

# SAINT DANIEL CHURCH

## EDUCATION COMMISSION

Updated on January 1, 2021

### Table of Contents

Organizational Notes .....	2
Ongoing Formation .....	3
Children's Classes .....	4
Preschool Program .....	5

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IS A LIFE-LONG PROCESS  
THROUGH WHICH WE CONTINUALLY GROW  
IN KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST  
AS OUR SAVIOR AND OUR GOD.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STARTS WITH ADULTS  
AND CONTINUES WITH THEIR CHILDREN  
UNTIL IT REACHES ALL PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL  
SO THAT CHRIST MAY BE LORD OF ALL.

# Organizational Notes for the Education Commission

## Purpose of the Commission

- The Education Commissions engages in both evangelization and catechesis within the parish community.
- The Education Commission also provides programs for ongoing religious education for all age groups.
- The primary focus of this Commission is on developing an adult faith that produces Catholic leaders.

## Commission Leadership

- The Pastor appoints a parish staff member to serve as the Director of the Education Commission.
- The Commission Director meets with the Pastor and the Staff Council regarding the goals of this Commission.
- The Director meets with all the commission members on a regular basis, both individually and as groups.

## Commission Membership

- The Commission members are either the leaders or designated representatives from each organization.
- Each year, the commission members are (re-)appointed by the Director in consultation with the Pastor.
- The Director recommends a commission member to the Pastor for membership on the parish council.

## Education Commission Staff

- Education Director: Karen Gulvas, 630-384-0137, karen@stdaniel.org
  - Religion Classes for grade school students in our parish
  - Bible-Kids Preschool program for our local community
- Formation Director: Fr. James Dvorscak, 630-384-0123, pastor@stdaniel.org
  - Pastor's Forum, ChristLife Course, RCIA Converts, Prayer Groups
  - Liaison for adult formation activities around the diocese and in our cluster of parishes
- Scripture Study: Diane Ahlemeyer: retired religious education director
  - Tuesday morning Scripture Study sessions as scheduled
  - Contact Diane through the Education Office
- Secretarial Services for Religion Classes and for Child Protection
  - Education Secretary: Judy Badger, 630-384-0125, reo@stdaniel.org
  - Protecting God's Children: Marybride Misar, 630-384-0124, info@stdaniel.org

Thank you to all the many volunteers in all our religious education programs, including those who are involved in ongoing formation and children's classes. We also appreciate the efforts of our preschool staff.

## Ongoing Formation

**Our Vision.** Our ongoing formation programs are designed for parishioners who have completed their sacraments of Christian Initiation, and for adults who wish to complete their sacraments of Christian Initiation in the Catholic Church. Faith is a life-long learning process within a parish community that prays, learns, and serves together.

**CHRISTLIFE Course.** CHRISTLIFE helps people to discover Jesus Christ personally, to follow Him in their daily lives as Catholic Christian disciples, and to share Him with others. The three parts of CHRISTLIFE are Discovering Christ, Following Christ, and Sharing Christ. For more information, please contact the Pastor's office.

**Prayer Partners.** In coordination with the Service Commission, our parish promotes adult prayer groups called Prayer Partners. The small faith-sharing groups for adults engage in prayer, learning and service for the purpose of establishing Acts 2:42 communities of Intentional Disciples.

**Adult Formation.** In addition to our local parish programs, our parish also promotes adult formation events and activities provided by the Diocese of Joliet and neighboring parishes. For more information, please go to [www.DioceeseofJoliet.org/layformation](http://www.DioceeseofJoliet.org/layformation), or contact the Education Office.

**Young Adults.** Our parish promotes young adult events and activities provided by the Diocese of Joliet and neighboring parishes. For more information, please go to [www.DioceeseofJoliet.org/yam](http://www.DioceeseofJoliet.org/yam), or contact the Education Office.

**Youth Ministry.** Our parish promotes youth ministry events and activities provided by the Diocese of Joliet and neighboring parishes. For more information, please go to [www.DioceeseofJoliet.org/ym](http://www.DioceeseofJoliet.org/ym), or contact the Education Office. There is also more information on our parish website.

**Bible Study.** Our parish conducts its own Catholic Bible Study program on a weekday morning throughout the school year. Please call the Education Office for more information. Our parish also promotes prayer partner groups that include a Bible Study component, through our parish service commission.

**Convert Classes.** The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) prepares people for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation. RCIA is for adults who wish to be baptized, to become Catholic, or to complete their sacraments. For more information, please contact the Pastor's office.

**Protecting God's Children.** Adults who work with children or vulnerable adults in our parish in any capacity are required to take this important diocesan program and to undergo required background checks. For more information, please contact the Parish Office.

**Other Programs.** Our parish also provides retreats, book study, and family events. We also promote adult prayer and study groups through the Service Commission. For more information, please contact the Education Office.

## Children's Classes

**Our Vision.** Religious Education starts with adults who have experienced Christ, who have decided to follow Christ, and who earnestly want to share Christ with others, especially with the young people of our parish community.

Thus, our parish grade school program starts first with the parents, enabling them to know and love their Catholic Christian faith more deeply, so that they can share that faith with their children more personally.

Our program continues with developing knowledgeable and skilled Catechists who can effectively assist the parents in sharing their Catholic Christian faith with their children. This is done through our classroom curriculum.

Our program seeks to fully initiate young people into the Catholic Church so that, at an age-appropriate level, they may continue to experience Christ, follow Christ, and share Christ, as graduates of our grade school program.

Our program is built on the foundation of families who attend Mass together each week, who are serious about living their daily lives as Catholic Christians, and who are active participants in the programs of our parish.

Our program introduces junior high students to activities that will encourage them to join our senior high youth ministry program, so they might discover their age-appropriate roles of service in our parish community.

Finally, our grade school program wants to produce graduates who will continue to practice their Catholic Christian faith throughout their lives and, one day in the future, share that faith with their own children.

**Grade School Religion Classes.** Our children's religion classes meet on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., as scheduled, from September through March. Parent meetings are held monthly during these class times.

Our eight-year program requires anyone who has missed any part of our program to make up for that material by independent study and examination by our parish education staff. Otherwise, sacraments may be delayed.

First Confession and First Communion are usually celebrated in second grade. Besides the classes for students, and the monthly parent meetings, there are additional meetings for second grade students and their parents.

Confirmation is usually celebrated in eighth grade. Besides the classes for students, and the monthly parent meetings, there are additional meetings for eighth grade students and their parents. There is also a retreat.

**Registration and Scheduling.** Information about the current year's schedule of classes and current tuition rates can be found in our parent handbook that is available on our parish website. Financial aid is available for tuition.

Registration is held in the spring in preparation for the fall start of classes. This is necessary for the ordering of the right number of books and materials for the students, as well as for the recruitment of their catechists.

If a student has missed any part of our complete eight-year program, their registration for a particular grade level is contingent upon a covenant for independent study and examination by a parish education staff member.

Thank you for letting us help you share your Catholic Christian faith with your children through participation in our parish grade school religion program. Together we can help form the next generation of Catholic Christians.

## Preschool Program

**Bible Kids Preschool** is a partnership with our parents as early childhood educators and provides children with an opportunity to discover the uniqueness given to them as a Child of God. Our program focuses on the principle that children learn through hands-on experience (play). The hands-on experience includes the following skill sets:

- **Fine Motor Development** - To gain strength and learn control to be able to write. Children participate in art and sensory play.
- **Language Development** – Being able to communicate with appropriate words, being able to comprehend and follow directions. Children engage in music, finger plays, and prayer to enhance their language development.
- **Social Development** – Learning appropriate interactions with others, taking turns, sharing, treating each other with kindness and respect.
- **Gross Motor Development** – Opportunities to run, ride bikes, climb, bouncing/throwing/catching a ball and free play are available every day. The children participate in an indoor gym for approximately twenty minutes daily.
- **Cognitive Development** – Learning math concepts such as number recognition, counting and value are the beginning process of addition and subtraction. In addition to knowing the upper and lower case letters, the children participate in activities such as sorting, classifying, sequencing, and beginning phonics. In the four to five-year old class, the children are able to read/sound out basic sight words, and the majority of the children are beginning to read when they complete the pre-kindergarten program.
- **Faith Experience** – The children pray at the start of the day and at snack time. Bible stories are presented daily, and Jesus is the focus for both Christmas and Easter (instead of Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny).

**Preschool Schedule:** Preschool usually begins in late August and usually ends before the Memorial Day weekend. Our program is from 9:15 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. for children ages two (by September 1st) through pre-kindergarten. Families may enroll for a minimum of two days or the maximum of five days. Families have the opportunity to select what days their child will attend the program. Tuition is paid monthly.

**Christmas Program:** One of the highlights of our preschool program is their annual Christmas Program, held in our church, and followed by a reception in our parish center. Although our preschool Christmas Program is not lengthy due to the young age of our students, it is a delightful event that fills our church building each year.

**Parent Hospitality:** At various times throughout the year, there are hospitality events with food and drink for our students, their families, their siblings, and of course their grandparents. These hospitality events help create a warm feeling of community among our preschool families and our dedicated preschool staff members.

**Preschool Parent Handbook.** To obtain a copy of our Preschool Parent Handbook, go to our parish website, [www.StDaniel.org](http://www.StDaniel.org), then click on the “education” link, and scroll down to the “preschool” section. You may also contact the Education Office to obtain a copy of this handbook.