



FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

Today we welcome and welcome back the families that are part of the Church of St. Mary by their participation in the Religious Education (RE) Program. RE classes are offered on Sunday mornings, Tuesday afternoons, and Tuesday evenings. Special thanks to the leadership of Mrs. Joy Pacheco, Director of Religious Education, her assistant, Ms. Rosa Osuna, and the many Catechists and families that grow in relationship with Jesus through the RE program.

Parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith. The catechists have a very important and key role in partnership with the students and families. The Archdiocese has guidelines that the Catechists follow, they are:

“Through religious instruction, preparation for the sacraments, animation of prayer and other works of charity, they help the baptized to grow in their fervor of the Christian life.” (Guide for Catechists, 1993)

“All Catechists shall be skilled, knowledgeable and faithful Roman Catholics. They shall be committed witnesses to the Gospel. They shall share actively in parish life. They serve the parish by communicating Christ’s message as articulated in the magisterium of the Church.” **Policy 1301.01**

“All Catechists shall participate in ongoing formation, catechetical training, and education. Parish and Catholic school Catechists are required to be certified or working toward Archdiocesan Catechist certification. They shall have sufficient knowledge of Roman Catholic doctrine and worship, familiarity with Scripture, ability to communicate, and an understanding of developmental stages and learning styles.” **Policy 1401.01**

We build bonds among each other to sustain our life in Christ: The parish represents a genuine Catholic community that is conscious of our solidarity in Christ with the entire Church of Chicago and the Universal Church. It is inclusive and harmonious, respecting and appreciating diversity in all its forms as an asset in worship and community life.

We transform the lives of others through service as Christ’s missionary disciples: The parish prepares and send parishioners as missionary disciples into the world to transform society with the joy and the truth of the Gospel. The parish is a beacon of faith and an advocate for justice and peace, reaching out in love to all who are in need, on the margin of society, or who live in fear and loneliness.

We respond to the call to holiness by journeying together with Jesus Christ: The parish accompanies the baptized on life’s journey to become more Christ-centered, resistant to sin, merciful, continually attentive to building a mature, well-integrated adult spirituality, and committed to charity, peace, prayer, and virtue.

We take responsibility for administration and leadership of the parish as good stewards of the gifts Christ has entrusted to us: The parish thrives under the visionary leadership of the pastor, who works in collaboration with his associates, staff and the laity to ensure that the parish’s mission can fully flourish as a result of proper administration. The parish fosters a culture of stewardship and a spirituality of gratitude that inspires parishioners to generously share the gifts Christ has entrusted to them in support of the mission of the Church through the parish, the Archdiocese, and the world.

Join me in praying for our Religious Education program and for all families with catechetical age children, that they may all grow in “their fervor of the Christian life.”

We are happy to have members of the Knights of Columbus with us today, receiving contributions to support the “Tootsie Roll Drive”. Next weekend, members of our Scouts programs will be inviting your kindness and generosity in support of their efforts.

May God guide and bless us with hearts of charity and prayer,

Fr. Mike Macur