

Religious Education Handbook
Saint Bernadette Church

Msgr. K. Bartholomew Smith, Pastor

Neil P. Sloan, Director

Office

School Hall Lobby (on school days, check in at the school office / annex entrance)

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Mailing Address

St. Bernadette Church, Religious Education

70 University Blvd. East

Silver Spring, MD 20901

Fall 2015 Office Hours

Sunday: 9:15am-10:15am & 12:00-1:00pm (Before & After Rel Ed classes)

Monday: Daytime by appointment

Tuesday: Off

Wednesday: 9:30am-4:30pm (Rel Ed office)

Thursday: 9am-11:00am (Rectory office)

Friday: By appointment

Religious Education Classes

Religious Education classes for grades K through 8 are held Sundays after the 9:00 am Mass from 10:30 - 11:45 am in the School. The school year runs from September through May (please see the calendar for specific dates). Saint Bernadette uses the Archdiocesan curriculum "Forming Disciples for the New Evangelization." Parent curriculum guides for grades K-8 can be found at: <http://adw.org/forming-disciples/>. Most of our classes utilize the *Finding God* series from Loyola Press (2013). This approved textbook series and a variety of other resources are used to meet the archdiocesan standards.

Class and Mass Attendance

Attendance will be taken for each class. It is important that students attend class regularly. For students who miss more than three classes, the Director will contact the family to discuss make-up work. Mass attendance is also an essential part of a child's religious formation. Families are encouraged to attend the 9:00 am Mass before religious education classes. Regardless of the Sunday mass that families choose, our catechists will regularly emphasize the importance of the communal weekly celebration of the Mass.

Classroom Expectations and Evaluation

We strive to maintain classroom settings that are instructive as well as comfortable for all students. If a student has a behavioral or other classroom issue, he or she will be escorted by a hallway monitor to the Director's office and parents will be contacted by phone. A meeting will follow if desired by the Director or parents. Every effort will be made to accommodate all students in our classes and to meet students' individual learning needs. Children in grades 3-8 will take a standardized test in the spring that helps the archdiocese and parish to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Parents are strongly encouraged to discuss their children's progress with catechists in person and by email. Parents are also welcome to observe a class or assistant in the classroom with the prior approval of the catechist.

Emergency Closings

Should we need to cancel classes due to weather or another situation, an e-mail announcement will be sent to parents by 8:00 am on the day of classes. The website will also be updated with an announcement.

Volunteering

Our program relies heavily on volunteers. It is expected that each family will contribute to the program in some way. This includes regular Sunday catechists (or co-catechists), classroom aides, high school helpers, hallway and door safety monitors, a supplies manager, and special event coordinators (for our table at the fall festival, Christmas celebration, and the end of the year picnic). Nominations are also encouraged for involved parents to serve on the Religious Education Enrichment Committee (REEC). All volunteers who have regular contact with children must be certified by the archdiocese through the Child Protection program (Virtus). See below for details.

Child Protection

All adults who will be volunteering to oversee children must go through the Archdiocesan Child Protection process before they are approved to serve. This includes catechists, classroom aides, hallway and door monitors, chaperones, and others. Simply go to <http://adw.org/childprotection/> and print the "Volunteer Application" and "Volunteer Checklist." You will need to contact Delfina Castro (dcastro@stbernadetteschurch.org in the rectory or Molly Perry (mperry@saintbernadetteschool.org) in the school to come in for a background check (2 forms of government ID, 1 being a photo ID, and \$13.50 in cash or check) and drop off the application. Ms. Perry is often available in the early morning and throughout the day for background checks. You will also need to register and attend a training session. To view the calendar of local sessions and register, see: <http://adw.org/events/category/protecting-gods-children-for-adults/>

Class Information

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Catechist</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
Kindergarten:	TBD	TBD
First:	TBD	TBD

Second:	Rachel Flynn & Valerie Franck	rlynnflynn@gmail.com valeriefranck44@yahoo.com
Third:	Eric McDonald	teachl2@msn.com
Fourth:	Josephine Monmaney	josiem@rcn.com
Fifth:	TBD	TBD
Sixth:	Maureen Sanelli	Maureen.sanelli@ey.com
Seventh:	Brad Weinsheimer	gbweinsheimer@gmail.com
Eighth:	Steve DeLuca	dremqwest@aol.com

Sacramental Preparation (Grades 2 and 8)

Children typically celebrate First Penance and First Holy Communion in the spring of their 2nd grade year. They then celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation in the spring of 8th grade. For these students, an additional fee to support the program of sacramental preparation is required. Parent meetings will be announced to help parents prepare their children. Children will also attend a retreat and engage in other forms of preparation.

For children who are homeschooled or who attend a Catholic school (other than Saint Bernadette Elementary School), it is expected that they will participate in religious education classes during sacramental years (grades 2 and 8). Beyond the important religious education that takes place in our classes, the sacraments are community celebrations. Therefore, it is important that all children participate with their peers in the parish community as they prepare for the sacraments.

Sacramental Preparation (Grades 1 and 7)

Two years of religious education are required for children to prepare for sacraments. Students preparing for First Penance and First Holy Communion must be enrolled in the 1st and 2nd grade. Students preparing for Confirmation must be enrolled in the 7th and 8th grade. Families whose children had their first year of formal preparation elsewhere can speak to the Director in order to determine, on a case by case basis, whether they meet this criteria. If a 2nd or 8th grade student has not had any religious education, they may be required to join our 1st or 7th grade classes respectively.

Sacramental Preparation (for children in other grades)

Families of students who are seeking Baptism, First Penance, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation after the grade in which these are typically celebrated should contact the Director for an individual consultation. Based on need, programs of sacramental preparation are offered to these students in order to complement their current religious education class and to help them prepare for these sacraments. The participation of the whole family in this time of preparation and religious formation is essential.

New Drop Off / Pick Up Procedures

For the safety and protection of our children, new policies are now in effect for the 2015-2016 school year. Please review them carefully and contact the Director with any questions.

Opening / Drop Off

Students may enter the school building beginning at 10:20am on class days. Entrance to the school is by the main annex (glass) doors only. Children will proceed to the School Hall to meet their catechist at a dedicated class meeting spot (children will not be permitted to enter classrooms). At 10:30, the director will open the class session with a prayer and students will be dismissed with their catechist to specific classrooms.

Reception / Signing In

A reception desk in the annex lobby will be staffed through the class period to assist children and parents. Any adults who have a need to see the Director or enter the school hallways will be required to sign. The Director is also available to see parents from 9:45-10:15 and from 12:00-1:00 by appointment.

Late Arrivals

Late students (after 10:30) will check in at the annex lobby reception desk and receive a late slip to bring to class. If the reception desk is not staffed when you arrive, please wait at the doors and someone will be with you shortly.

Closing / Pick Up

Parents may arrive beginning at 11:30 for pick up at the back doors to the annex (field side). Parents may park in lots on either side of the property and walk to the back field doors. **NOTE:** Parents must come to the doors and pick up their own children (unless an alternate pick up person has been listed on the registration form or by an advance note to the Director). **NOTE:** Students will not be permitted to leave on their own or with any other person unless prior written notice is given to the Director. Classes will dismiss individually starting with eighth grade and ending with kindergarten.

No other school doors may be used for student pick up. Please refrain from opening any other doors to allow people to enter. For their safety, students need to be dismissed in a supervised manner only at the back field doors.