



St. Mary Catholic Church

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Dear Parents,

I pray that you are all having a safe and blessed Summer! It's hard to believe that the new school year is just around the corner but here we are! Our first day is set to begin September 12, 2021, from 9:15-10:30. Enclosed in this envelope you will find your registration paperwork, a calendar for the year and an opt-out form for the "Empowering God's Children" seminar (continue reading for details). Please fill out your registration and return with payment by August 27, 2021.

This year we will be beginning our classes in prayer. Please bring your child into the church and sit with their class. We will spend a few minutes in prayer and then the students will head to class with their teachers. I do ask that you stay for this time of prayer if at all possible, especially the first few classes as your students get used to the change and as a nice way for you to meet their teacher as well. Keep in mind though, that you are always welcome and encouraged to join us for opening prayers throughout the course of the school year as each class will begin with prayer in the church.

Another piece of business that I want to make you aware of, is that the first class this year we will be spending the first half of it completing the "Empowering God's Children" lessons. Classes will watch a short video and do an activity learning about body autonomy and safe environment practices. This is a requirement from the Diocese of Rockford that it is offered to all students, K-8. If you prefer that your child does not attend this lesson, please fill out the enclosed "opt-out" form and return it with your registration paperwork if you are wanting your child to attend the lesson there is nothing for you to fill out, simply send your child to class and they will attend. Your child will sit out and wait with one of the catechist volunteers until the lesson is over (approximately 15-20 minutes) so please send your child to RE the first day regardless of if they will be attending the "EGC" lesson because they will still have time for some welcome activities and class time.

Finally, we will be offering in-person only this year. If you have extenuating circumstances and cannot attend in-person due to your child's health concerns or that of an immediate family member, please let me know and I would be happy to make accommodations for you. I never want any student left out or behind, there is always a place for your child(ren) in our program!

I am looking forward to seeing you all soon and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me and I will do my best to help you.

Thank you and God Bless,

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