

Return to In Person RE Sessions

In-person sessions begin next week (Wednesday, February 24). Please see the policy below and be sure your child(ren) come prepared.

We are now in NEED of a 3rd grade catechist. If you are interested in helping fill this spot please contact me ASAP or we will have to discuss other options for this grade level.

* Parents opting to continue virtual learning will be receiving a separate email with lessons.

In Person Policies

We placed a lot of thought into policies needed in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. If you have any questions or concerns about the following, please feel free to contact me.

- Keep children home when they are sick or have family members at home who are ill, especially with acute respiratory symptoms (not allergies or chronic conditions).
- If children become sick during class time, parents will be notified immediately to come pick up all their children.
- Masks must be worn at all times in St. Mark buildings.
- Seats will be assigned in each class area, maintaining a minimum of six feet distance between each.
- Everyone will be required to use hand sanitizer upon entering St. Mark buildings and class areas and be expected to keep their hands to themselves.
- Student materials will be kept in individual containers and at their assigned seats for class each week.
- Only students and catechists will be allowed inside the buildings, unless otherwise specified. Parents can wait outside the front doors of the RE building to pick up students after class, we encourage you to utilize older siblings when possible.
- NO Food/drink/treats will be allowed at this time.

Ash Wednesday and Lent:

Lent begins tomorrow as we celebrate Ash Wednesday!!

Ash Wednesday Mass

- We encourage all our families to attend Mass, whether in person or virtually.
- Mass will be at 6:30pm at St. Mark.
- If you choose to join us virtually you can do so on our cluster Facebook page (Mary Mark) or on our linkage website's [live stream page](#).

Lenten Prayer Opportunities

- Sign up at Dynamic Catholic for daily inspiration and prayer emails. (www.dynamiccatholic.com/lent/best-lent-ever)
- Stations of the Cross will be offered each Monday night prior to Mass beginning at 5:00pm.
- A Stations of the Cross Service has been recorded and will be posted on our Facebook page and website for parishioners to utilize for meditation and prayer at home.

Lenten Reading Materials (Located in church entrances)

- Little Black Books – Daily 3-minute devotionals for each day of Lent.
- Word Among Us – Daily readings and reflections for each day of Lent.

Mary's Meals Collection (Located in church entrances & Sent home with students)

- Family activity calendars and collection cups to help us remember our blessings and help children in need this Lenten season.
- M&Ms for Mary's Meals– Each student will be given a tube of Mini M&Ms. For each tube they return full of quarters they can get a new one full of candy. *Bonus - Donations have been offered to help each returned tube fully pay for a child to eat for an entire year.
- Coin Jar challenge – We will continue where we left off last year! Each classroom will have coin jars. Students may bring coins to help their class collect the most money. (This year pennies count!) *M&M tube donations will also be counted into class totals.* The class with the highest total at the end of the RE year will receive a prize.

Lenten Studies

• *Embracing His Passion Bible Study*

We will follow Jesus Christ through his passion, from the Last Supper to His burial. We will dig into the history of the time and dive into and reflect on Christ's Passion story in all four Gospel accounts. All you will need is a Bible, some available in church entrances. Contact Brenda Strayer for connection information.

• *Rejoice & Be Glad Book Study*

We discuss a chapter of Pope Francis' much acclaimed recent encyclical calling each of us to holiness. We gave this out at Christmas, but additional books may be found in the church entrances. Contact Brenda Strayer for connection information.

Youth Ministry:

- *For at least this month, we will still meet virtually. These gatherings are for all youth in **grades 6-12**, and are held once per month. Our next gathering will be Sunday, February 28. We will be doing a special Escape Room. Join us for fun, fellowship (with prizes) and to pray. Contact Brenda Strayer for connection information:*

- **NCYC...** ATTENTION! It is now time we start thinking seriously about attending NCYC in November. This is for all **CURRENT 8th – 11th GRADE STUDENTS**. We need to discuss cost options and move forward on some fundraising ideas. We will have a virtual meeting on **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28 (5:30PM)**. Contact Brenda Strayer for connection information.

Blessings this Lenten Season and I look forward to seeing many of you soon.

Brenda Strayer
St. Mark Director of Faith Formation