

FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET, 2023-24

[Families please keep this sheet as a reference throughout the coming year.]

Dates are subject to change. Watch the parish bulletins each week for any changes.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BEGINS WITH CLASSES WED., SEPT. 13.

Note: Parents of Grade 11 students are also asked to attend the September 13 class to hear Confirmation requirements.

****Class Times, Drop Off/Pick Up:**

Grades 1-5, 5:30PM-6:45PM:

Drop children off under the canopy in front of church or at the sidewalk leading to the north hall door. (The west hall door remains locked.) You can also walk your children into the hall if you prefer. **Please do not drop off children before 5:15PM, as adult supervision may not be available until that time.**

For pick up, most cars line up and stop under the canopy one at a time for the children. We know picking them up this way takes extra time. However, it is much safer than having the children run through the parking lot in between cars. You can also park your vehicle in the big parking lot and walk to the church entrance to pick your child up, if you prefer.

Grades 6-12, 7:00PM-8:10PM:

Drop off and pick up for Grades 6-12 can be along the front (north) side of the church or in the bigger parking lot area. (Reminder: West hall door is locked.) Please be watchful of students walking and running, especially when it is dark or slippery. Older students who drive themselves, please park behind the hall and enter through the single south door for class.

****Prerequisites:**

For Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist: Completion of Gr. 1 and 2 materials are required prior to reception of those Sacraments.

For Confirmation: Students must satisfactorily complete the earlier grades, participate in the Confirmation program, and be attending Mass regularly (weekly).

NOTE: Those in Grade 2 and Grades 11-12 are to be attending classes (not home-schooled) for these years when they are preparing to receive new Sacraments.

****Inclement Weather/Other Cancellations:**

If a class is cancelled:

1. Catechists will be notified and asked to call each of their students.
2. If school in Rib Lake is cancelled for bad weather that day, class will be automatically cancelled that evening.
3. Cancellation will be announced in Rib Lake elementary, middle and high schools if done while school is still in session that day.
4. Cancellation notice can be heard on WKEB/WIGM radio station in Medford (99.3 FM), and it will be posted on the Rib Lake Good Shepherd Faith Formation facebook page.
5. You can call the parish office (715-427-5259), the catechist or Mary Kauer, parish secretary (715-783-0132) to find out if class is cancelled or if you have concerns about your travel.

****Absences:**

Call the catechist or the parish office (715-427-5259) if your child will be gone from class. (You can always leave a message if no answer.) Acceptable absences include illness or emergency situations (students are not "excused" for going to other faith denomination events or other non-emergency events). If a student is frequently absent, the CRE will contact the family to draft an attendance plan.

****Parent Involvement:**

The witness you give to your children helps in forming a good spiritual foundation for them. When they see that Mass is important to you each week, they are more likely to have it become important in their lives. Our catechists are here to support families in the faith formation of their children. However, parents are their primary teachers from early on. At a child's baptism, parents promise to bring them up in the Catholic faith and teach them to become good Christians. Part of that commitment includes regular Mass attendance, praying with them daily, and instilling moral values in their lives.

****Reconciliation:**

Students of Grades 2-11 have two opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the religious education year.

****Masses During Faith Formation:**

You will note a few Masses scheduled during Religious Education on Wednesdays. Yes, that is considered their class, but please note the time of the Mass is probably different than their ordinary class time. Parents should attend those Masses with their children at Good Shepherd. A Youth Mass on Wednesday, September 20 will be held at Holy Rosary, Medford for Grades 6-12. A bus is scheduled to transport students to Medford. Bus will arrive at Good Shepherd 5:30 pm and leave Rib Lake at 5:45 that evening for this trip. A Parent Permission form is required for each student attending. Please have students return those completed forms at their first class on September 13. Return time to Good Shepherd is expected to be about 8:15 pm.

****Parent Meeting for Grade 11 Students:**

Parents with youth in Grade 11, please attend their first class on Wednesday, September 13 at 7 pm in the church. Students will be given a folder with a handbook, service hour sheet and other important information regarding the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. A lot of material will be covered that evening that you should be aware of.

****New This Year-Pet Blessing**

We do a Pet Blessing in early October, in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. For better participation, we are trying something new, and we need the help of you parents. The Pet Blessing will be Wednesday, October 4 at 6:45 pm on the church lawn (or under the canopy, if rain). Bring any pets you have, leashed or caged, for a blessing by our pastor. Students would still attend class that evening at their usual class times. Parents with children in the early session can bring any pets at 6:45 when they return to church to pick up their children. Parents with students in the later session, please bring your children at 6:45 with your pets. Then when students go to class about 7 pm, parents can take the pets home with them. Don't have a pet? We encourage you to still attend and enjoy (or have your grandparents bring their pets, if they have any)!

****Trunk or Treat**

Saturday, October 28, we offer Trunk or Treat after Mass. Kids can come to the 6:30 pm Mass in their Halloween costumes. Adults will offer treats from the trunks of their cars after that Mass. Kids can bring a friend too, because there are always plenty goodies!

****Grades 1-5 Christmas Pageant:**

Each year Grades 1-5 youth are involved in a Christmas Pageant. It will be held at the end of the Christmas Season, on the Epiphany of the Lord, on Sunday, January 7, 2024, following the 9:30 am Mass in the church. **Any parents who know their children will *not* be in the pageant on that date, please let their catechist know by early November, so they are not assigned a part!** Be sure to invite grandparents and friends to that Mass for this special event.

****Grade 2 Reconciliation:**

A First Reconciliation Retreat will be Wednesday, January 10, 2024, during regular class time in church. Parents are asked to attend with the children. The catechist will be providing parents with the steps to Reconciliation and a copy of the Act of Contrition for students. The date of First Reconciliation will be the following week, Wed., January 17, during their regular class time. The first half of that class will include a quick review of the steps to Reconciliation, and the sacrament will be administered following that time. Parents are encouraged to also go to confession that same evening. This shows the children how important the sacrament is to you.

****Grade 2 Retreat for Holy Communion:**

The First Communion Retreat will be held at Holy Rosary, Medford on Saturday, March 9, 2024. Both parents and students are asked to attend. This will include students from all four parishes. Stations are set up for activities and students will make candles that will be used at the Mass of their First Communion. Your catechist will remind you of this event when the time nears.

****Grade 2 First Holy Communion:**

First Communion will be the weekend of April 27-28. It still needs to be determined which Mass this sacrament will be offered at, for each of the four parishes. If it is not convenient for you to attend the Mass at Good Shepherd when it is scheduled, you do have the option to participate at one of the other Masses within our parish community that same weekend. Please inform your catechist at the Retreat on March 9, 2024 which parish you will attend for this Sacrament. If these dates do not work for you, your child can receive Holy Communion *individually* on another date at the Mass of your choice.

****Movie Night**

Wednesday, January 31, 2024 is set for Movie Night. It's a nice mid-season/winter break for all the students. Grades 6-11 will be bussed to the Broadway Theater in Medford to join with the other students from our four-parish community. Permission forms will be required for this. Watch for those as the time nears. Grades 1-5 will have a movie night at Good Shepherd that same day. This has become a big hit, since they can wear their PJ's and bring a small blanket or pillow to sit on.

****Easter Joy Baskets**

Given to people in need of "joy," last year's baskets were made in each classroom. Students selected the basket recipients in advance, and each student was asked to bring a few items to class to fill the baskets. We ask for parents who would be willing to deliver the basket on behalf of their class. Families can add their own specialties too, i.e., homemade bread, cookies, etc. Consider doing this! It is a great opportunity to put a smile on someone's face who is in need of joy. Watch for more information during the year.

**** Easter Triduum Services**

The Easter Triduum is the high point of our Catholic Faith. We encourage you to attend Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil (and/or Easter Sunday) liturgies with your children. Those dates and times will be published near the end of Lent.

****Facebook Page for Faith Formation**

You may want to check out the "Rib Lake Good Shepherd Faith Formation" page. The intent of this page is to highlight special Religious Education events and projects, as well as provide occasional reminders or program details. Check in frequently for updates.

****Have Questions or Concerns?**

Our CRE, Mike Bub, is always happy to address any concerns you may have throughout the year. Please feel welcome to contact him at 715-748-3336 (ext. 248) or on his cell, 715-965-7748.