

A. The Mission and Ministry of Catechesis

1. The Aim of Catechesis: “Catechesis aims to bring about in the believer an ever more mature faith in Jesus Christ, a deeper knowledge and love of his person and message, and a firm commitment to follow him.” (NDC 19. A)
2. Ministry Focus: The six tasks of catechesis (NDC 20) are to promote knowledge of the faith, liturgical catechesis, moral formation, prayer, community life, and missionary initiative.

B. Catechetical Programs

1. We use the Diocesan Curriculum Guidelines
2. Parish Curriculum—A weekly program with theme and goals for each age level
3. Sacramental Preparation
 - Immediate preparation for First Reception of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and First Reception of the Eucharist is in the second grade Confirmation Preparation – 2 year program, Level 1 & Level 2 admitting students in grades 7 and above
 - RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults)
 - For adults – 14 yrs. and older
 - For children – done within the program
4. Faith Formation Opportunities (Possible Options Include)
 - Adult Bible study, RCIA, GIFT programs, etc
 - Catechist Formation classes to achieve certification
 - Vicariate wide programs offered through the year

C. Support and Services for Catechists

1. Resources available in the Education Center: videos, media equipment, enrichment material’s for you and your students, Bibles, classroom supplies, holy objects, Catechist magazine
2. Tuition is waived for children of catechists only.
3. A supply closet is available for most of your needs. Consult the office first before you make your own purchases seeking reimbursement.
4. Catechist formation—fees are paid by the parish. Please attend formation classes in our own vicariate whenever possible for cost purposes.
5. Substitutes will be provided for any circumstances.
6. We maintain an open door policy to aid you with any needs or concerns you may have.

D. Code of Conduct for Volunteers

The resource is the *Code of Pastoral Conduct* For Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Ministers, Administrators, Staff and Volunteers, pp. 14-15. (www.aodonline.org)

E. Safety Policies

1. Arrival/Dismissal Procedures: Catechists must be at St. André Bessette Education Center by 5:45pm and stay until the last child from their class is picked up.
2. First Aid will be administered by the office.
3. Dispensing Medications: no medicines, including over-the-counter meds, are to be given to a child (under 18 yrs.)
4. Food/Snacks - be concerned about allergies (**no peanut products**)
5. Fire/Weather/Bomb practice drills will be performed by Nov. 1st (procedures are posted in every classroom)
6. Lock Down (in event of an intruder, power failure, etc.), please follow directions which are posted in every classroom

F. Expectations of Catechists:

1. Lesson Planning and preparation per syllabus for each session: please come prepared and knowledgeable of the material you will be covering and adhere to the syllabus schedule.
2. Chapters are to go home with the child every week (grades K-8)
3. The “Circle of Grace” shall be taught by March in each classroom and must be noted on the attendance sheet to indicate all children present. The Circle of Grace folder & evaluation sheet **must be completed & turned in to the office after completion.**
4. Catechist Formation: all catechists should strive to be certified according to the Archdiocesan Catechist Certification by attending at least 2 sessions per semester until completing Full Certification. Certified catechists should seek enrichment opportunities yearly.
5. Participation in Protecting God’s Children™: **You must attend this class within six months of hire or volunteer assignment date for anyone who may have contact with children.**
6. Criminal Background Check: Anyone who may have contact with children, the elderly or persons with disabilities **must submit to a background check before starting work or a volunteer assignment.**
7. Absence: Please notify the rel. ed. office and leave the catechist guide for the substitute if you know you are going to be absent.
8. The Classroom/Attendance Folder must remain in the Ed. Center and returned after each class session.

9. Discipline/Behavior Policies:
- First offense – Verbal consultation with child outside of the classroom
 - Second offense – Verbal consultation with child, teacher and DRE
 - Third offense – Child will be sent to the office to notify home.
 - Reporting suspected abuse—Current law requires school personnel and clergy to report suspected abuse. Catechetical personnel, whether paid or volunteer, may report suspected abuse, but are not required by law to do so. However, as persons of faith, we have a moral obligation to report suspected abuse.

G. Policies and Procedures

- Policy about guests attending religious formation sessions: please alert the office of guests not registered in the program.
- YOU MUST get prior approval by the DRE for any communication sent to parents/guardians.
- Food and snacks policy: be aware of allergies, all rooms must be cleaned up before you leave; no open food is to be left in the room. **WE ARE A PEANUT FREE PROGRAM.**
- Plans for substitute catechists: please give ample notice if possible to the office if you will need a substitute. Your substitute will follow the syllabus for that week's lesson.
- Pick up procedures: Kindergarten- picked up from the Classroom; Grade 1- escorted to the front door for pickup by parent, Grade 2 as well as all other escorted to the front door.
- Comply with child pickup form to which child may be released to.
- Early dismissal policy: Letter from a parent/guardian
- Cancellation of classes: we will comply with Ecorse schools.
- Respect for classroom space: Leave room clean, books neatly stacked, candles extinguished, off (if applicable), lights off, etc.
- First aid policies: Go thru the office for bandages, meds, etc.
- Video/Photographing Utilization (If photos will be published and names used, parental permission is on file and must be checked.)

H. Directory:

St. André Bessette
4250 West Jefferson, Mi 48229
Office: 313-383-8514 ext 16
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday.-5-7:30

St. André Bessette CATECHIST HANDBOOK

Vera Rodriguez, DRE
Mary Vozniak, RCIA
Megan Mearnic, Office Manager



Let the children come to me Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing their little children to him [Jesus] that he might touch them, and the disciples scolded them for this. When Jesus noticed it, he was very angry and said, "Let the children come to me and don't stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he took the children in his arms and laying his hands on them, blessed them.