

*Lifelong
Faith
Formation
Parent Handbook*

2011-2012



**A VISION FOR A VIBRANT FAITH COMMUNITY:
LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION COMMISSION**

The Lifelong Faith Formation Commission's role is to tie all the ministries and groups involved in Lifelong Faith Formation together, providing formation, vision, and direction to staff and leadership involved in these ministries. We continue to encourage collaboration and creativity between groups and ministries. The LFF Commission continues to invite those interested to become part of this vital ministry. The Lifelong Faith Formation Commission reports to the Parish Council. Please call the LFF office for more information.

CONTACT PERSONS

CHILD MINISTRY.....Jim Beuscher 425-3101, x314
 4-Year-Old and 5-Year-Old Kindergarten beuscherj@stmaryhc.org
 Elementary – Grades 1-5
 Middle School – Grades 6-8
 Sacramental Programs – Eucharist and Reconciliation

YOUTH MINISTRY..... Tim Winters 425-3101, x335
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 High School – Grades 9-10
 Confirmation – Grades 11 & up

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LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION POLICIES

St. Mary offers a variety of Religious Education Programs to meet the needs of its parishioners .It is our mission to minister to all the children of our parish. Parents of children in the public schools are strongly encouraged to enroll their school-aged children in our religious education program. Because Lifelong Faith Formation is an ongoing process, it is necessary that children participate fully at all grade levels. To register your child/children, you must be an active/contributing member of St. Mary.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION INCLUDES: Mass attendance by children and parents, and sharing your time and talents at church activities. A contributing member is one who remembers to financially support the parish. The parish subsidizes a significant amount of money to allow for the variety of programs offered and the staff that is needed to minister in these programs.

ANNUAL ATTENDANCE

Consecutive yearly participation in Lifelong Faith Formation programming offered to students in the Preschool through Confirmation level is strongly *encouraged*.

Lifelong Faith Formation is an ongoing lifelong process. The determination of readiness to participate at a particular level in Lifelong Faith Formation programming will be made in consultation with the Program Director, the child's parent(s), and the child.

REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Children are expected to participate in all program sessions, except in cases of sickness or family emergency. Children in preschool through grade 3 *must be brought to and picked up from the gathering site (Classroom/Church) by a parent, guardian, or other designated adult.*

REPEATED ABSENCES

Following the third unexcused absence (absence without prior notification and/or justification), parents will be contacted and asked to meet with the Director. The student's continued participation in the program will be determined at that time. As a result of unnecessary absences, the child may be required to repeat the appropriate grade level.

LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION POLICIES



FAMILY PARTICIPATION

This is **YOUR** program. So along with the staff, both parent(s) and child are asked to become actively involved throughout the year. Please prayerfully consider where you can best serve your parish community. Many hands are needed!! Your participation on the financial level is always appreciated, but your time and talent should be an ongoing contribution to your parish as well. This type of stewardship is fostered by prayer, discernment, active participation, and authentic sharing of our personal resources.

SAFETY

For the safety of your children while attending class, we recommend that whenever possible you come into the building with your children, observe standard parking regulations and be cautious as you drive near the entrance. **NO CAPS MAY BE WORN IN THE BUILDING.**

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Care and respect of the property used should be given by those who participate in the programs. Parents will be notified of the damage done by their child, and the cost of repair or replacement is the parent's responsibility.

SACRAMENT POLICY FOR CHILD MINISTRY

Children preparing to receive Eucharist or Reconciliation for the first time are required to be enrolled in religious education during the year prior to as well as the year of preparation for the sacrament they will be receiving. This means the child must have been enrolled in a formal religious education program or a catholic school setting. It is necessary that your child participate in our parish sacramental program process. Please watch for a separate mailing to register your child/children for these special sessions.



OTHER CATECHETICAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

Children in grades 1-5 are invited to participate in the Children's Liturgy of the Word on the first and third Sundays of the month during the 9:00 and 11:00A.M. Liturgies. No registrations required. Children will be invited to join the facilitators after the opening prayer and will return after the Prayer of the Faithful.



PROCEDURE FOR ENTERING SCHOOL AND PARISH AREA

Sundays and Mondays

We will have 2 entrances:

- Lower School parking lot
- Parish Office (upper lot)

Wednesdays

We will have 2 entrances:

- Parish Office & upper school lot

Everyone is asked to use **these entrances** only and park in the designated areas. Please park your car and take your children into the building. "Drop-offs" increase delays and provide for a dangerous situation. Thank you!

NOTE: Handicapped and Fire Lane Parking Restrictions will be Reinforced by the Hales Corners Police Department.



PROCEDURE FOR DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS

For Preschool through Grade 3 dismissal is from the classroom ONLY!
A parent must come in to pick up the child/ren. A written request for early dismissal is always necessary.

FOUR-YEAR-OLD and FIVE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN

CURRICULUM – Four-Year-Olds

Stories of God's Love 4/5

This program welcomes the youngest members to our Faith Community and teaches about God's love for us. It is their introduction to the teachings of the Catholic Faith. They will learn about God's love for them, their family and friends. They will learn about the Church and the Bible. Through the wonders of creation, they will learn about all the wonderful things God has given us.

CURRICULUM – Five-Year-Olds

Stories of God's Love Kindergarten
Published by RCL

In this book Kindergartners will learn about the many ways God's love affects them. God's love gives us creation, makes me who I am, gives me people to love, gives me Jesus and teaches me to love.

Each lesson fosters warmth and wonderful traditions in the home where faith is spoken of and lived! The content and experiences are on target socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically for their age level. Through creative activities, stories, prayer experiences and special celebrations, the children working together learn how to care for themselves and others.

FOUR-YEAR-OLD and FIVE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN

1. Each child will receive a folder on the first day of class.
2. Please take the time to review each week's lesson with your child by checking their folders. Newsletters, parent notes, etc., will always be found in these.
3. Please feel free to discuss any particular problem you may be having by setting aside a special time to meet your child's teacher (preferably after class). We want the program to be enjoyed by all.
4. **BAD WEATHER:** When in doubt, watch Channels 4, 6 and 12 or listen to their affiliated radio stations. On Sunday, it is more difficult to get announcements on because the Weather Desk is not usually open. Please check the parish website.
5. Please follow your calendar and always check the "Week Ahead" section of the Parish Bulletin and Parish Website for emergency changes



FOUR-YEAR-OLD and FIVE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN

1. Each child should bring a folder the first day of class.
2. Please take the time to review each week's lesson with your child by checking their folders. Newsletters, parent notes, etc., will always be found in these.
3. Please feel free to discuss any particular problem you may be having by setting aside a special time to meet your child's teacher (preferably after class). We want the program to be enjoyed by all.
4. BAD WEATHER: When in doubt, watch Channels 4, 6 and 12 or listen to their affiliated radio stations. On Sunday, it is more difficult to get announcements on because the Weather Desk is not usually open. Please check the parish website.
5. Please follow your calendar and always check the "Week Ahead" section of the Parish Bulletin and Parish Website for emergency changes.

- ✓ *Help children arrive on time.*
- ✓ *Review each week's lesson.*
- ✓ *Discuss your concerns with your child's teacher.*
- ✓ *Follow procedures for inclement weather.*
- ✓ *Read the "Week Ahead" in each week's bulletin.*



K4, K5 and GRADE 1

SESSION TIMES

Sunday Mornings, 9:00 - 10:15 A.M. (During the 9:00 A.M. Liturgy)

SESSION DATES: SEMESTER I

October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

November 6, 13, 20, (No class November 27)

December 4, 11

SESSION DATES: SEMESTER II

January 15, 22, 29

February 5, 12, 26 (No class February 19),

March 4, 11, 18, 25

CURRICULUM

K4 — God Made the World, Loyola Press

K5 and Grade 1 — Blest Are We,

Silver Burdett & Ginn Co.

See page 6



GRADES 1-5

SESSION TIME

Monday Evenings, 6:15 – 7:30 P.M.

Wednesday Evenings, 5:00 – 6:15 P.M.

SESSION DATES: SEMESTER I

Monday

September 26

October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

November 7, 14, 28 (No class 11/21)

December 5

Wednesday

September 28

October 5, 12, 19, 26

November 2, 9, 16, 30 (No Class 11/23)

December 7

SESSION DATES: SEMESTER II

Monday

January 9, 16, 23, 30

February 6, 13, 20, 27

March 5, 12, 19

Wednesday

January 11, 18, 25

February 1, 8, 15, 29 (No class 2/22)

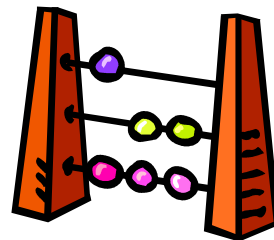
March 7, 14, 21

CURRICULUM

Blest Are We, Silver Burdett & Ginn Co.

GRADES 1-5

1. So that our sessions can begin promptly, we request that the children arrive a few minutes early. Younger children (Grades 1, 2 & 3) **MUST BE** brought into the building and picked up by an adult or older brother or sister.
2. Please call the Lifelong Faith Formation Office, if he/she will be late or absent! Following the third unexcused absence (absence without prior notification and/or justification), parents will be contacted and asked to meet with the Director. The student's continued participation in the program will be determined at that time. The child may be required to repeat the grade.
3. You are encouraged to car pool. This will greatly help with the flow of traffic at school and a day without driving is appreciated by everyone.
4. The student book is a **WORK TEXT** — it is meant to be written in. Besides their text, occasionally parent notes and other pertinent information regarding projects are sent home. Please check with your children each week. (Check their folder also.)
5. During the year the children have an opportunity to gather at church for special programs and different opportunities for prayer.
6. **BAD WEATHER:** If the school is closed due to bad weather, we **WILL NOT HAVE CLASSES** that evening. When in doubt, watch Channels 4, 6 and 12 or listen to their affiliated radio stations. **You may also check our parish website.**
7. **TARDINESS:** A student, not in class by five minutes after the program session is scheduled to begin, is considered tardy. Tardiness disrupts the class time. Please help by having your child arrive on time (5 minutes before class time begins). Repeated tardiness or repeated unexcused tardiness will be reviewed by the Director and the parent/guardian will be contacted.
8. **EARLY DISMISSAL:** Children are expected to participate in the **ENTIRE** session. A parent's written request to the catechist is necessary to permit the student to leave the session during scheduled class time. At these times, a Parent/Guardian is required to pick up the student from class. Catechists **ARE NOT** allowed to dismiss the student without this request. This is to insure your child's safety and is diocesan policy.
9. **ANNUAL ATTENDANCE:** Consecutive yearly participation in Lifelong Faith Formation programming offered to students in the Preschool through Confirmation level is strongly encouraged. Lifelong Faith Formation is an ongoing lifelong process. The determination of readiness to participate at a particular level in Lifelong Faith Formation programming will be made in consultation with the program director, the child's parent(s) and child



- ✓ Help children arrive a few minutes before classes begin.
- ✓ Accompany younger children into and out of building.
- ✓ Observe attendance policy. Call 414-425-3101 if your child will be absent.
- ✓ Car pool.
- ✓ Check parent notes and other information sent home.
- ✓ Follow procedures for inclement weather.
- ✓ Provide written permission for early dismissal. Pick up child from class .
- ✓ Encourage perfect attendance!

GRADES 6, 7, and 8

SESSION TIME

Monday Evenings, 6:15 – 7:30 P.M.

Wednesday Evenings, 5:00 – 6:15 P.M.

SESSION DATES: SEMESTER I

Monday

October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

November 7, 14

Wednesday

October 5, 12, 19, 26

November 2, 9, 16



SESSION DATES: SEMESTER II

Monday

January 23, 30

February 6, 13, 27 (No class 2/20)

March 5, 12

Wednesday

January 25

February 1, 8, 15, 29 (No class 2/22)

March 7, 14

CURRICULUM– GRADE 6

Blest Are We, Silver Burdett & Ginn Co.

This year we are using the catechetical series for GRADES 1-6 — Blest Are We, Silver Burdett & Ginn. Blest Are We is designed to engage children and families in faith formation. Blest Are We has 20 core chapters plus Feasts and Seasons. Each grade level and unit has a program theme song and music. There are “We Care” chapters at the end of each unit to provide opportunities to introduce and discuss Catholic Social Teachings. Finally, Blest Are We has an “Our Catholic Heritage” reference section at the end of each child’s book based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We are very excited to bring the best formation resource to our children and parents with Blest Are We.

- ◆ Call 414-425-3101 if your child will be absent.
- ◆ Following absence, pick up homework packet and complete with child.
- ◆ Return packet to teacher.

NOTES

1. Please call the Lifelong Faith Formation Office, 425-3101, if your child is unable to attend a session.
2. **Homework resources** will be given to your teen when your teen is absent from a session. It is your responsibility to cover the material with your teen, and return it at the following session. Your help in this area is greatly appreciated!
3. Service and outreach are an important component of Lifelong Faith Formation. Flyers and permission slips will be sent home giving you more information when service opportunities are offered.
4. If you have any questions or concerns during the coming year, please call.

CURRICULUM – GRADES 7-8

Blest Are We, Silver Burdett & Ginn Co.
The Story of Our Church & The Story of Jesus

This year we are using the **catechetical series for GRADES 7-8 — Blest Are We, Silver Burdett & Ginn**. *Blest Are We* is designed to engage children and families in faith formation. *Blest Are We* has 20 core chapters plus Feasts and Seasons. Each grade level and unit has a program theme song and music. There are “We Care” chapters at the end of each unit to provide opportunities to introduce and discuss Catholic Social Teachings. Finally, *Blest Are We* has an “Our Catholic Heritage” reference section at the end of each child’s book based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. We are very excited to bring the best formation resource to our children and parents with *Blest Are We*.

- ◆ **Watch for information and permission slips for service, social And outreach activities.**
- ◆ **Call with questions or concerns.**

ST. MARY PARISH MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY

Middle School Youth Ministry is an organization for all St. Mary Parish middle school students from both public and private schools (6th, 7th, and 8th graders). It provides a safe supervised atmosphere for kids to build community in faith and friendship. There are three aspects to this organization: service, social and spiritual. Over the past five years social activities have included: dances, skating at the Pettit Ice Center, swimming at a local high school, a night at the Bucks/Wave game. Service activities included serving meals to the homeless at St. Ben's, visiting the sick and elderly at nursing homes, raking leaves for those in need, and making and delivering sandwich lunches for those at Guest House. Activities will start up again in the fall. Watch for announcements of ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS.

ST. MARY PARISH MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP



MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAM

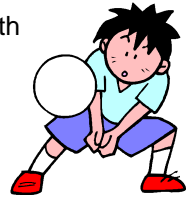
Middle school students (Grades 6-7-8) who are registered in our parish Lifelong Faith Formation program and attend the classes on a regular basis are able to participate in our parish athletic programs.

Philosophy

It is the primary purpose of the St. Mary's Athletic Association to provide an extension of the Christian Educational experience. The Parish Athletic Program is designed to provide enjoyable extracurricular activities for children and teach the fundamentals of sports. The program strives to develop self worth, sportsmanship, discipline, sound judgment and physical well being.

Eligibility

Only children of registered Parish members actively participating in the St. Mary's Lifelong Faith Formation program or students enrolled in St. Mary's Parish School may participate in parish athletic programs. Requirements for participation apply equally to students in the parish school and in the Lifelong Faith Formation program. Eligibility to compete will be determined by the students' academic record, effort, attendance and conduct in school (whether Catholic or public), and in Lifelong Faith Formation classes. Information on sign up dates for the different sports will be made available throughout the year. For more information on our detailed athletic policies please contact the St. Mary's Athletic Association.



HIGH SCHOOL LIFELONG FORMATION FRESHMEN & SOPHOMORES



SESSION TIME

Sunday Evenings, 7:00 - 8:00 P.M.

SESSION DATES

September 11

October 2

November 6

December 14 — Special evening for Parents and Freshmen/Sophomores
at St. Alphonsus, 7-8:30 p.m.

January 15

February 19

February 20-22 Parish Mission

March 18

April 1

Service and outreach dates will be discussed in small groups and posted on the parish website.



FRESHMEN & SOPHOMORES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This year we are using the book “Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth” and the program Total Catechesis for our freshmen and sophomores. These programs are resources that nurture both an understanding of the Catholic faith and an experience of living the Catholic faith. The design of the programs reflects key elements of Catholic identity in both its content and structure. It is developed around key themes of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. In addition, the programs also empower teens with the skills to live their Catholic faith today. The programs utilize four different approaches.



In the Teaching approach, teens will explore key themes of the Catholic faith that include the sacramental life of the Church, the cycle of the liturgical year, the rich store of Catholic social teachings and the support received in being a part of a caring Christian community. We will have a presentation on Dating Relationships.

The Service approach engages teens in living out the Gospel call to service through concrete action projects. This year's service projects include St. Ben's, St. Vincent de Paul Food Drive, Mission Trip and the Haiti Parish Connection Project. Overnight service Immersion retreats will also be offered.



The Prayer and Worship approach provides opportunities for teens to experience a variety of prayer experiences and to develop their own prayer life. A special teen Mass takes place prior to class on most sessions.

Through the Community approach, teens will discover the value of belonging to a caring Christian Community through social events and activities offered throughout the school year.

Lifelong Faith Formation sessions are required of all students attending public high school as a prerequisite for Confirmation in the 11th or 12th grade.

CYM BASKETBALL/VOLLEYBALL

The CYM (Catholic Youth Ministry) sports leagues are parish-based leagues for boys and girls.

Parish based teams are composed of youth enrolled in the Life Long Faith Formation classes/youth ministry or in Catholic high school. They must be parish members and not playing for their high school team.

Coed Volleyball teams form late September with games starting in early November. Basketball Teams form in mid-November with games starting in late December. All games are against other parish teams in the Archdiocese. An additional fee is required. More details will be available on the website or through the Lifelong Faith Formation office.



ST. MARY PARISH YOUTH GROUP TEEN SPARC

The **St. Mary High School Youth Group** is a group of teens from public and private school who are looking to develop new friendships, grow and share their faith and help the community. **SPARC STANDS FOR S (social) P (positive) A (active) R (real) and C (community)**. Watch the bulletin and website for upcoming events and activities.
Come, Catch the **SPARC!**



**All High
School Youth**

Are invited

To join.



CONFIRMATION – YOUTH

SESSION TIME

Sunday Evenings, 7:00 - 8:00 P.M.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION...

- welcomes us and deepens our belonging to the faith community
- deepens our relationship to God, as Creator, Redeemer and Spirit
- strengthens us as disciples

In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, young people are given the opportunity to express their decision to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at age 16 and a junior in high school. Making this faith commitment is an important step in each person's life and should be an informed decision based on knowledge of the Catholic faith, the depth of one's faith development, the degree of one's commitment to Jesus and to our faith community.

Anyone wishing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation is expected to fulfill the following requirements:

1. active membership in the parish community
2. minimum age of 16 and a junior in high school
3. participation in the preparation program, including educational, retreat and service components.

Confirmation preparation provides an opportunity for growth in knowledge, which hopefully will lead to growth in faith as well.

Sessions begin in November with the Sacrament being celebrated October of 2013.

Confirmation candidates, sponsors and parents will receive a separate handbook and schedule. Information on **Adult Confirmation** formation can be found on page 15.

ADULT & FAMILY MINISTRY

Brigid O'Donnell
414-425-2174, ext. 338



SMALL FAITH COMMUNITIES

What does a small group entail? Each one is different, but here are some common characteristics:

- ❖ You share your personal experiences of God's work in your lives.
- ❖ You support each other to further your actions in a life of service.
- ❖ You reflect on Scripture and/or other materials and challenge each other to live the gospel in Your daily lives.
- ❖ You meet on a regular basis.
- ❖ You commit yourselves to being church—on a small scale—focusing on your faith and God's presence as it applies to everyday life.

A small group can be a source of support if you wish to deepen your faith and integrate it more fully into your relationships and work.

The small group is a vital part of the greater parish community. It provides encouragement. Sharing life Stories with each other gives concrete examples of God's grace in your lives.

Let us know your needs or interests and we will work with you to make it happen.
Call, Brigid O'Donnell at 414-425-2174, ext. 338.

ABOUT CATHOLICISM INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CATHOLIC?

Many non-Catholic adults who come in contact with St. Mary's often express an interest in joining our Church. Some are from other Christian traditions. Others have not been baptized or, if baptized, have not received First Eucharist or Confirmation. If you are interested in exploring Catholicism through what is called the RCIA (The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults), our director of Adult and Family Ministry, , will Brigid O'Donnell, pastoral associate will be happy to discuss how St. Mary's can best help you, 414-425-2174, ext. 338.

ADULT CONFIRMATION

If, for whatever reason, you've not been confirmed, now might be the time to deepen your relationship with God through the sacrament of Confirmation. You will be gathering with other adults who are considering making their adult commitment of faith. Thursday evenings, October – April, these sessions are in collaboration with St. Alphonsus, St. Martin of Tours, and St. John the Evangelist parishes. Pick up an Adult Confirmation brochure in the Parish Communication Center or call Tim Winters for details.

FIRST THURSDAYS & FIRST FRIDAYS FOR WOMEN

Come share your spiritual journey with other women!
This is an ongoing spirituality group. We check in with each other. You are Welcome to join us in September or October before the group is established through June. It is a monthly commitment.



WOMEN AT THE WELL

2011-2012

Would you like to connect with other women of any age or in any stage of life?

Do you enjoy learning about your faith?

Is understanding the Sunday Scripture readings something you want to do?

Just like the Samaritan women who had her physical and spiritual thirst quenched when she met Jesus at the town well, we gather to enjoy each other's company and to attend to our spiritual growth.

Women at the Well meets twice a month on Friday morning from 9:15-10:45a.m. in the board Room (located just outside the Gathering Space of church.)

Once a month we will reflect on the Sunday Scripture readings.

Once a month we will discuss a faith topic.

There is no need to register. Come as often as your schedule allows. Check the flier on our website for specific dates and topics. We begin September 16th. Child care is available, but you need to call ahead for this service.

SPIRITUALITY FOR MEN

First Friday Men's club meets at 8:00a.m. each month for Mass and a talk by Fr. Dominic. It is held at Klemmer's on Oklahoma Avenue. Call 414-281-0526 for more information.

The Men's Discussion Group meets two Saturdays a month from 9:30-11:00a.m. Contact Fred Matestic at 414-303-3852.

ST. MARY'S ADULT LIFELONG FORMATION LIBRARY

Looking for some new information on scripture, spirituality, saints or just an interesting read? The browsing shelves on the third floor, outside room 312, have a surprising array of books, as well as other media, for the adult learner. Generous donors have made thoughtful contributions which range from devotional to academic. Available to all parishioners, these materials can be checked out simply by signing the sign-out book next to the shelves (the honor system). Take a look! You'll be glad you did.



TUESDAY EVENING SCRIPTURE STUDY

Each Tuesday evening Fr. Chuck Schramm leads a Scripture Study looking at the readings for the upcoming weekend. The study provides a time to learn and to process together the reading proclaimed on Sunday, giving the parish opportunities to understand better the Word of God. The group meets each Tuesday at 7 P.M in Room 312 in the Parish office.

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT- THE WAY OF THE CROSS

On four Wednesday evenings in Lent St. Mary's offers Stations of the Cross. How can we get to know Jesus if we do not walk with him? Watch the bulletin for this and other opportunities to grow in your relationship with Christ. Know peace.



FRIDAY FAMILY NIGHTS

All families of the parish are invited to join us for two special Friday Nights of fun and formation.

Friday -- November 18th An evening to be "Thankful".

Friday -- March 16th "Lenten Journey"

Watch the bulletin and School/ Lifelong Formation for details.

MANY MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS

Watch our parish bulletin for other wonderful opportunities meeting a wide variety of needs. It pays to read the bulletin! In addition, your ideas for ways we can better serve you are always welcome.

