a personal appreciation for the season as well as the Easter Season.

Why Catholics Worship this Way. The Catholic Mass is filled with rituals and traditions. Students will explore dimensions of the Mass, how it developed, and its unique aspects.

Two Scripture workshops (Bibles required for workshops)

Jesus the Storyteller. Jesus used parables to teach the Good News. Students will learn some facts behind certain parables as well as act them out.

Paul. Paul's endeavors set the foundations for the early Christian Church. Students will befriend Paul, the man and *Apostle of the Gentiles*.

Revelations and the Final Days. Students will study the Book of Revelation, and learn how certain Christians, as well as Catholics, interpret the end of the world.

Scripture Sketches. Students will make connections between Catholic values and the Scriptures. From this point, students will develop a medium to communicate certain values in the current society.

- **Pre-Confirmation Rally Day (December 9, 2007)**
This afternoon event begins with 12 noon Mass. Afterwards, students will participate in a rally, located on the parish campus. Those not in attendance will be required to attend the all-day diocesan rally.
- **Sponsors.** Sponsors will be chosen during the first year of the Confirmation Program. See appendix 1.

REGISTRATION. Unless specified, each workshop is limited to 16 students. Registration will be honored on a first come, first serve basis. Schedules will be sent in early August.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS. Parent volunteers are required in each workshop. Parents may request a specific workshop or leave it to the discretion of the staff. Parents are notified of their assignments in August.

CURRICULUM. The Director approves all workshops and handouts. The text, Catholic Youth Handbook, is used in Level One. Bibles, given in sixth grade, are also used.

LEVEL TWO: CONFIRMATION

There will be an orientation meeting to explain the requirements for Level II. The following is an overview.

- **Independent Christian Service**
- **Workshops** Christian Service- One workshop plus the actual service project
Rite of Confirmation Workshop Series (5 sequential workshops)
- **Retreat.** Candidates are required to participate in a Confirmation retreat.
- **Reconciliation.** Candidates are required to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

- **Tardiness (beyond five minutes) warrants nonparticipation.**
- **Early dismissal will not be allowed.**
- Failure to report to a workshop requires the parent to request a makeup day. The School of Religion will assign the student, based on workshop availability.

CODE OF BEHAVIOR. Students are expected to behave in a Christian manner rooted in respect. A student:

- Is expected to respect others, including adults. Inappropriate words and actions will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not restricted to, foul language, bullying, harassment, fighting, threats, disobedience of instructions, or disruptive behavior.
- Will not be allowed to bring in food or drink unless approved by the director.
- Will dress in modest attire appropriate for religious instruction, and will not create a distraction.
- Will respect the parish property, and not vandalize any aspect of the property.
- Will not bring drugs, alcohol, or weapons on the premises. Appropriate legal action will be taken.
- Will not bring entertainment devices or cell phones into the classroom. Cell phone access must be petitioned by the parent to the director, and used solely for the purpose of parent communication.

We reserve the right to inspect a person's personal property when there is reasonable belief that the individual is violating the rules or concealing contraband. In cases where this code is violated, the catechist will give the student a **SINGLE** verbal warning. Afterwards, the student will be dismissed, and be required to make up the workshop.

COMMUNICATION. To assure effective communication, the following forms of media will be used.

- Telephone access to the director, 630-894-5880.
- E-mail access to the director, kenortega@sbcglobal.net
- Website access to program events, www.stwalterchurch.com
- Sacramental preparation letters and reminder cards

PARENTAL ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS. The School of Religion abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment, namely that both parents have access to the child's records, though physical access to the child is determined by the court decree. Divorced/separated parents must file a **Court Certified Copy of the Custody** section of the divorce decree or separation agreement with the School of Religion office.

CLASS CANCELLATION. In the event that classes are canceled due to weather, an announcement will be made on the following stations: WGN/720 AM or WBBM/780 AM. A listing of closing can also be found on the website, www.Emergencyclosings.com/. Also, call the School of Religion absentee line, 630-539-3553.

EMERGENCY PREPARATION. Procedures for various emergency drills are established.

- Awareness of tornado safety procedures will be presented to students.
- Adults will be instructed on procedures concerning intruder alert and on-site disruptions.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE. In the case of an unforeseen crisis during class sessions, a lockdown procedure will be initiated to assure student safety.

In such a situation, parents must report to the main office where the director will instruct them on the procedure for picking up their children. Full parent cooperation is expected.

HEALTH CONCERNS AND MEDICATION. Health concerns should be brought to the attention of the School of Religion during registration. Parents/ guardians should know that:

1. A catechist **may not** administer medication.
2. No student is allowed to take any medication (including aspirin) into the classroom. Medication should be left at the main office.
3. A confidential appointment with the director should be made to discuss health concerns.

SPECIAL NEEDS. In accordance with canon law, no child is denied religious education. With sufficient collaboration with the parent or guardian, and the director, special needs students may participate in the program. Constant assessment will assure the positive experience for all involved. In certain situations, alternatives to the workshop model may be suggested.

CHILD ABUSE. In accordance with diocesan policy, all adults ministering to minors are "mandated", or required, by state law to report evidence of reasonable suspicion of abuse and/or neglect of a minor to the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services. Catechists and classroom aides shall be required annually to sign the state form acknowledging they are aware of their status as mandated reporters. The signed copy is to be kept on file in the parish.

OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES AND PERMISSION FORMS. On occasion students may attend one of the following events off the parish premises: Diocesan events Parish-sponsored service projects. These activities will be designated as **parish-sponsored events**. The parish will not recognize other gatherings by parents, catechists, or students. The parish is not liable for any accidents that may occur on non parish-sponsored events.

Whenever minors are participating in a parish-sponsored activity that requires transportation off parish property, a Diocesan permission form must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian of the minor. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

TRANSPORTING MINORS. Driving young people in a personal vehicle with drivers other than their own parents is strongly discouraged. For this reason, unless otherwise arranged, catechists **may not** drive students home or to other events.