

St. Matthias P.S.R. Handbook

2009-2010

Reference Guide for Religious Education Programs and Requirements

Primary Catechists:

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd: 3 to 6 Atrium: Michelle Lonero

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd: 6 to 9 Atrium: Maria Wood

St. Matthias Active Religious Training (S.M.A.R.T.)

S.M.A.R.T. Level I grade 4: Carmella Rosati

S.M.A.R.T. Level I Grade 5: Michael Norris

S.M.A.R.T. Level I Grade 6: Patty Rains

S.M.A.R.T. Level II Grade 7-9 Louise Miller/Dianne Laheta

Sacramental Preparation- First Reconciliation and First Eucharist: Janet Rymut

Sacramental Preparation- Confirmation: Nadine Grimm, Dianne Laheta, Patti Tomasello

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.) Dianne Laheta

Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (R.C.I.C.) Dianne Laheta

Adult Catholic Education (A.C.E.) Dianne Laheta

Vacation Bible School (V.B.S.) Dianne Laheta

Dear St. Matthias Family,

This handbook has been designed to give you a general overview of the many catechetical programs that St. Matthias has to offer to you and your family. Please keep this handbook as a reference tool for your family to use when selecting formal faith formation programs here at St. Matthias.

We believe that Christian formation is the ministry which enables ALL people to experience the love and faith of Jesus Christ so that they might make that faith their own. As a stewardship community we incorporate what we have learned into our daily lives by spending time in prayer, caring for the resources God has blessed us with, and reaching out to those who are in need.

The mission of the St. Matthias Religious Education Office is to provide children and adults with sound Catholic teachings designed to empower them into a life of discipleship by proclaiming the message of the Gospel through word and deed in our world. This dynamic process involves youth, adolescents, and adults. It is a continuous experience of God's love begun, primarily and most importantly, in the Christian family and supported by a more formal catechetical program. The formal education is intended to continue to build on and nurture the firm foundation parents have rooted in their family life.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION is a lifelong process aimed at:

conversion

growth in faith

service to others

Our St. Matthias Mission Statement reflects the four tasks of catechesis which result in evangelization and Christian stewardship:

1. *community building -*

"provide for the spiritual growth and development of our community"

2. *proclaiming the Christian message-*

"Proclaiming the message of the Risen Lord"

3. *leading people to full and active participation in the Church-*

"sharing liturgies, ministries and responsibilities"

4. *motivating people to serve others-*

"called to be disciples of Christ, reach out with a loving and caring spirit"

Our staff strives to provide a caring, loving and enthusiastic atmosphere whereby children and adults can experience and share in God's love. Participants will be involved in a variety of endeavors that broaden and deepen their Christian faith. The text and learning resources invite the participant to respond to all of life's experiences through liturgy, prayer, music, art and drama.

Thank you for sharing your time with us. Each and every person is truly a gift.

In Jesus' love,

St. Matthias Religious Education Staff

Catechetical Leader: Dianne Laheta 440-888-8220

FAITH FORMATION OPTIONS

We offer three options for your child to participate in faith formation:

Option One: The first option for ages 3 yrs to 9 yrs is **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**

Option Two: A second option is the **SMART Program (St. Matthias Active Religious Training)** level I for grades 4 ó 6; level II for grades 7 ó 9.

Option Three: The third option is **Family Home Schooling**.

All three options include attendance at weekly Mass, parent participation, participation in St. Matthias service projects and other activities throughout the entire year. In compliance with guidelines set by the Diocese of Cleveland Office of Catechetical Services all three options will be supplemented with the Faith First Legacy Edition book and require the completion of weekly online assessments.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is an approach to the religious formation of the child. It is rooted in Sacred Scripture, liturgy, and the educational philosophy and method of Maria Montessori. Each week the children gather in a room prepared for them called an "atrium." This specially prepared space contains many materials that the children can work with and use. For example, there is an area in the room set aside for work with the articles of the Mass: a smaller than child-size model altar, chalice, paten, lectionary, sacramentary, tabernacle, chasubles, among other articles. Another area is dedicated to the sacrament of baptism, another has dioramas depicting key events in the life of Jesus (the Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, the Presentation in the Temple, the visit of the magi, and the Last Supper), yet another for a few select parables, and a prayer table is set up in an area where the children gather to pray.

This particular type of religious experience is well suited to the needs and capacities of the young child.

St. Matthias has two atriums. The upper room is dedicated to children 3 to 6 years of age. The classroom area is dedicated to children 6 to 9 years of age. **Children enrolled in the 6-9 atrium will be required to complete weekly online assessments at www.faithfirst.com Instructions can be found under the S.M.A.R.T. program information on the following page.**

This program is held on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. beginning in September and concluding in May. It is highly recommended that children enroll in the program at age 3. **Children must have a minimum of 2 years atrium experience to enroll in the 6 to 9 year old program. ONLY CHILDREN NEW TO ST. MATTHIAS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ENROLL IN THE 6 TO 9 PROGRAM WITHOUT PRIOR ATRIUM EXPERIENCE** Parents registering their children for CGS will be required to attend 3 sessions per year to assist the permanent catechist.

Fee for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd: \$40.00 one child \$60.00 two or more children

St. Matthias Active Religious Training (S.M.A.R.T)

The SMART program is a more traditional religious education program for children in grades 4-8. Level I is designed for children in grades 4-6 and is modeled after the vacation bible school approach. Children are grouped by grade level for approximately 15 minutes at various stations learning about their faith. Station 1: the children learn from the Faith First legacy edition book with their catechist. Station 2: the children will participate in a game related to the Faith First lesson. Station 3: the children create a take home craft or participate in a church service project related to the Faith First lesson. Station 4: the children enjoy a snack or other activity related to the Faith First lesson. The children will be accompanied by their lead catechist to each station. Children enrolled in SMART level I will be required to complete a weekly online assessment at www.faithfirst.com. SMART II is designed for children in grades 7 ó 9. This program is a bible based program allowing students to read the bible and discuss passages with their peers. For more information regarding the materials used for SMART level II please visit www.AscensionPress.com. and search for the T3 The Teen Timeline series.

Parents registering their children for the SMART program are required to attend 4 sessions per year to assist the permanent catechist. No experience or advance preparation is necessary. All materials and instructions will be provided. Your participation will guarantee that the child to adult ratio will provide for safe and orderly environment for all children.

This program meets every Monday beginning October 5, 2009

Level I 6:00-7:15 p.m. (grades 4-6)

Level II 7:15-8:30 p.m. (grades 7-9)

The fee for the SMART program is: \$60.00 one child

\$80.00 two children

\$100.00 three or more children

Online Assessment instructions:

Log onto the internet and enter www.faithfirst.com in the address bar.

In the right hand column under **Highlights** click on **Chapter Review**

Choose Legacy Edition

Choose your child's grade

Choose the corresponding chapter. (we will provide you with this information at the parent meeting)

Choose GO and complete the review.

When you have completed the review email the results to dilaheta@rocketmail.com.

Please indicate on the registration form if you **do not** have internet access so we can provide you with a hard copy.

Attention: Hard copies of the online assessments will be provided for families that do not have internet access.

S.M.A.R.T. Dates 2009/2010 Level I 6:00-7:15 p.m. Level II 7:15-8:30 p.m.

Wed. Sept 30, 2009 Parent and Student prayer service and information meeting 7:00 p.m. in the church.

Oct 5, 2009 Class 1	Nov 23, 2009 Class 8	Jan 11, 2010 Class 13	March 15, 2010 Class 20
Oct 12, 2009 Class 2	Nov 30, 2009 Class 9	Jan 25, 2010 Class 14	March 22, 2010 Class 21
Oct 19, 2009 Class 3	Dec 7, 2009 Class 10	Feb 1, 2010 Class 15	March 29, 2010 Class 22
Oct 26, 2009 Class 4	Tuesday Dec 8, 2009 Attend Mass: Feast Day Immaculate Conception	Feb 8, 2010 Class 16	April 12, 2010 Class 23
Nov 5, 2009 Class 5	Dec 14, 2009 Class 11	Feb 22, 2010 Class 17	April 19, 2010 Class 24
Nov 6, 2009 Class 6	Dec 21, 2009 Christmas Break No Class	March 1, 2010 Class 18	April 26, 2010 Class 25
Nov 16, 2009 Class 7	Jan 4, 2010 Class 12	March 8, 2010 Class 19	May 3, 2010 End of year party.

FAMILY HOME SCHOOLING

Families participating in this option will be given a Faith First Legacy edition book to use with their children. Families will be required to visit www.faithfirst.com on a weekly basis and complete the online chapter review. Results of the review should be e-mailed to dilaheta@rocketmail.com. See Online Assessment instructions under the SMART description on the previous page.

Family Home Schooling is for families who would like to take responsibility for presenting faith formation to their own child(ren). St. Matthias will provide the textbooks to assist parents in their efforts.

If this is a sacramental year for your child(ren), Family Home Schooling preparation will fulfill the ðPSRö portion of the faith formation requirement, but there will be additional requirements for the Sacrament. Additional information on sacramental preparation is addressed later in this handbook.

Registration for Family Home Schooling is required so we can order the appropriate number of textbooks. Families must be signed up prior to the *fall meeting* (September 30th 7:00 p.m.) when textbooks will be distributed. Only new parishioners will be admitted into the program after this meeting.

The Diocese of Cleveland's Office of Catholic Education Home Schooling Policy requires parents to inform the Pastor of the church in writing of their intent to assume responsibility for religious instruction in the Catholic Faith. Our Pastor is charged with the responsibility of insuring that all children are offered an opportunity to participate in Religious Education. This letter substantiates that you, as a parent, are assuming this responsibility on the behalf of your child(ren). The letter should include the names of the child(ren) that will be registered in Family Home Schooling. Letters must be attached to the registration forms when returned to St. Matthias Church. The office will forward these letters to our pastor.

Families opting for Family Home Schooling are to attend a mandatory information meeting at the beginning of the school year. At this meeting more details will be given about the goals and format of the program, and textbooks will be distributed.

Fee for Family Home Schooling: \$45.00 for the first child in the program, and \$20.00 for each child thereafter. This fee includes the gospel supplements that parents will be completing weekly with their children.

Sacramental Preparation

First Reconciliation/First Eucharist

Preparation for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist will take place on Monday evenings from 6 to 7:15p.m. Children enrolling in the First Reconciliation/First Eucharist preparation sessions **must have received a minimum of two years** of catechesis in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program, Generations of Faith, SMART, Family Home Schooling or a cluster parish PSR program. Registration forms will be sent out in the middle of August to children that meet these requirements based on our records. Please note that children will not be automatically accepted into this program without meeting the above requirements unless they can pass a written assessment. The assessment will require that the child knows information basic to the catholic faith such as the Sign of the Cross, the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the liturgical seasons and their corresponding colors, etc.

Fee for First Reconciliation/First Eucharist Preparation: \$40.00 per child

First Reconciliation Dates	October 5, 2009	October 12, 2009	October 19, 2009	October 26, 2009	November 2, 2009	Retreat Day November 8, 2009	November 9, 2009
First Eucharist Dates	February 1, 2010	February 8, 2010	February 22, 2010	March 1, 2010	March 8, 2010	April 18, 2010 Retreat Day	April 19, 2010 Extended Class with practice

First Reconciliation Celebration: Monday November 16, 2009 7:30 p.m.

First Eucharist Celebration: Saturday April 24, 2010 4:00 p.m.

Confirmation

Preparation sessions for the sacrament of Confirmation are held on Sunday afternoon beginning in January from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Students in ninth grade or older may enroll in these preparation sessions. Students enrolling for confirmation preparation must have a **minimum of 7 years** of catechesis in a combination of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Generations of Faith, SMART, Youth Alive or a cluster parish PSR program; and must be **currently enrolled in the SMART level II** program. Registration packets and a complete schedule of important dates will be sent in August to students that meet these requirements according to our records. **Confirmation Mass Friday April 30, 2010 7:00 p.m. celebrated by Bishop Lennon.**

Fee for Confirmation preparation: \$50.00

Prep session Dates	January 24, 2010 12:30-2:30	January 31, 2010 12:30-2:30	February 28, 2010 12:30-2:30	March 19-21, 2010 Youth Renewal	March 28, 2010 12:30-2:30	April 25, 2010 Retreat Day w sponsor 12:30-4:00p.m.
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LITURGICAL PARTICIPATION:

The Liturgy (Eucharist/Mass) is the center and foundation of our Catholic life according to Vatican II. Therefore, it is important that students participate in weekly worship with the parish community as well as in Holy Days of Celebration.

STUDENT CONDUCT:

The following is expected of all students attending Catechesis of the Good Shepherd or SMART at St. Matthias:

Students should be dropped off 5 minutes prior to their class starting.

Students are responsible for bringing their textbooks and pencils to class each week unless otherwise directed by the catechist.

Students are expected to cooperate with classmates and staff, following directives established for the well being and safety of all in the St. Matthias PSR program.

Parents will be contacted if a student is consistently uncooperative with these directives.

Chewing gum and eating candy during class are not permitted unless permission is given by the catechist in charge.

Students are expected to be courteous to others, to speak and act in a Christian manner, and to be respectful of the classroom and all St. Matthias property.

Students should not be in their classroom area unsupervised. If the teacher is not in the classroom area, parents are asked to please remain with them until a catechist arrives.

Students are to request permission of the catechist to leave the classroom area for any reason. (**Parents** please have your children use the bathroom at home prior to leaving for C.G.S or SMART instruction).

Children must be picked up promptly.

Unfortunately, we have had to implement the “**Three Strikes—you’re in**” policy for uncooperative students. When a student acts in an inappropriate manner, the catechist will contact Dianne Laheta who will be in touch with you shortly to discuss your child’s actions. In the event this occurs 3 times in one year the parent will be required to attend the remainder of the sessions with their child.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

If Parma, North Royalton or Brecksville does not have school on a particular day because of a holiday or snow day, there will be no classes held that day.

EMERGENCY CANCELLATION:

Should the need arise to cancel PSR, we will broadcast that information on local radio and TV (channels 3, 5 and 8). If applicable, we will also make an attempt to e-mail each family to notify them that PSR has been cancelled.

FEES:

No family will be turned away because of an inability to pay fees. In the event of financial difficulty, please contact the Religious Education Office.

CATECHISTS & AIDES:

Our catechists and aides are volunteers who give of themselves freely and devote their time to our PSR program because of their love of children and desire to pass on their faith. All catechists are fingerprinted, and have taken a Virtus training course on protecting God's children. They have also read the Diocesan Policies for the Safety of Children and the Code of Conduct in Ministry. Would you please consider being part of our catechetical team?

SCHEDULE:

Advance copies of our schedule for the upcoming Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and SMART will be available through our website. Our website is: www.stmatthiaschuch.org

DROP-OFF AND PICKUP:

Parents must park and walk their child(ren) into the building each day for CGS and SMART. Parents should pick up SMART students in the gathering area.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING ALLOWED ALONG THE SIDEWALK AT
DISMISSAL. YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY IS OUR FIRST CONCERN!**

CARPOOL INFORMATION:

If you choose to make carpool arrangements, please know that it is your responsibility to ensure the safety of your child(ren). Please talk with your child(ren) about what family friend or neighbor has permission to take them home. Please notify your child's catechist in writing in the event your child will not be picked up by you. Children must be picked up promptly at the end of classes.

PSR TEXTBOOKS:

Faith First Legacy Edition, published by RCL Publishing, is the textbook used by all three of our catechetical programs 1 through Grade 6. RCL has an excellent web site; check it out at www.FaithFirst.com

Faith First textbooks were chosen by the Catholic Press Association as First Place winners for all textbook series. Please take time to review lessons with your child/ren. There is a wealth of knowledge provided in each chapter. In addition, each chapter has a **“With My Family”** section to be completed at home. **Please assist your child with this section weekly.** Doing this makes a statement that faith and church are important in your life. It will then become important to them.

OTHER FORMATION PROGRAMS

A.C.E.:

A.C.E. Adult Catholic Education: This program is designed for adults desiring a deeper understanding of our Catholic Faith and Traditions. Topics such as Church History, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and Sacred Scripture will be covered this year. The A.C.E. program is a collaborative effort of our parish cluster. Presentations are held at various locations within our cluster. Check the bulletin or www.stmatthiaschurch.org for a full schedule with times and locations.

RCIA:

The **Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.)** is for non-Catholics who wish to know more about the Catholic faith, or for baptized Catholics who never completed their sacraments of initiation (Confirmation and Eucharist). The journey involves learning about the teachings and traditions of the Church as well as sharing in its rituals, which outwardly express the community's blessing, joy and support. RCIA is active all year round. Joining RCIA is not an obligation to become Catholic; however, those who desire may be fully initiated as Roman Catholics at the Easter Vigil Mass. TO INQUIRE, call Dianne Laheta 440-888-8220.

Bible Study:

There are several Bible study groups that meet throughout the year. Contact Dianne Laheta for times and places.

Vacation Bible School:

St. Matthias offers a Vacation Bible School program each summer. Children participating in this program must be going into kindergarten, up to 10 yrs. old. VBS will be scheduled for a week in June. Look for announcements in the bulletin. Space is limited; registrations are accepted on a first come, first served basis.

Altar Servers:

Boys and girls in 3rd grade or older are invited to sign up for training sessions to become altar servers. Watch the Sunday bulletin for announcements for the training sessions, or call the parish office at (440) 888-8220 for information. Children should have received their First Eucharist prior to signing up for training sessions.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Registration

Student Name _____

Place of birth _____ Year _____ Month _____ Day _____

Name of Father _____ Religion _____

Name of Mother _____ Religion _____

Home Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone/Pager _____ email address _____

Enrolling student in the 3-6 _____ program Sundays in the upper room 9a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Grades pre school thru K

Enrolling student in the 6-9 _____ program Sundays in the classrooms 9a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Grades 1 through 4.

School Attending _____ school grade fall 09 _____

Sacramental Record

	Baptism	First Holy Communion	Confirmation
Church			
City			
Date			

Emergency Contact Name _____ Relationship _____

Phone number _____

Allergies _____ Medications _____

Learning disabilities or special needs of student _____

I (We) understand that my child must abide by the rules set by the volunteer teachers and administrators of St. Matthias Church catechetical programs.

Signature _____

Fee: \$40.00 per student/\$60.00 per family. Make checks payable to St. Matthias Youth Ministries

Deadline for registration August 15, 2009 Classes are limited to 25 students for each age group.

Our family **does not** have internet access _____

S.M.A.R.T. Level I Registration

Catechesis for 4th, 5th, 6th grades

Student Name _____

Place of birth _____ Year _____ Month _____ Date _____

Name of Father _____ Religion _____

Name of Mother _____ Religion _____

Home Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone/Pager _____

Parent's e-mail _____

School Attending _____ school grade fall 09 _____

Sacramental Record

	Baptism	First Holy Communion	Confirmation
Church			
City			
Date			

Emergency Contact Name _____ Relationship _____

Phone number _____

Allergies _____ Medications _____

Learning disabilities or special needs of student _____

I (We) understand that my child must abide by the rules set by the volunteer teachers and administrators of St. Matthias Church catechetical programs.

Signature _____

Fee: \$60.00. one child, \$80.00 two children, \$100.00 3 or more children

Make checks payable to St. Matthias Youth Ministries

***Parent /Student meeting September 30th @ 7:00 p.m. in the church.

Deadline for registration is Monday August 31, 2009

Our Family **does not** have internet access _____

S.M.A.R.T. Level II Registration

Catechesis for 7th, 8th, 9th grades

Student Name _____

Place of birth _____ Year _____ Month _____ Date _____

Name of Father _____ Religion _____

Name of Mother _____ Religion _____

Home Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone/Pager _____

Parent's e-mail _____

School Attending _____ school grade fall 09 _____

Sacramental Record

	Baptism	First Holy Communion	Confirmation
Church			
City			
Date			

Emergency Contact Name _____ Relationship _____

Phone number _____

Allergies _____ Medications _____

Learning disabilities or special needs of student _____

I (We) understand that my child must abide by the rules set by the volunteer teachers and administrators of St. Matthias Church catechetical programs.

Signature _____

Fee: \$60.00 one child, \$80.00 two children, \$100.00 three or more children

Make checks payable to St. Matthias Youth Ministries

****Parent /Student meeting September 30th @ 7:00 p.m. in the church.

Deadline for registration is Monday August 31, 2009

Our family **does not** have internet access _____

Family Home Schooling

Dear Fr. Ray,

We have decided that we would like to take responsibility for the formal religious education of child(ren). We agree to use the resources provided to us by the St. Matthias Office of Religious Education and to complete all necessary assessments and assignments in a timely manner. We further understand that our child(ren) should attend additional sacramental preparation programs during sacramental years.

Parents Names: _____

Child's Name: _____ Child's Age _____ Child's Grade _____

Child's Name: _____ Child's Age _____ Child's Grade _____

Child's Name: _____ Child's Age _____ Child's Grade _____

Child's Name: _____ Child's Age _____ Child's Grade _____

Our family **does not** have internet access _____

Parent Signature _____

Fee \$45.00 one child, \$20.00 for each additional child. Make checks payable to St. Matthias Youth Ministries.

Deadline for F.H.S. is August 31, 2009

Sacramental Preparation Registration

First Reconciliation/First Eucharist/Confirmation

Family Name: _____

Father's Name: _____ Religion _____

Mother's (Maiden)Name _____ Religion _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Child's Full Name: _____

Grade: _____ School Attending _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Date of Baptism: _____

Church: _____

God Parents: _____

My child has been receiving religious education through the:

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program _____

Generations of Faith _____ Youth Alive (S.M.A.R.T.) _____

Family Home School _____ Other: _____

Please provide a copy of your child's baptismal certificate if they were not baptized at St. Matthias.

Fee: First Reconciliation/First Eucharist: \$40.00

Confirmation: \$50.00

Make checks payable to St. Matthias Youth Ministries

Parent Assistant Form

Parent's Name _____

Child's Name _____

Program I would like to assist with:

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd 3 to 6 _____

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd 6 to 9 _____

S.M.A.R.T. Level I _____

S.M.A.R.T. Level II _____

Dates Available _____

An email reminder will be sent one week prior to your available dates.

A calendar of all catechetical programs will be available at the end of August.