

What Do We Do?



Catechesis is a term the Church uses to refer to the art of teaching the Catholic Faith. It comes from the Greek term, *katechein*, which means to “echo down.” Catechists are those who “echo down,” or “hand on,” or “pass down” the revelation of God to people. We are delegated by our local parish pastor to do this service as an extension of our local bishop’s authority to teach the Catholic Faith. Bishops receive this authority and ministry from Jesus Christ. So, this means that we ourselves must be people of prayer who know and love both Jesus and His Church. Our aim is to foster understanding of God’s revelation among His people so that, through this deeper understanding, people are changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ for greater union with Him and His Body, the Church.

Here at St. Edward the Confessor Parish, there are a number of ways we form God’s people in Faith:

- **Parish School of Religion (P.S.R.)** are religion classes for children in grades Kindergarten through 11th Grade who do not attend a Catholic school. Catholic parents have an important responsibility to make sure that their children are taught the holy Catholic Faith that comes to us from the apostles. PSR Catechists instruct these children (currently on Mondays from 4:15-5:30 p.m. for Grades K-11). Children must attend religion classes for all of 1st and 2nd Grades before they can receive First Holy Communion in 2nd Grade and children must also attend religion classes for all of 9th and 10th Grades before they can receive the sacrament of Confirmation in 11th Grade.
- **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults/Children (R.C.I.A./R.C.I.C.)** is a process composed of various stages which prepares individuals who are age 7 and older for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church or completion of the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist). It includes weekly lessons (currently on Tuesdays from 7-8:30 p.m. for adults and Mondays from 4:15-5:15 p.m. for children), liturgical rituals, and prayer. RCIA/RCIC Catechists instruct these individuals. Sponsors and Godparents serve as mentors throughout this journey.
- **High School Confirmation Preparation** is the process which prepares high school-aged individuals for reception of the sacrament of Confirmation. Candidates for this sacrament are required to participate in classes, complete assignments, participate in a Confirmation retreat, and submit to a final interview. Confirmation Prep Catechists instruct these individuals.
- **Vacation Bible School (V.B.S.)** is a week-long program in the mornings in the summer to help children between the ages of 3 and 11 grow close to the Lord through enthusiastic and engaging activities. A variety of volunteers are needed for this program: Station Leaders prepare and present a 20-minute lesson which is repeated 4 times each day (Bible Story Skits, Videos, Games, Science Experiments) to small groups in a classroom or present one-two 25-minute lessons each day (Songs or Snacks) to all the children in the cafeteria; Crew Leaders accompany a small group of children as they rotate from one station to another while caring for these children and encouraging their participation; Aides/Assistants give help, as needed (may include helping parents and children find where they should go as the children arrive and depart each day, assess whether all children are present each day, help decorate our spaces, gather needed supplies, solicit funds, and assist the station leaders with their activities such as skits, experiments, snack-making, etc.
- **Adult Faith Formation** programs include Bible Studies and other studies for adults of all ages to deepen their understanding of the Catholic Faith. Our Bible Studies currently take place on Monday evenings in the Fall and Spring from 7-9 p.m. An Adult Faith Formation Facilitator would be responsible, as a volunteer, for facilitating 4-8 week video lessons on some aspect of the Creed of the Church.
- **Young Adults Group**. We do not have such a group in our parish. Currently, young adults of our parish are encouraged to participate in the young adult programs offered by our archdiocese. However, if an individual is interested in volunteering to lead such a group here in our parish, this may be a possibility.

Our parish Director of Religious Education will give training and/or guidance to anyone wishing to volunteer with any of these programs in our parish.