

+ Wednesday, April 22nd, 2009 + St. Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes +

Dear Religious Education Parents,

With First Communion this coming weekend, another year of Religious Education ministry here at Lourdes is beginning to wrap up. It has been a *very good year* for all three sacramental programs as well as the classroom work and a variety of speakers, presentations, tours and the like!

All of this, supporting your efforts as your children's "first and best teachers" (Baptismal Rite) and the weekly experience of Mass has, I hope & pray, brought your families closer to the Lord, Who always stays so close to us!

That continuous pattern of Christian Living and weekly Mass - even throughout the summer months and vacations - helps us to grow to be more like Jesus!

I thank **Karen Nienhaus**, our Director of Religious Education and Coordinator of the Secondary Program, **Angela Bieda**, Elementary Coordinator and Sacramental Program Director and **Gwen Van Asten**, Administrative Assistant, who along with our dedicated **Catechists** have done so much to help your children grow in the Lord! I hope you'll thank them too!

Looking to next year, 2009-2010, I've been asked to make you aware of *some important operating assumptions and policies*:

* **Enrollment forms and fees for 2009-2010 are due no later than May 15th, 2009.**

Except for new parishioners registered over the summer, no exceptions will be made, since we need to order texts and recruit catechists "before the last minute". Please respect this date, won't you? Thanks very much!

* **We have - except for 2 'grandfather clauses' with good pastoral reasons - eliminated "out of parish" participation in our Religious Education ministry.** With our own enrollment high, we cannot at this time welcome folks from outside OLOL. And since they have membership in another parish, or are welcome to formally join us here, it wouldn't really be in anybody's best interests to offer R.E. 'ala carte'.

* **We presume that your enrolling your children in the program is based on your willingness to come to weekend Mass regularly with your kids,** since Religious Education is a *supplement* to what you do as parents in the home, and to the "Main Event" - the weekend Mass.

* **We also have the expectation that as you are able, you will volunteer to share you time and talents in the parish family.**

* **We also need to expect that by regular envelope giving, you will support the financial needs of the parish family generously as you are able.** As a parish, we cannot "run on air"!

I do not check the financials myself. *But we will begin, with 2009-2010 to hold back registration if there has been no signs of active membership, which our Office Staff can track.*

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns, and for being with us in the parish family! For summer rest and recreation, and always in prayer, worship, service, sharing, mercy and friendship...and for Earth and for Heaven...

"God bless us...EVERY one!"

Father Tim Skillcox