



ASCENSION RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

808 S. East Avenue Oak Park, IL 60304 PH 708-848-3099 FAX 708-848-2773 www.ascensionchurch.com/re

*Above all, trust in the
slow work of God. Chardin*

July 20, 2009

Dear Religious Education Families,

Today, my newest grandson, Trevor Joseph, is one month old. I have had the joy of holding him these past few weeks. It has called to mind the words of Thomas Keating, "The love of God cradles us unceasingly." How will Trevor know the love of God unless he feels it in our arms, hears it in our voices and sees it in our smiles?

There is so much I want to share with Trevor!

Trevor's birth renews my dedication to your children. I have so much I want to share with them and with you this year. In June I attended an international conference on Children's Spirituality. At the end of June, Mary Jo Burns, the principal of Ascension, and I attended a workshop on the new Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum. The Religious Ed Board, with your input, continues to work on our Strategic Plan to improve the program we offer you at Ascension. Throughout this year I will be sharing the important highlights of all these experiences.

Dominican University offers us an incredible opportunity this year. Internationally known artist and speaker, Gertrud Mueller Nelson will be speaking on the topic: **Hidden in Plain Sight: Imagination and the Discovery of Grace**. I am encouraging all families who are preparing for sacraments this year, (First Eucharist, Reconciliation, Confirmation '09 and '10) to attend her talk on September 29, 2009 at 7:00 PM at Dominican University. This will replace the parent meeting at Ascension which begins the year of sacramental preparation. A flyer is included in this mailing. All other families are also invited. Gertrude is a delightful speaker. It will be a very entertaining and informative evening. All fees related to the presentation are prepaid by Ascension so you are welcome to attend free of charge – more information to follow.

These offerings are in addition to the quality program we always strive to provide and you have come to expect from Ascension. How can we adequately share all these things with you? Slowly! That is how God works. The catechetical theme for this year is "*Catechesis and the Proclamation of the Word*." I invite you to open your ears and your heart to hear and consider the many ways God is speaking to you this year. How will you respond?

I am excited about beginning a new year with your children, with you and with the many generous catechists who volunteer in the program. If this is your first year with us I am grateful for all the new energy and enthusiasm you will bring. I invite you to become involved in some way this year. Please volunteer to work at one of our events, attend one of the prayer services, or take advantage of the many Dominican U offerings. To all who are returning, I rely on your warmth and experience to welcome the new families and introduce them to the program.

We continue to work on improving our communications with you through email and our website. I pray that God will bless all our efforts and slowly but surely bring them to fulfillment.

- **Opening School Mass:** Fr. Larry extends a special invitation to all Religious Education families to attend a Mass to begin the new school year. We will gather in church on Tuesday, September 22 at 7:00 PM for our Opening School Mass. Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday families are invited. We will pray for God's blessings on all who are part of our program; children, parents, catechists and support staff. Please mark your calendar with this important date.
- **Ascension-reled@hotmail.com:** This is our office e-mail address. You may use it to communicate with our office.
- **Website:** Please visit our website at www.ascensionchurch.com/re during the year for calendar items, event information, photos and forms.
- **Emergency Form:** Please fill in the emergency information form and **RETURN IT WITH YOUR REGISTRATION FORM.**
- **Permission slip:** We will have some pictures on our website of religious education events—ex. Pumpkin sale, sacramental meetings etc. To do this we need permission to use children's pictures. If you agree to allow us to do this please sign the appropriate space on the form and return it to us.
- **An abbreviated class session schedule is included in this mailing. A complete schedule will be given to your child on the first day of class. Please use this schedule until you receive the new one.**

REGISTRATION

Included with this letter is a Registration Form for the 2009-2010 school year. Please take some time in the next few days to fill out the form completely. If you have a child entering the program for the first time, you must fill in the information on the back of the form and **provide a copy of your child's baptismal certificate.**

Please return this form as soon as possible. Timely registrations enable us to prepare our class lists and determine our need for additional catechists. Mail the completed form to the religious education office or return it to the Parish Center. You may also drop off completed forms in person on registration weekend.

Please note: The deadline for current Catechesis of the Good Shepherd students is August 21. We will make available any openings in these sessions on August 22 to accommodate new students.

REGISTRATION WEEKEND
August 29 and 30 - After All Masses
East Avenue Entrance of Church

AND
September 1, 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
Religious Education Office
808 S. East Ave.

All Registrations should be in our office by September 1, 2009.

INFORMATION REGARDING CLASSES

Regular Program Classes meet in the School Building – 601 Van Buren Street
Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Classes meet in the Parish Center building –
808 S. East Avenue

Tuesday Evening Classes begin on September 8 at 6:55 PM

Class assignments will be posted in the entryway to the School. Children will report to their classrooms at 6:55 PM for an evening of class. Children in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program will meet at 6:55 PM in the Parish Center Chapel (4-6 yr. old) or the Parish Center Lower Level (7-9 yr. old). Parents will be invited to join us on **Tuesday, September 22 for our Beginning of the Year Mass at 7:00 PM.**

Wednesday Afternoon Classes begin on September 9 at 3:30 PM.

Three levels of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd are offered on Wednesday afternoons. We will offer sessions for 4-6 year olds, 7-9 year olds and 9-12 year olds. All levels meet in the Parish Center – Level I (4-6 year olds) in the Parish Center Chapel, Level II (7-9 year olds) in the Parish Center Lower Level and Level III (9-12 year olds) in the Parish Center Dining Room.

Sunday Morning Classes begin on September 13 at 10:00 AM

Class assignments for the Regular Program will be posted in the entryway to the School. Students will report to their classrooms for a full session.

Sunday morning sessions of the **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** will also begin on Sunday, Sept. 13 at 9:00 AM and 10:00 AM in the Parish Center Chapel (4-6 yr. old) or Parish Center Lower Level (7-9 yr. old).

CATECHETICAL SUNDAY -- SEPTEMBER 20

Catechesis and The Proclamation of The Word

On Sunday, September 20, at the 11:00 AM Mass, we will commission all catechists in the parish. Please set aside this date and time and join us to pray with and for our catechists as they begin a new year. On this day only, 10:00 AM classes will dismiss at 10:45 AM to allow our catechists to attend the 11:00 Mass.

PAYMENT

Full payment of tuition and fees is recommended at the time of registration. If this is not possible, 1/3 of the total is due at registration; 1/3 is due by November 30; and final payment of all tuition and fees is due by January 31. **Registrations will not be accepted without some payment of tuition.** If, for any reason, you cannot pay the required tuition, contact Christine Ondrla in the Religious Education Office (708-848-3099). You will be given you a waiver form to fill out and return to the Office. According to a policy established by the Religious Education Board, **waivers will be available only until FEBRUARY 15**. If you have not signed a waiver by that date, full payment of tuition will be expected. Waivers are for **tuition only**. Book and sacramental fees are expected to be paid for each child.

This year we encourage you to be conscious of your sharing in the following areas:

- * full payment of Religious Education tuition and fees
- * weekly Sunday contribution
- * donation of supplies and materials to the program
- * purchasing shopping Certificates (4% to 29% of the cost of these certificates goes to the support of Ascension Parish)

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE

In order to facilitate our record keeping and accounting, if your child's last name differs from the parents' name, please indicate the child's full name, as well as your own. In addition, when making tuition or fee payments, **DO NOT** deposit them in the Sunday collection basket. They may not be credited to your account in our office.

Respectfully,

Christine Ondrla, DRE

INCLUDED IN THIS MAILING:

- Registration Form
- Volunteer Form
- Emergency Form
- Permission for Web Page
- Abbreviated calendar (on back of Dominican flyer)
- Flyer – Dominican University presents Gertrud Mueller Nelson