



# 2024 - 2025

# Parent Handbook

Shelly Cronen  
Family Catechesis Director  
[shellyc@ourlourdes.org](mailto:shellyc@ourlourdes.org)  
502-896-0241

<https://ourlourdes.org/religious-education-for-children>

Facebook group: “Our Lady of Lourdes Religious Education”

---

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Mission:

*To know, love, and serve God.  
Love and serve our neighbors.  
Grow intentional disciples.*

Our Lady of Lourdes Families,

My name is Shelly Cronen and I am the Family Catechesis Director at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. It is my absolute delight to work with the families in our parish with children who do not attend our parish school through our Family Catechesis Religious Education program! I am writing to invite you and your child(ren) to enroll in our program for the 2024-2025 year!

As you may know, the Family Catechesis model of Religious Education is new to our parish, however this model is not entirely new in the Catholic Faith. In fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church (2226) states that "Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith." It is our hope that through implementing this model, families will be given the opportunity to strengthen their collective faith as a family unit, while also being a part of the greater Church Community of Our Lady of Lourdes through liturgy, the Eucharist, and the many other opportunities our parish offers. This model of Religious Education will be the most successful with the help and support of you, the parents. It is my sincere hope and prayer that we will work together, collaborating on ideas, celebrating successes and navigating difficulties throughout the duration of the program. I will always be available for questions, comments, ideas, etc. and I hope that we can work together to make this exactly what each family needs it to be!

Following this model of Religious Education, families will meet as a large group once a month on Sundays for learning, fellowship and conversation. The remainder of the "lessons" will be completed at home in the weeks between in-person meetings. This will allow families the flexibility to incorporate these lessons into their lives at the most convenient time for each family! Our in-person gatherings will be broken up into three parts - first, we will meet as a large group with everyone together to discuss what we learned about at home since the last session and give an overview of what will be done before the next meeting. Next, we will break out into smaller, age-specific groups for more discussion. The final portion of our meetings will be attending Mass all together. After Mass, we will be sent off to complete the next 3 or so lessons before meeting again as a large group the following month.

The Family Catechesis program encompasses the entire family, including all ages of children and adults. 2nd grade students will prepare for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, while 8th grade students will prepare for Confirmation. All other ages will focus on Church teachings, gospel messages, and other guided lessons throughout the academic year.

Please see the enclosed packet for further details. I truly look forward to working with your family and getting to know each of you! If I can be of any help, please feel free to reach out at any time.

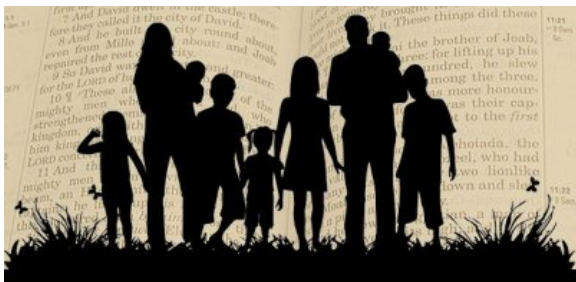
Blessings,

Shelly Cronen  
*Our Lady of Lourdes*  
*Family Catechesis Director*  
Phone: 502-896-0241  
Email: [shellyc@ourlourdes.org](mailto:shellyc@ourlourdes.org)

## PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

---

Parents are the primary educators responsible for the spiritual growth of their children. The goal of the Parish Staff and Catechists is to assist you in this awesome responsibility. As stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church 2225:



*“Parents should initiate their children at an early age into the mysteries of the faith of which they are the “first heralds” for their children. They should associate them from their tenderest years with the life of the Church.”*

While our program will assist in teaching your child a great deal about our faith and about who God is, it is your example of living the Gospel in your life that will ultimately be his/her greatest spiritual influence.

Here are some ways you can live as a disciple of Christ and be a witness to your family:

- Attend Mass as a family on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. **PLEASE REMEMBER THAT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DOES NOT TAKE THE PLACE OF MASS.**
- Make your own faith a priority by seeking opportunities for adult faith formation in the parish.
- Support a parish ministry with the gift of your time and talents.
- Spend time as a family completing the Family Catechesis lessons. Make this time fun and engaging, maybe even joining with another family to work through the lessons. This time is intended to grant your family the flexibility needed with busy schedules, while also providing opportunities for the entire family to grow in faith.

## MEET YOUR CATECHISTS

---

The term “catechist” is used in a broad sense to designate one who, directed by parish staff, participates in formal and religious education ministry. Our parish is blessed to have the following individuals helping teach our children:

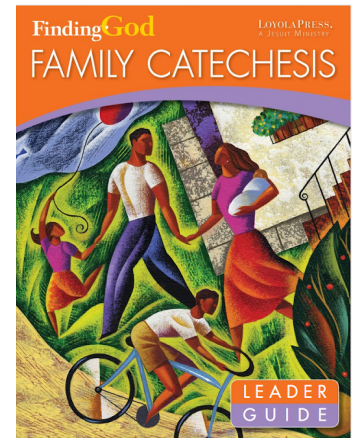
Grade Level	Name	Contact Email
Preschool & Kindergarten	Isabella Edghill	isedghill@gmail.com
1st & 2nd Grade	Jennifer Stratman	jennifer.stratman4@gmail.com
3rd - 5th Grade		
6th & 7th Grade		
8th Grade - Confirmation	Francisco Alzuru	falzuruvera@gmail.com

## PROGRAM FEATURES

---

The Religious Education Program at Our Lady of Lourdes is designed for families with children who are not attending a Catholic school. We will use the Finding God Family Catechesis curriculum published by Loyola Press. More information about this program can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/43whwsp8>.

*“For a variety of reasons, parishes across the country are inviting parents to take an active role in the catechizing of their children. The Finding God Family Catechesis program makes this easy. Our Family Catechesis program is unique in that it helps parents grow in their own faith while they guide their children in core faith formation. This flexible and engaging program nurtures faith and helps build community.”*



## CLASS TIMES AND DATES

---

Sessions are on **Sunday mornings from 10:00-11:15am, with 11:30 Mass attendance directly following.** Your family should be in the Cafeteria and ready to begin at the designated time. Parish Staff and Religious Education Catechists make every effort to begin sessions on time. Your promptness is very much appreciated. We will meet for Family Catechesis on the following Sundays:

- Sunday, August 18, 2024 - Family Catechesis Kickoff!
- Sunday, September 22, 2024 - Unit 1
- Sunday, October 20, 2024 - Unit 2
- Sunday, November 10, 2024 - Unit 3
- Sunday, December 15, 2024 - Advent Unit
- Sunday, January 12, 2025 - Unit 4
- Sunday, February 9, 2025 - Unit 5
- Sunday, March 16, 2025 - Lent Unit
- Sunday, April 13, 2025 - Sacrament Celebration/ Family Brunch

## ATTENDANCE

---

Attendance is taken each session. We appreciate your efforts to attend each session, as much as it is possible to do so. If you know your family will be missing a session, please email Shelly Cronen at [shellyc@ourlourdes.org](mailto:shellyc@ourlourdes.org) ahead of time. The catechetical staff will appreciate the notice as the number of individuals attending may affect a lesson plan. The catechetical staff is instructed to let parish leadership know if a student misses more than two consecutive sessions. **EACH CLASS/SESSION IS ESSENTIAL TO COVER ALL MATERIAL**, please make every effort to be present for all sessions! Between sessions, curriculum may be covered at the pace at which it is most beneficial and convenient for your family.

## COMMUNICATION

---

All families will be provided a calendar of activities and important sacramental dates at the beginning of the year. Flyers and additional communications will be sent home as reminders as needed. Most communication will be via email and through the Facebook Group “Our Lady of Lourdes Religious Education.”

## CLASS CANCELLATIONS

---

If a situation arises where classes need to be canceled (usually weather-related), announcements will be made via email and through the Facebook Group.

## PHOTOS

---

Our Lady of Lourdes reserves the right to take photos of participants of parish programs. These photos will be used in accordance with the normal business practices of the parish, including: the bulletin, newsletter, website or promotional materials. Photographs of children will not be used if permission is not granted on the registration form.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

---



Students in 2nd grade will be preparing for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist throughout the year. This preparation will last for the duration of the Religious Education period. The curriculum used is *Blessed* by Dynamic Catholic. There is a separate calendar for 2nd grade students, as there are required sacramental meetings and workshops in addition to the regularly-scheduled Family Catechesis sessions.

Students in 8th grade will be preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation throughout the year. This preparation will last for the duration of the Religious Education period. The curriculum used is *Chosen: Your Journey to Confirmation* by Ascension Press. There is a separate calendar for Confirmation students, as there are required sacramental meetings and deadlines in addition to the regularly-scheduled Family Catechesis sessions.

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

---

The parish Religious Education Program follows the Archdiocesan guidelines for maintaining a safe environment for all children. All volunteers who have regular contact with children must attend the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Training and submit a background check.

### Training Schedule:

<https://www.archlou.org/about-the-archdiocese/archdiocesan-policies-guidelines-and-handbooks/restoringtrust/safe/>

## FIELD TRIPS

---

Catechists may use the church building and grounds to help illustrate a topic that is being taught in the classroom. Catechists will not take the children off the church property without advance notice and permission granted by parents. Catechists will attempt to notify parents in advance when they are planning to utilize spaces on the parish grounds that are not where classes are typically held. When enrolling your child in the Religious Education program, you are giving permission for the catechist to teach your child anywhere on church property.

## VOLUNTEERS

---

The parish Religious Education Program is a volunteer program. Our catechists are members of the parish who have been trained and volunteer their time and talent to share their faith in order to help our children grow in their own faith. If you wish to volunteer to be a catechist or a substitute catechist, please reach out to Shelly Cronen at [shellyc@ourlourdes.org](mailto:shellyc@ourlourdes.org).

## EXTRA CURRICULAR

---

Religious Education students may participate in CSAA-sponsored sports programs at local Catholic schools. The CSAA handbook (<https://loucsaa.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/CSAA-Handbook-rev.-Aug-2023.pdf>) states:

*“Student athletes who do not attend a catholic school or are home schooled and are approved members in good standing at an Archdiocese of Louisville Parish may participate in CSAA sports for their parish only. If the parish does not offer a particular CSAA sport, the student athlete may play for another parish/school team pending the agreement with the parish/school and approval of CSAA Executive Director and the CSAA Sport Director. They must meet all the requirements included in the CSAA Gameday individual registration portal, **including actively participating in the mandated religious education of their home parish.** These athletes must meet the age requirement and may not be in the 9th grade or older regardless of age.”*



Class attendance will be monitored and reported to the school's athletic director. Additional forms may need to be filed in order to participate. Please contact Shelly Cronen for additional information at [shellyc@ourlourdes.org](mailto:shellyc@ourlourdes.org).

## CONDUCT POLICY

---

In an effort to foster the development of self-disciplined Christian values in its youth, Our Lady of Lourdes parish expects students to behave in a responsible and moral manner. Students are responsible for their actions. Catechists, the Program Director, or the pastor will take appropriate action when inappropriate conduct is exhibited. It takes only one student to disrupt the entire faith learning of a classroom. The continued disruption of class time by a student will not be tolerated.

Our Lady of Lourdes believes that appropriate conduct is promoted by acknowledging good conduct and by positive reinforcement of individuals and the group. Rules exist for the protection of the group and the orderly operation of the program.

Religious Education classes are time for sharing God's Kingdom. This sharing is a privilege and must be treated as such. Catechists deserve full support and cooperation. This includes listening, following directions and participating in the activities of the class. CELL PHONES, IPADS OR OTHER DEVICES ARE NOT REQUIRED FOR CLASS AND ARE NOT PERMITTED.

Because parents will also be present throughout the Religious Education Family Catechesis program, we ask for cooperation and support with this effort. Please set a good example for the children by also leaving the cell phones behind during instruction and fellowship time together. We realize that situations may arise during our meeting times that will need to be dealt with right away. Please step out to respond to these situations so that distractions will be limited. We appreciate your help with these matters!

## CHILDREN WITHDRAWN OR DISMISSED FROM A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

---

When a child is dismissed and/or withdrawn at the request of a Catholic School or parents of the child, the Pastor will determine whether the child will be eligible for enrollment in the Order of Christian Initiation of Children (OCIC) OR our parish's Religious Education Program. OCIC is not a part of our Religious Education Program for children, but it will facilitate sacramental formation at Our Lady of Lourdes. OCIC will require parents' participation. Please contact our Adult Formation Director, Lynette Kessinger, with questions and to register, [lynettek@ourlourdes.org](mailto:lynettek@ourlourdes.org).

## RIGHT TO AMEND

---

This handbook is meant to provide parents with helpful information on the parish Religious Education program. It is not meant to cover every situation. Our Lady of Lourdes reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary at any time. Parents will be notified in writing if changes are made to any procedure or information in this handbook.

## REGISTRATION

---

Registration for the Religious Education program will be open August 1st. Forms are available on the website at <https://ourlourdes.org/religious-education-for-children> or from Shelly Cronen or any time at the Parish Office.