



# Focus on Faith Formation

St. Malachy Children's Religious Education Newsletter

## Religious Education Directory:

Diane Burns, Director of Religious Education 852-8476

Marilyn Webb and Annemarie Hensley, Coordinators 852-3195

## Web-sites:

St. Malachy WEB Page <http://www.saintmalachy.cc> (Our Newsletter is on this page)

Faith First WEB Page <http://www.faithfirst.com> (The grade school curriculum)

## Letter From the Desk of Diane Burns:

The wonderful season of Advent is upon us, and so we work with the children to help them to prepare for the celebration of the coming of Jesus. We remember His coming as a baby but we also prepare for His coming to each of us in the Eucharist, and His continuing presence in each other. Also at this time of the year we are reminded to always be prepared for His coming at the end of time. As we do all of our wonderful things in preparation for Christmas, let's keep our hearts ever open to Jesus. This can be a very happy and exciting time for children, so we are having an Advent Intergenerational Gathering, which you will read about in this newsletter, and also some reading material available in the Narthex and in the Bulletin to help you during this very special season.

We want to **thank** all of the generous Catechists who have volunteered to share their faith with our children on Sunday mornings. We have four first grades and we had two this summer so that tells you how our program is growing. Our First Communion class should be large next year. We have had and are still having difficulty getting Catechists for all of your classes. Please, if you have any desire to be a Catechist, call our Faith Formation Office (852-8476). Even if you are nervous about doing it you could get over it by observing or helping in a class where you didn't have to be in charge. We always try to put two people in every classroom, that way one person can present the lesson, and the other person can make sure that the children are on task. We have a very good Catechist Formation Program and we will help you in any way that we can.

We are working very hard again this year to help the children to understand the Mass which is our most important prayer as a faith community. Each Sunday our Catechists read and talk about the Gospel for the Sunday. They ask the children

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## Calendar of Events

St. Malachy Reconciliation Service	Thursday, December 1 - 7:00 p.m.
Women's Advent Morning of Reflection	Saturday, December 3 - 9:00a.m. -1:00p.m.
Intergenerational Advent Event	Sunday, December 4 - 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Christmas Break – No Religious Education	Sundays, December 25 and January 1
Religious Education Classes Resume	Sunday, January 8, 2006

## Catechist Certification Classes/Echoes of Faith

Intern Catechist Class	Catechist Class or Intern Class	Dates/Time
Liturgy and Sacraments	Prayer and Spirituality	Wednesday, Jan. 25 9:00-11:30 a.m.
The Bible	The Creed/The Church	Wednesday, Jan. 25 6:30-9:00 p.m.
Curriculum	The Creed/The Church	Tuesday, Feb. 21 9:00-11:30 a.m.
Liturgy and Sacraments	Curriculum	Wednesday, Feb. 22 6:30-9:00 p.m.

- ✠ Turn in your registration cards or call Annemarie or Marilyn, 852-3195.
- ✠ If you are working on your intern catechist certificate and the class you need is not being offered you may take the catechist class with permission.
- ✠ Usually the classes will be held in Diane's office and/or in the Conference Room.

### Diane Burns' Letter (cont.)

questions which will help them to apply the Scripture reading to their lives. I would encourage you to please bring the children to Mass, especially those in second grade and above. It is so important for them to participate in our Sunday liturgy with our parish family. Otherwise they are learning about something that they are never going to put into practice. In the bulletin each Sunday there is a question on the Sunday readings, which is just for children. It is very good to talk about the readings and the homily on the way home from Mass, and one way to do this is to discuss the children's question from the bulletin. Any way that you can make Sunday Mass an important part of your day is very supportive for your child on his/her faith journey.



## *Letter from our Business Manager*

Dear Parents,

At the evening mass for All Saints Day, Fr. Peter challenged each of us to pick a saint. He shared with us that his Grandmother Gallagher suggested that he pray to one saint, one saint who is not so well known or popular and by doing this he would have a better chance of getting his prayer heard quicker than if he prayed to a popular saint like St. Jude or St. Francis. How about St. Isidore of Seville, the patron saint of the internet? Did you know that St. Albert the Great is the patron saint of students struggling with science?

Beginning in January, you and your child will have an opportunity to pick a saint each week. Our children's stewardship envelopes for 2006 feature patron saints. Each week a different saint is pictured with a paragraph about his or her life. These envelopes provide an opportunity for you and your children to learn about the saints.

Your child will receive his or her patron saint stewardship envelopes in December. (For those in the Summer Intensive program, please pick up your envelopes at the office or in the narthex.) Please encourage your children to use these envelopes to express their gratitude to God for their many gifts. We ask that each child place his or her envelope in the offertory basket each week with his or her gift of treasure, time and talent written on the envelope. This is just one of the many opportunities and privileges that you have as a parent to teach your child about stewardship and to model good stewardship by being present at mass and using your envelope each week.

Peace,

Lynda K. Curry  
Stewardship Commission



If you have not paid your religious education fees, please bring them to Diane, Annemarie, or Marilyn during the Sunday classes or drop them in the collection. Call our office if you are uncertain if you paid.

One child - \$75;      Two children - \$110;      Three or more children - \$145

## First Communion Information

- ✝ The Advent Penance service for the parish is December 1, at 7:00 p.m. If you and your child have completed your Reconciliation books and you feel he or she is ready, this would be a good time for reconciliation. Other opportunities would be during the Lenten Penance Service, any Saturday at 4:30 or by making an appointment with Fr. Dan or Fr. Peter.



- ✝ Remember that the First Communion parent and child meetings are on **Wednesday, January 18, or Thursday, January 19, 2006** at 7:00 p.m. in the church.

- ✝ At these meetings Father will talk to the children and their parents about the Mass and the importance of the Eucharist in their lives. Your books for working with your children will be available and you will receive all the information you will need concerning the Eucharistic retreats, pictures, practices, etc.
- ✝ Remember also that your child will be attending a Eucharistic retreat on one of the following Saturday mornings: February 18, February 25, or March 11.
- ✝ A reminder of the dates for First Communion:

April 22/23 - **Alternative Mass Option** – Children may receive First Communion with their parents at any of the Masses on this weekend.

April 29/30 - **Group Mass Option** will be at the 5:30 Saturday evening Mass and at the 12:00 Sunday Mass. **Alternative Mass Option** – Children may receive First Communion with their parents at the 7:30, 9:00, 10:30 Masses on this weekend.

May 6/7 - **Group Mass Option** will be at the 5:30 Saturday evening Mass and at the 12:00 Sunday Mass. **Alternative Mass Option** – Children may receive First Communion with their parents at the 7:30, 9:00, 10:30 Masses on this weekend.

### Emergency Closings - Winter Weather

If Brownsburg and/or St. Malachy school is canceled on Wednesday, our religious education classes will also be canceled. We will call the following stations if weather should warrant canceling class.

**TV:** WRTV - Ch.6, WISH - Ch.8, WTHR – Ch.13  
**Radio:** 1070AM, 97.1 FM, 93.1 FM, 105.7 FM



<http://www.abcteach.co>

## Lighting the Way through Advent

At St. Malachy's there are several ways that we can celebrate Advent in our preparation for the beautiful feast of Christmas.

### Celebrate Advent with the Saints December 4, 2005, 1-3 p.m. in the Holy Family Room

Come to this intergenerational activity to gather as a family, meet other people in the parish, celebrate Advent, learn about some of the saints of the season, do a craft related to one of the saints, and prepare for the coming of Christ. Everyone is invited: parents and children, grandparents, couples, single people, and every kind of family in between. We only have space for 75 people in the Holy Family Room, so registration is limited. We are asking for \$5 from each family to pay for supplies for the afternoon. Sign up after all the Masses on November 20. Call the Faith Formation Office at 852-8476 for more information.



### Light up our Community

We'd like to tell you about a custom that you might like to introduce during this season of Advent. We all know that lights are a huge part of the Christmas season. There are lights in our stores, on our streets, on our trees, seemingly everywhere. Lights

in our windows can signify the love and warmth of our homes - the domestic churches of our lives. We are suggesting that during this season you might want to use a blue light to represent the stillness of the night in waiting for the birth of the Savior and to signify our Blessed Mother's waiting in quiet anticipation of the wondrous event that was before her. By placing a blue light in one or all of your windows you will be a quiet yet visible sign of your Catholic Christian identity. What a wonderful witness to our community as we wait in joyful hope for the celebration to come. On Christmas Eve you could then change the blue light to a clear light as a sign that the gift of hope, Jesus Christ, has been born to us.

### Advent Bulletin Inserts

Don't forget to check the bulletin during Advent for the inserts that will help you celebrate the season of Advent with activities that you can do with your families.

Here is a **Prayer for Advent** that you might want to use as part of your Advent rituals:

*God of our desire, come and be with us this Advent. Draw our attention to your presence in our lives, in those we love and those we need to learn to love better. Give us trust in your wisdom and mercy so that we can open our hearts fully to all that you desire for us. We join with our sisters and brothers in the Church and throughout the world in a prayer for peace in these troubled times, peace in our hearts, peace in our homes and peace among nations. Amen.*

## **SIMPLICITY – A Good Virtue for Advent and Christmas**

Some information taken from Celebrate, A Publication of the Center for Ministry Development

During Advent, we prepare to celebrate Christmas, the day Jesus was born in the *simple* surroundings of a stable. We also prepare for Jesus to come again.

Jesus is born in our hearts each time we feel his love and share it with others. When we *simplify* our lives, we create a space for Jesus to come again into our hearts and to be born again through us.

To live simply means to be attentive to each moment and to live it to the fullest. It means to live without complicating details. In that *simplicity* we can find God.

Family life is easily controlled by the calendar and complicated by extracurricular activities. To live *simply* we need to set priorities and honor them in our daily activities. First we need to decide what is important to us. Then we need to choose which activities we will participate in, and which activities we will not participate in.

### **Simple suggestions**

- When you trim your home for the holidays, trim away some of the details. Invite each member to be in charge of his or her favorite decoration – that means putting it up and taking it down.
- When you bake those holiday goodies, don't let yourself get burned out by baking so many. Bake a few as a family for Christmas and then decide (and note on the calendar) which ones you will bake later on those cold and snowy January days.
- When deciding on gifts, remember to share God's love by sharing gifts of yourself, particularly during the holidays when memories are made by sharing time together.
- Remember (as Fr. Dan tells us each year) that the Christmas season starts on December 25 and lasts at least 12 days. Save some of those activities for the time when the original excitement of Christmas Day has lessened.

Some of the greatest saints in our Church are those who discovered that they needed to simplify their lives. St. Francis of Assisi gave up his family wealth to live

a life more in keeping with the life of Jesus. St. Thomas Becket gave up the privileges and recognition of his position in order to follow the teachings of Jesus. How might God be calling you to simplify your lives?