

October 1, 2017

Dear Parents and Students of the Sixth Grade:

Welcome to the 11am Sunday sixth grade Religious Education class at St. Joseph Catholic Church! My name is Susan Schneider and I will be teaching the 11:00am class along with Mike Powers, a wonderful former teacher at St. Francis, Ann Arbor. My husband, Kevin, and I, have been married for 43 years, have 4 grown married children, 8 grandchildren ranging in age from 7 to 20 and new this year a great granddaughter. We officially joined St. Joseph Parish a little over 3 years ago. I retired from teaching “the big kids”, (high school mathematics) which made it possible to teach religious education again (6th grade religious education is my favorite.). I attended 12 years of Catholic schools and have earned my advanced catechist certification and continue to learn about our great God. Together with your sixth grader, we hope to have a fun and memorable year exploring the Bible!

The primary goal for sixth grade is for every student to become familiar with the Bible. By being more comfortable with using the Bible, your young person can begin to own it. While accomplishing this, we will be studying the history of the Catholic religion, beginning with our Jewish roots and ending with the life and times of Jesus. Often the connections between the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) and the New Testament (The life of Jesus and the early church) will be incorporated into the same lesson.

Along with the textbook, The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers, which students will use for 3 years, we will be using the Bible. We have Bibles in the classroom for the students but suggest that if a student has their own to bring it with them to class. The Bible becomes even more their “own” when using it on a regular basis. We will be using the New American Bible in class. There is a copy in the classroom if you would like to preview it.

It has been said that the Catholic Church is the eldest child of the Jewish faith. Many of our traditions and celebrations have a basis in or are shared with the Jewish faith. We will spend some of this year studying our “Jewish roots”, from the beginning in the book of Genesis and other books of the Old and New Testaments. Knowing the Old Testament unlocks many of the passages in the New Testament.

Yes, students will have homework most weeks, but I promise it shouldn't be painful. Like all homework, it is intended to revisit the material covered in class and give the students a chance to interact with it one more time. By doing something with what they learned in class, they are more likely to remember it. They will be given a copy of the summary of the chapter and will have taken some notes in class in their little notebooks to help with the review. This gives you a window into the material presented in class.

The theme for our Rel. Ed silent auction basket this year is U of M Fan. We will be collecting items in the classroom to put in our class basket. The deadline for donations this year is Thursday, October 19th. The auction date is November 11, 2017. Whichever class earns the most tickets for their basket during the auction will earn a special treat. Thank you in advance for any items you are able to donate towards our basket!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. (734) 717-6076 or schneids72@gmail.com. Mike and I are looking forward to our time with your young people!

May the Lord bless you always,

Mrs. Susan Schneider and Mr. Mike Powers