

# SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

## St. Damian's Parish Faith Formation

WELCOME TO THE 2020/2021 FAITH FORMATION FAMILY!

### NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

This year the teachers will be submitting their classroom updates on a staggered schedule instead of a monthly schedule.

Classroom updates from the teachers will be included in the following monthly newsletters:

September 2020

November 2020

February 2021

April 2021



Father Anthony, Deacon Glenn, Deacon Kevin, and Sister Ellen will continue to share information on a monthly schedule. You will also find important dates, charity and fundraiser opportunities, etc. in the monthly newsletter.

### **2020 – 2021 Teachers**

Kindergarten	Lori Jansen & Chris Kalmer	<a href="mailto:ljansen@frontier.com">ljansen@frontier.com</a> <a href="mailto:chriskalmer@icloud.com">chriskalmer@icloud.com</a>
Grade 1	Mary Innes	<a href="mailto:mkinnes@wisperhome.com">mkinnes@wisperhome.com</a>
Grade 2	Denise Luitjohan (First Reconciliation and First Communion)	<a href="mailto:denise_luitjohan@yahoo.com">denise_luitjohan@yahoo.com</a>
Grade 3	Ruth Pingsterhaus & Hunter Jansen	<a href="mailto:rpingerhaus@yahoo.com">rpingerhaus@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:huntermjansen580@yahoo.com">huntermjansen580@yahoo.com</a>
Grade 4	Sandy Kramer & Hunter Jansen	<a href="mailto:edkramer@charter.net">edkramer@charter.net</a> <a href="mailto:huntermjansen580@yahoo.com">huntermjansen580@yahoo.com</a>
Grade 5 & 6	Sharon Kalmer	<a href="mailto:skalmer@kalmerlumber.com">skalmer@kalmerlumber.com</a>
Grades 7 & 8	Jackie Toennies & William Athmer	<a href="mailto:Craigathmer74@gmail.com">Craigathmer74@gmail.com</a>
Other Helpers	Avery Budde	<a href="mailto:abudde927@gmail.com">abudde927@gmail.com</a>

**Thank you all for taking up this duty.**

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### **Kindergarten:**

Hello to all the parents of the Kindergarten students! As I am writing this, we've had two classes, so it's still a new experience.

During the first class, each student was blessed in his/her answer to Jesus' call to be His friend and follower. We have also learned about the world God made.

Saying the Sign of the Cross and making the Sign of the Cross with our right hand is our first prayer to learn. Mealtimes and bedtime are great opportunities to practice this Catholic tradition.

If you have ideas for songs and movement activities for the children to learn, please send them to me!

We will learn "You Give Your Heart to Jesus", with actions, to the tune of the "Hokey Pokey".

**-Lori Jansen**

### **Grade 1:**

We've only been in class for two weeks, but the first grade is off to a good start.

We will be learning the Memory prayers this year and the first prayer we are focusing on is The Guardian Angel Prayer. It would be helpful if parents said the prayer with their child--it's an especially good prayer to say in the morning to start each day.

We have been reading from a children's bible and have learned the story of creation and all about Adam and Eve. Last week we read about Noah, the Ark, the big flood, and how God sent a rainbow when the rain stopped.

We will continue to work on the Guardian Angel prayer and read stories in the bible, along with activities to reinforce ideas/concepts.

**-Mary Innes**

### **Grade 2:**

The second graders have started their journey towards First Reconciliation. We are using the Dynamic Catholic Blessed series. They are always reminded how blessed they are, and how they need to become the 'best version of themselves'.

The evening classes are challenging but we will make it work!

**-Denise Luitjohan**

### **Grade 3:**

The third grade has been reviewing some of the prayers that the students previously learned; the Glory Be and the Angel of God prayers. We also learned the Golden Rule and studied the Ten Commandments; we discussed what they mean for us and tried to make positive statements of the Ten Commandments.

Our last class was on God's creation and how people are responsible for taking care of the earth and all of its creatures. We will continue learning about this and talking about how people can help with this.

**-Ruth Pingsterhaus**

**Grade 4:**

The Damiansville fourth grade has been working on the Ten Commandments.

Our next unit will be on the Trinity.

We are learning that we are made in God's image and likeness. We need to live and love in our community.

We will learn the Persons of the Trinity and how they help us be good and avoid evil.

**-Sandy Kramer**

**Grades 5 & 6:**

As I mentioned in the parent letter I sent home the first night, our focus this year is "BE KIND".

We are still adjusting to having evening class and I can guarantee you these two classes have not lost their socialization skills in the past 6 months. 😊

I am looking forward to a fun, faith-filled year!

**-Sharon Kalmer**

**Grades 7 & 8:**

The 7th and 8th grade had their first Faith Formation class on Wednesday the 23rd. This year, we only have one hour a week instead of 45 minutes three times a week. That means we will have to stuff as much as we can into the time we have to prepare for Confirmation.

I know we will do it with the encouragement of you parents.

**-Jackie Toennies**

## FATHER ANTHONY'S GUIDANCE

**Faith Article from the Los Angeles Times editorial**

Among the other disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has been the closing of houses of worship and the cancellation of religious gatherings. The arrival of what could be called spiritual distancing was powerfully symbolized recently by images of Pope Francis offering a blessing to an empty St. Peter's Square. Christians around the world in the coming weeks will be "attending" services via YouTube and Jews will be participating in their practices on Zoom.

The alacrity with which mainstream religious groups have responded to the pandemic is admirable, but the idea of suspending public worship also has provoked dissent. We're referring not only to a handful of religious leaders who have behaved recklessly in holding services in defiance of social distancing norms or government decrees, but also to those clergy members and commentators who, without advocating violation of the law, have questioned the idea.

Stone, who wrote a handbook that suggests ways for churches to continue to meet in small groups, further argued: "Even as we take Communion from separate plates and cups to minimize risk, forgo hand-shaking or hugging, and sit at a distance from each other, we still commune." He also suggested that continuing church services would serve as "a societal roll call, especially for older people: Those who don't show up should be checked on during the week."

Many who worry about closing churches or suspending services aren't cheerleaders for capitalism; they want to defend religious values. Those values include fellowship with other believers — it was an Anglican priest who wrote that "no man is an island" — and of course contact with God. As Burke put it: "In considering what is needed to live, we must not forget that our first consideration is our relationship with God."

Of course a religious leader would say that. But the bishops and pastors who have decided to close churches for the time being in the interest of public health are also acting on a religious impulse, a reverence for human life.

In an editorial written partly as a response to Stone, the magazine Christianity Today made a powerful case for erring on the side of safety.

The editorial argued that "even if we do practice stringent hygiene and social distancing, coming together as congregations in the face of this pandemic actually mars our witness. Rather than looking courageous and faithful, we come off looking callous and even foolish, not unlike the snake handlers who insisted on playing with poison as a proof of true faith." It added: "The church remains the church online, too."

The same can be said of other faiths that must worship virtually as the price of protecting themselves and others from a rampant virus. In time, churches, synagogues, mosques and private homes will again be filled with worshipers. But it would be tragic — and fundamentally irreligious — to rush that return to normalcy and risk human lives.

**-Fr. Anthony Onyango**

## THE DEACON'S CORNER

**During this time of Covid, it would be good to ask for intercessions from our Holy Mother. Also do you have a patron Saint?**

**Does your classroom have a patron Saint? Here are 10 Saints with a special connection to education.**

**St. Thomas Aquinas**, a brilliant scholar, is one of many patron saints of students.

**St. Catherine of Alexandria** was famous for her debating skills and is a patron of students, teachers, and librarians.

**St. Joseph of Cupertino**, famously a struggling student, is the patron of students taking exams.

**St. Gregory the Great**, a patron of teachers, was a Pope and writer who invented the calendar we use today as well as a form of church music that bears his name (Gregorian chant).

**St. John Baptist de la Salle** worked to improve schools and is a patron of teachers.

**St. Gemma Galgani**, a patron of students, is known for having been a conscientious student herself.

**St. Albert the Great** was one of St. Thomas Aquinas' teachers and is the patron of science students.

**St. John Berchmans** is a patron against gossip; he endeavored to say something nice about everyone.

**St. Aloysius Gonzaga** was so wise that by the age of 11 he was teaching catechism to other children. He is the patron of young students.

**St. Thèrèse of Lisieux**, known for her "little way" of kindness toward others, struggled with social relationships in school and is an excellent patron for students.

And of course; **Saints Bernard, Damian and Cosmas.**

Just an added note of the **importance of the children coming to Mass regularly on weekends with their families.** On weekdays they attend Mass during Faith Formation sessions, but the children need to pray with their moms and dads at Mass also on the weekends. Praying together strengthens a family in more ways than we'll ever realize!!!! Joshua says', "**as for me and my house, we will serve God**" Thank you for bringing the children to Mass!

Deacon Glenn

**"May you always be doing those good, kind things that show you are a child of God." Phil 1:11**

## HISPANIC MINISTRY

*We continue – Sunday Mass each week with volunteers greeting us at the doors with hand sanitizer, a thermometer to check temperatures, a list of those who have called ahead and a longer list of those who have been coming rather consistently.*

*Several families have taken turns to serve at the door, but usually it has been Salvador and Inez Tehandon with their sons.*

*There are other volunteers – lectors and cleaners. One special lector is Emiliano Navarro, 7th grader from St. Bernard; another is Genesis Contreras a new freshman at Mater Dei from Damiansville.*

*Many hands, youth and adult, help to make sure the church is ready for whoever will come for the next service. All the help is appreciated. We hope to return to "normal" but in the meantime we do the best we can to be in Church.*

*Our thanks to Deacons Glenn and Kevin for recording the Mass each Sunday.*

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*Seguimos – Misa dominical cada semana con voluntarios recibiéndonos en la puerta con sanitizado de manos, termómetro para chequear las temperaturas, una lista de los que han llamado y una lista mas grande do los que han habido asistiendo.*

*Varias familias han turnado sirviendo en la puerta, pero más que otra ha sido Salvador e Inez Tehandon con sus hijos.*

*Hay otros voluntarios – lectores y los que limpian. Un lector especial es Emiliano Navarro, estudiante del grado 7 de S. Bernard; otra es Genesis Contreras, nueva estudiante en Mater Dei de S. Damian.*

*Muchas manos, joven y adulta, ayudan a asegurar que la iglesia esté lista para quien vendrá próximo para un servicio. Apreciamos toda la ayuda. Esperamos el día cuando todo regrese a "normal" pero mientras hacemos lo posible de seguir siendo Iglesia.*

*Nuestros kudos a los Diáconos Glenn y Kevin por grabar la Misa cada domingo.*

**-Sister Ellen Orf**

