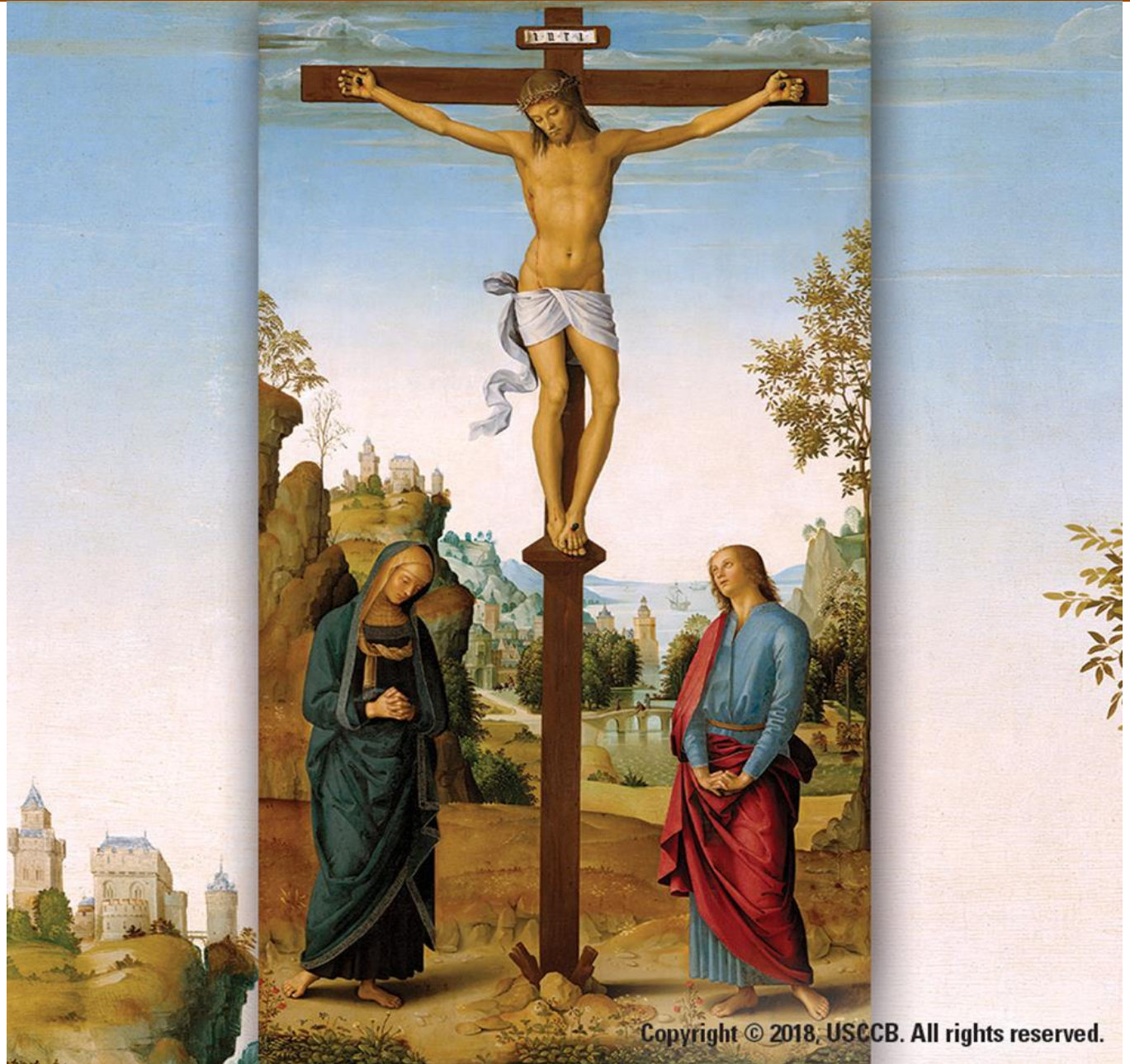


Saint Brigid Catholic Church

Parish School of Religion



Parent Handbook 2018-2019

Your child's safety is our first concern!
Please follow these procedures, keeping the safety of children in mind:
Park your car. Walk your children to their classrooms.
*Please **do not** park in the fire lane in front of Holy Redeemer.*



Dear friends in the Lord:

We welcome you to the 2018-2019 Parish School of Religion (PSR) at Saint Brigid Catholic Church. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis has asked each of us to prayerfully reflect on our call to discipleship. As we consider the sentiments of Pope Francis, we believe it is our mission to invite your children to a renewed discipleship in the Way of Jesus Christ, a discipleship they learn most powerfully at home, from you (parents and caregivers). We are here to support every parent and caregiver of every child, for we believe and the catechism clearly indicates that you are the primary teacher of your child in the ways of the faith.

Our PSR families receive a book, “Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families.” The book is intended to help parents engage their children with the Mass and deepen their appreciation of the richness of their faith life. Please take your responsibility seriously. The prompts in the book can help start conversations on the way to and from Mass. This can enhance your family Mass experience. Along with the God-given role you have as your child’s primary teacher, you are encouraged to strengthen your own faith-life through ongoing study and Christian formation. There are many programs offered at our parish that will allow you this chance of study and re-commitment. Please make sure to keep eyes and ears open for these programs of study...for *your* discipleship, *your call to holiness*.

Attendance at Sunday Mass as a family is critically important. Your joyful participation at the Lord’s Divine Liturgy (holy Mass) each week will teach your child about the importance of the Lord’s Day in an extraordinary way and set a wonderful example for your child.

Please read through this handbook to gain a deeper understanding of the program our staff has designed for our families and children. Please do not hesitate to ask our PSR staff any question you might have in regard to your child’s formation. We are here to assist you, and to serve the Spirit in forming our children in the new Way of Life.

May God continue to bless you and your families during the coming year and know how happy we are to see you each week!

Sincerely in Christ,

Reverend Neil Herlihy
Pastor

Saint Brigid Catholic Church Mission Statement



Saint Brigid Catholic Church commits by the grace of our Lord to be a people of God who, in a welcoming environment, enthusiastically gather in worship and prayer to become more Christ centered in our lives and actions, while teaching and treasuring the traditions of the Catholic Church.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GOALS

Our religious education program strives to encourage children and their families:



- Share the Gospel message, build community, and give service.
- Share with each child a knowledge of the love of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Assist students in character development, emphasizing Catholic principles and Christian values.
- Encourage students to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Nourish each child with the Word of God in Sacred Scripture, and to deep their knowledge of the teachings, practices and traditions of the Catholic faith through a Christ centered curriculum in addition to regular Sunday Mass attendance.

We would like to emphasize that religious education is not just bringing your child to celebrate the Sacraments. It is a continuous formation in the faith that never ends with the celebration of a Sacrament. We offer faith formation classes from kindergarten through fifth grade so that children of Saint Brigid may continuously grow in their knowledge of our Catholic faith.

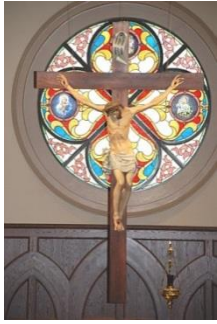
Special Needs Students

The goal of our Special Needs program is to create a welcoming and safe environment for ALL students, realizing our responsibilities as Catholics to provide opportunities for all for a fuller participation in the Holy Mass and a deeper understanding of our Catholic Faith. Special Needs families must register through the PSR program and fill out an assessment form. Several opportunities for children/teens with needs include:

- Mainstream students into the PSR program with experienced catechists and/or classroom aids.
- Separate opportunities for multi-sensory/manipulative/experiential learning.
- Home schooling resources for parents.
- Tutoring opportunities for students to work with other parents with experience.
- Opportunities for Sacramental preparation to become more meaningful.



Families who have registered and filled out an assessment form will be contacted by our Special Needs volunteer coordinator who has professional experience in Special Needs. All information will remain strictly confidential. Parents will have an opportunity to discuss specific means of support with catechists. Please contact Susan Dörner, our Special Needs volunteer coordinator at susandorner@gmail.com with any questions specific to the process or program for elementary age children.



Saint Brigid Catholic Church

Religious Education

3400 Old Alabama Road

Alpharetta, GA 30022

www.saintbrigid.org

PHONE 678-393-0060 FAX 678-393-0071

Clergy

Reverend Neil J. Herlihy, *Pastor*, ext. 101 nherlihy@saintbrigid.org

Reverend Peter Ha, *Parochial Vicar*, ext.102 pha@saintbrigid.org

Reverend Bill Hao, *Parochial Vicar*, ext. 103 bhao@saintbrigid.org

Reverend Mr. Leo Gahafer, *Deacon*, lgahafer@saintbrigid.org

Reverend Mr. Henry Hein, *Deacon*, hhein@saintbrigid.org

Reverend Mr. Tom Huff, *Deacon*, thuff@saintbrigid.org

Reverend Mr. Ron Leidenfrost, *Deacon*, rleidenfrost.org

Reverend Mr. Jim Wolf, *Deacon*, jwolf@saintbrigid.org

Reverend Mr. David Briselden, *Deacon*, dbriselden@saintbrigid.org

Religious Education Staff

Reverend Mr. Henry Hein, *Director of Religious Education*, hhein@saintbrigid.org

Susan Davidson, *PSR Registrar*, ext. 116 sdavidson@saintbrigid.org

Kathryn Halaszynski, *PSR Coordinator & Children's Liturgy of the Word*, ext.120 khalaszynski@saintbrigid.org

Barbara Kratz, *PSR Coordinator & First Eucharist*, ext. 126 bkratz@saintbrigid.org

Donna Ortiz, *Middle School Youth Minister*, ext. 129 dortiz@saintbrigid.org

Cindy Soder, *Middle School Assistant Youth Minister*, ext. 154 csoder@saintbrigid.org

Susan Dorner, *Volunteer Special Needs Coordinator*, susandorner@gmail.com

Preparation for First Reconciliation and Communion – Important Dates!

This year of receiving multiple sacraments is one of the most important years of our lives, as we become one with the very Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. Our preparation at Saint Brigid is comprehensive in understanding and spiritual in leading children to Christ. Therefore the following requirements must be adhered to:



- Weekly attendance at Sunday Mass
- Weekly attendance at PSR classes
- Baptismal certificate
- Parent attendance at mandatory workshops (Reconciliation and First Eucharist)

IMPORTANT DATES: First Reconciliation:

First Reconciliation Parent Meeting: Tuesday, October 16th @ 6:00 pm or Wednesday, October 17th @ 10:00 am

Location: Saint Brigid Nave

Catechists attend if they have a child making the Sacrament.

First Reconciliation Retreat: Saturday, January 12th ~ 9:30 am to 11:15 am

Location: Holy Redeemer

All second grade catechists must attend.

First Reconciliation Celebration: Children will be given the opportunity to celebrate the sacrament with their family during select Wednesdays during the months of January and February.

IMPORTANT DATES: First Holy Communion

First Holy Communion parent meeting: Tuesday, February 26 @ 6:00 pm or Wednesday, February 27 @ 10:00 am

Location: Saint Brigid Nave

Catechists only need to attend if they have a child making the Sacrament.

First Holy Communion morning of reflection: Saturday, April 27 ~ 11:00 am-12:30

All parents attend with their children

Catechists only need to attend if they have a child making the Sacrament.

First Holy Communion Rehearsals: Tuesday, May 7th, or Wednesday, May 8th, or Thursday, May 9th at 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm

All Catechists must attend depending upon when your class rehearses.

First Holy Communion Ceremony: Saturday, May 11th ~ 9:00 or 11:30 am or 2:00

Mass assignments are made at First Holy Communion parent meeting

Prayer and Worship

A family that prays together...stays together!

Precepts of the Church

To be Catholic means to embrace and pass on the treasures of our faith. As parents it is important that we continue to follow minimum spiritual guidelines or “precepts” of the Church, those “positive laws made by the Church authorities, minimum in prayer and moral effort, for the sake of their growth in love of God and neighbor.” CCC 2041



- Attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation.
- Confess your sins at least once a year.
- Receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season.
- Keep holy the holy days of obligation
- Observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
- Help to provide for the needs of the Church.

Family & Student Opportunities

CHILDREN’S LITURGY OF THE WORD



Children, ages 4 years old through 1st Grade, are dismissed from Mass during the Liturgy of the Word. They are escorted to the chapel, assisted by volunteer shepherds. They will hear the Word from the Children’s Lectionary. The lead catechist guides the children to an understanding of the Gospel that they can embrace. Masses for this opportunity are during the Saturday Vigil 5:00 PM; Sunday 9:00 AM and 10:45 AM.

Please call your PSR Coordinators if you would like to be part of the volunteer team of presenters, or shepherds. You are welcome to come observe, help out or become a presenter. No registration is required for Children’s Liturgy of the Word.

Family Opportunities

- Parish Picnic – September 23, 2018 from 1-4:00 p.m.
- Advent Parish Mission – December 3,4, 5, 2018 at 7-8:00 pm

PSR Service Projects

Service Projects-

Students do service projects in order to live out their faith. These are home projects in which we encourage all to participate. **Parent Volunteers** are needed to organize and count the items and to deliver the items to MUST ministries.



MUST Ministries – Advent Service Project:

Information Flyers distributed week of November 11 and 12th

Items collected week of December 2nd and 3rd

We collect new hats, gloves, and mittens for those in need.

Saint Brigid Ministries and Volunteer Opportunities

Saint Brigid has over 50 ministries in which you and your family can become a part of our family community. You may pick up a ministry booklet at the parish office. See the Sunday parish bulletin for details.

SUBSTITUTE CATECHISTS ARE ALWAYS WANTED

These adults/parents fill in when a catechist is absent. Substitute catechists only assist in the classroom, and need not prepare lesson plans for whatever class they substitute. They may volunteer only during their registered session or all sessions, and are available in advance or on short notice. This is perfect ministry for beginners who want to experience the classroom for the first time or for the experienced catechist who cannot be available on a scheduled basis. For the protection of our children, all volunteers are required to undergo a background check. SEE THE NEXT SECTION BELOW. Please volunteer to assist in the classroom as a substitute in the event of the absence of one of your child's catechists.



Office of Child & Youth Protection

Each volunteer who has regular contact with children must, as a condition of his ministry or service to the Archdiocese, consent to a "Background Check." The "Background Check" will include a check of references, verification of personal and educational information and criminal history. This review must be redone every 5 years. **Archdiocesan policy states there must be 2 ADULT SCREENED catechists present with the children at all times.** This includes Prayer Honor Roll and Substitute Catechist Volunteers.



SAFE ENVIRONMENT MATERIALS FOR CHILDREN



Safe Environment Materials for Children

In consideration of our responsibility to keep our children and youth safe, the Archdiocese of Atlanta is providing all parishes and schools with the Children Safe Environment from VIRTUS. See link for more information.

<http://www.archatl.com/ministries-services/safe-environment/parent-information/>

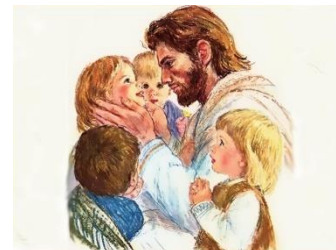
SAFE ENVIRONMENT MATERIALS FOR CHILDREN

Archdiocesan Screening - In response to Article 12 of the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children & Young People, the Archdiocese of Atlanta created a “Safe Environment program” to ensure that all members of our community respects the magisterium of the Church, and follow a standard of conduct for all persons in positions of trust. All children in our program will be offered a presentation.

Date: October 14 & 15, 2018

Parish School of Religion Policy Full Participation and Attendance

The Archdiocese of Atlanta requires 30 classroom hours for full credit of a year of Religious Education. Students are asked to attend all classes. However, please do not send a sick or contagious child to class. If a student misses a class, make-up work is required. This work will be provided through the student’s catechist. Please have children complete the lesson sheets and activity pages; which will be given to you by the catechist. Please return the assignment as soon as possible. Children should never miss more than **4** classes. Please contact us if there is a family issue, or if we can be of any assistance.



Class participation is important for a sound faith, understanding, and spiritual development to grow in their relationships with Catholic peers.

Parish School of Religion Policies

Family Issues

Saint Brigid Parish School of Religion strives to accommodate your needs as much as possible. In order for our staff and volunteers to accommodate students and families, please notify our PSR Coordinators or catechists if there are issues that may affect attendance or behavior.

- If there are more than **4** missed classes, please contact us as well as completing the make-up work. It is important for catechists to be aware of unforeseen circumstances such as serious illness, etc.
- If a catechist experiences behavior issues that cannot be contained, PSR Coordinator will contact the parents and schedule a meeting, in order to find solutions. *No catechist volunteer is expected to deal with behavior that is not Christian or conducive to learning.* Please help us by discussing the importance of a positive Christian learning environment. Catechists encourage students by setting a Christian example, and through positive reinforcement.
- Financial needs should never be an issue in participation in our Parish School of Religion. Please contact PSR Coordinator, or Registrar if you need assistance.

COMMUNICATIONS

E-mails: All parents and catechists will be put on our e-mail distribution lists for updates and reminders.

Bulletin Announcements: All PSR announcements are made in the Sunday Bulletin. It is the parent's responsibility to read these announcements in case of schedule changes or updates. Please read this weekly.

Constant Contact: E-mail fliers will be sent out as a courtesy for advertising RE events. If you would like to receive these, please e-mail us at re@saintbrigid.org.

There are NO parish mailings for regular information and updates, please refer to your PSR calendar, the Sunday church bulletin, or www.saintbrigid.org. Please make sure Saint Brigid has your current E-mail address by contacting our registrar, Susan Davidson at sdavidson@saintbrigid.org.

SAFETY

Inclement Weather

Classes are not necessarily cancelled when Fulton County Schools are cancelled. Please do NOT call the church. Check the home page of our website, www.saintbrigid.org to verify if classes have been cancelled and check your email.



Parking and Safety



All parents are asked to park their cars in a legal parking space, and walk your children to their classrooms. Parents will then sign in their children into the classroom. When picking up students, we ask again, that parents park in legal parking spaces, and walk in to sign their children out of the classrooms. Please do NOT park in the parking lane or "drop off area in front of the school, this is illegal parking. Please do not allow your child to walk into the building alone. For everyone's safety do not park in fire lane. All volunteers must sign in at the front desk at Holy Redeemer and issued a nametag. All catechists are to wear their nametags at all times.



Safety

All catechists and volunteers are required to wear their **nametags** at all times for identification purposes. Volunteers will also be issued a nametag to enter the building. Parents are not allowed to enter Holy Redeemer until dismissal.

Holy Redeemer Policies

Please no food in the classrooms. Do not use materials and supplies belonging to the teachers and their students. Please instruct your children to **NOT open any of the desks**. Please instruct them to respect the HR student's private property. In the Primary Pod, please do not let siblings use the blocks or Legos.



Curriculum Information

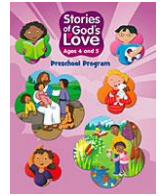
All Classes held at Saint Brigid Catholic Church and Holy Redeemer School

Times: Sunday 8:45 – 10:00 a.m. & 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

Monday 5:00 – 6:15 p.m.

Preschool 3 & Preschool 4 year olds – Kindergarten

“Stories of God’s Love” – series from RCL. It presents the Bible as the source for learning about God and his Son, Jesus. Joyful songs, and hand on activities introduce children to God’s gifts of self, creation, and love with family and the church community.



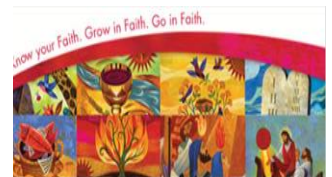
Preschool 4 and 5 year olds – optional program upon request



“**Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**” – Children develop and experience an understanding of loving the Good Shepherd in an approach that is rooted in the Bible, the liturgy of the Church, and the educational hands-on principles of Maria Montessori in a special classroom called the “Atrium” which contains simple but beautiful educational material. The curriculum helps the children develop a deep prayerful relationship with God; gaining a relationship of deep peace and enjoying God’s presence in their lives.

Grades 1st to 3rd grade “Finding God” series Loyola Press

A comprehensive Catholic curriculum, which provides sound and substantial lessons in the faith and delivers those lessons through experiential activities that makes these essential lessons part of a lifelong practice. This program is enhanced with age appropriate and compelling materials, activities, art and music. (www.findinggod.com)



Gospel Weeklies
Pflaum  FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

Grades 4th & 5th “Pflaum Publishing Group

The Pflaum Gospel Weeklies are a liturgically-based program. It leads fourth and fifth graders in making moral choices and exploring and expanding their faith. Dramatizations, current events, and original stories link the Gospel to kids’ own lives.

Prayer Honor Roll of St. Brigid PSR

The Prayer Honor Roll is a series of 13 prayers and Bible teachings for PSR students to learn and memorize. The program starts in Kindergarten and is cumulative in that all prayers from previous grades are included as new ones are added for the older grades.



The prayers taught in Prayer Honor Roll (listed below) are traditional prayers and teachings of our Faith. By providing the prayer books and award incentive of Prayer Honor Roll, we hope to provide students and their families with an opportunity to learn and discuss these prayers together.

How it works:


- During class your child will receive a Prayer Honor Roll sheet to take home. A copy is available on our website.
- Please volunteer as a **Prayer Honor Roll Listener** for your class.
- The catechists have a prayer chart to help keep track of the students' progress. When the parent listener comes to class, class will proceed normally as the students individually go out to the hall to say their prayers.
- Students can learn their prayers on their own at home. Encourage prayer at meals to practice together. Prayers can be learned in any order.
- Those who have completed all their grade-level prayers by that date will receive a PHR award and certificate.

Even though this is primarily a memorization activity, we want to make sure the details of memorization don't become more important than the spirit of the prayer or the understanding of the prayer. Learning the prayers by heart is just one way to explore the beliefs and truths of our faith, so it's ok to prompt the children if needed or to discuss difficult words or concepts. We want them to understand when and why we use these prayers, and not just the words.

Traditional prayers are one tool in our prayer toolbox, but we hope that an understanding of these prayers will help our students develop an overall prayer life, and ultimately deepen their faith.

If you would like to help us coordinate Prayer Honor Roll Certificate and prize distribution contact your PSR coordinator.

Prayers for the Prayer Honor Roll

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sign of the Cross, Genuflect 2. Our Father 3. Hail Mary <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Kindergarten</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Glory Be 5. Prayer to my Guardian Angel <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Grade 1</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Prayer Before Meals (traditional) 7. Act of Contrition <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Grade 2</i></p>	 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Morning Offering 9. Fruits of the Spirit 10. Ten Commandments <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Grade 3</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Corporal Works of Mercy 12. The Beatitudes <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Grade 4</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Hail Holy Queen <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Grade 5</i></p>
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RESOURCES AND PARENT SUPPORT

At Home Suggestions

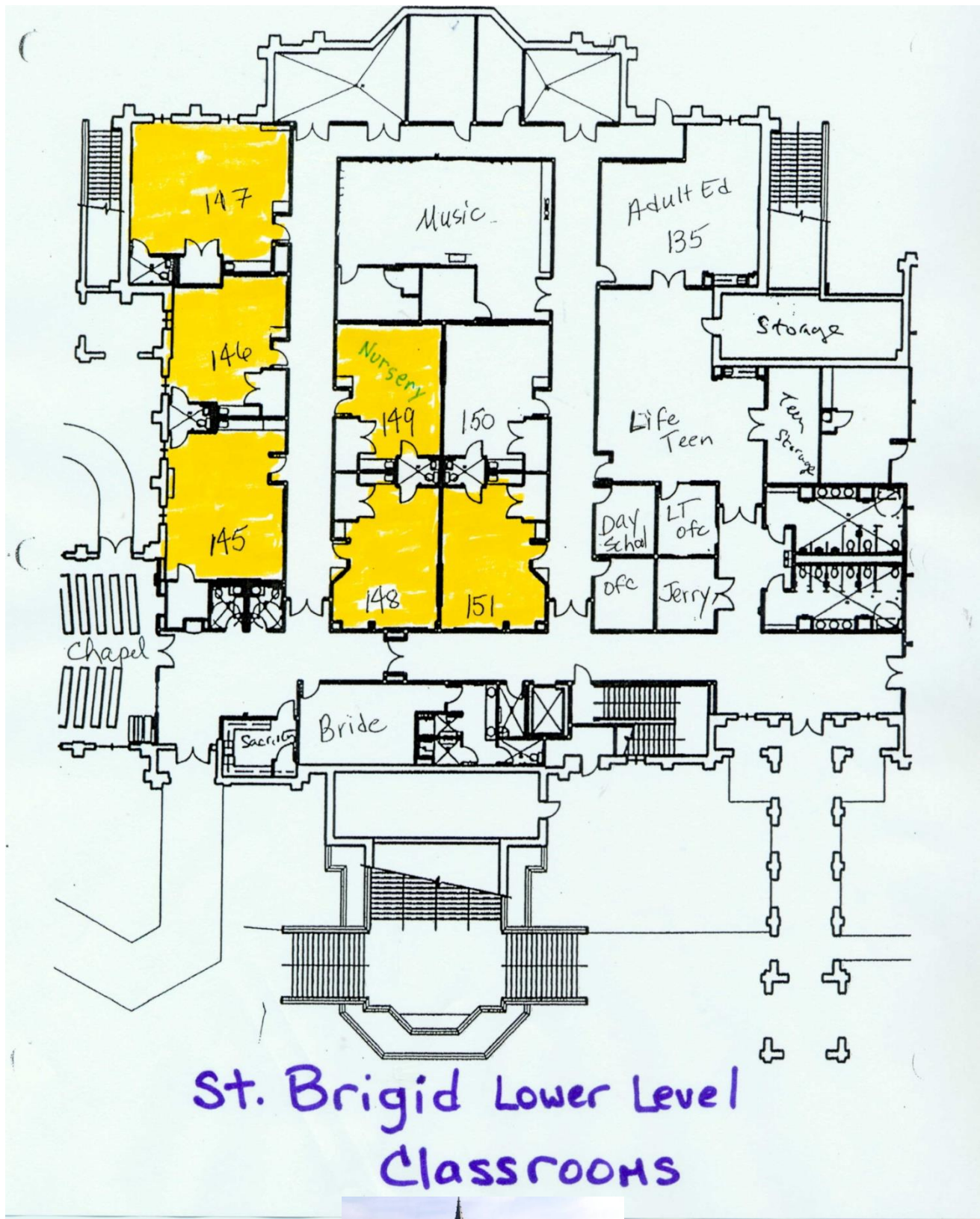
At the end of each session, your 1st through 3rd grader will come home with the pages of their lesson from their workbook. These lessons offer the children a way to partner with their parents and help them to effectively share their faith with each other. These pages contain interesting and meaningful opportunities for making faith come alive at home.

- ❑ Go to www.findinggod.com to review class each week. Encourage your child to explore this website and have fun playing games and activities.
- ❑ Pray for your children; pray that the Holy Spirit will enlighten your family in sharing your faith.
- ❑ Provide the example to begin and end each day with a prayer. Pray before every meal. Create a prayer table or area in your home. You may add to it by using liturgical colors or sacramental's such as a rosary, statue or a bible.
- ❑ Be enthusiastic about your faith; share your love for God and your dependency on Him.
- ❑ Subscribe to a Children's Sunday missal. We recommend the: Magnifikids, containing all the readings and the prayers of the [Sunday Mass](#). It is a wonderful spiritual guide adapted to their lives and development. It provides and explains the Sunday Liturgy and helps children understand difficult vocabulary words in the readings. Go to <http://www.magnificat.fr> for more information. (please see bulletin for bulk order it is placed soon)
- ❑ Challenge the children to live out their faith. Give them weekly challenges!
- ❑ Always use positive reinforcement.
- ❑ Let our PSR staff know if you have any concerns in which you need our support.



CATHOLIC WEBSITES: USE FOR RESOURCE MATERIALS

www.vatican.va - Vatican
www.usccb.org - United States Conference Of Catholic Bishops
www.archatl.com - Archdiocese of Atlanta
www.saintbrigid.org - St. Brigid Catholic Church
www.faithfirst.com - RCL
www.catechistsjourney.loyolapress.com/ Loyola Press Catechist Blog
www.catholic.com - Catholic Answers - Karl Keating
www.salvationhistory.com - St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology - Scott Hahn
www.jamesakin.com - Nazareth Resource Library - James Akin
www.catholic-convert.com - Defenders of the Catholic Faith - Steve Ray
www.ewtn.com - Eternal Word Television Network
www.flaum.com Pflaum publishing group
www.cwnews.com - Catholic World News
www.lifesite.net - Catholic Canadian News Agency
www.masstimes.org - Find Mass times when you are out of town for a local Church
www.newadvent.org - Catholic Encyclopedia
www.catholicexchange.com - Catholic Exchange
www.catholicity.org - Catholicity
www.catholiceducation.org - Catholic Educator's Resource Center
www.catholicmom.com - CatholicMom.com – go to kids section for craft ideas
www.puzzlemaker.com - Create puzzles, access clipart and brain teasers at Discover.com



Holy Redeemer Map

