

## Answers to Most Asked Questions about Volunteering for OLMC Religious Education (RE) Program

### **WHY does Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish offer Religious Education classes for children?**

*In an effort to assist\* parents, in the important work of raising their children in the truths and the practice of their Catholic Faith.*

*\* Vital to a family's faith formation is the parents' commitment to regularly bring their children with them to Mass, and to pray and talk about the things of God together as a family.*

**WHY do we need 100+ Volunteers every year?** Each year, Our Lady of Mount Carmel registers 350 to 450 students from Pre-Kinder thru 12th grade. To adequately care for this number of students, we offer classes in 4 Sessions: 2 on Sunday and 2 on Wednesday. Additionally, both Volunteer & Student families are often stretched between jobs, children, health, school, extra-curricular and family/extended family duties. Since there can be "unexpected/unplanned" time away from RE commitments & regular attendance, having an adequately staffed Religious Ed program allows for all program needs to be met no matter what situations and circumstances may arise for the volunteers or student families throughout the year.

**Who is a Volunteer?** All Adult Catholics in good standing with the Church, who are willing & able to sacrifice in service for the Lord, including: Men, Women, experienced & inexperienced, single or married by the Church, Parents, Husbands, Wives, Aunts, Uncles, Godparents, and Grandparents! As well as Minors ages 14-17 who may assist throughout the RE program as Aides/Youth Leaders. Prior to serving, **ALL** volunteers must be Certified by the Diocese of Corpus Christi, TX. Certification includes an Application with Criminal Background Check and Safe Environment Training.

**For 18 yrs old and up**, certification is conveniently offered **ONLINE** (takes about 1.5 hrs and should be done on laptop, tablet or pc for ease of viewing). **14-17yrs old** are trained **IN-PERSON** by Jennifer Wicks, DRE & Safe Environment Coordinator, call 643-3548.

**Where?** Most RE Session duties are performed in RE Building. Highschool classes are held in Hall.

**What Do Volunteers Do?** Remember, YOU are not alone, Volunteers work in Teams and always have RE Staff to rely on for support, direction, comfort and understanding! Teaching Teams are typically composed of (2) Adults; **Childcare** and especially lower grade Teaching Teams are encouraged to include an interested minor (14+ yrs & appropriately Certified) as a third member of their Team.

Following the Church Liturgical Year we: ● **Teach & Substitute** using approved age-appropriate curriculum that is made for both the inexperienced and experienced as well as use related resources provided by the RE Office ● **Provide Child Care free** for young children while their parents teach/volunteer.

**How Much Time Does it Take?** Minimally, Session Duties begin 15 to 20 minutes prior to Session Start time and end 15 to 20 minutes after Session End time. While Training is more (and on-going) for Catechists & Catechist Aides than for those providing Childcare or RE Office help, Spiritual and Continuing Faith Formation materials/events are provided throughout the year for ALL Volunteers.

**"Weekly" Volunteers** serve 26-28 "Class Sessions" per year according to the RE Calendar specified each year. Substitutes serve according to their commitment schedule/program needs.

**Additionally:** At home or in the classroom, **Teaching Team Partners** (individually or as a team) and **Substitutes** set aside 1 ½ to 2 ½ hrs. sometime in advance of each Class to properly prepare for their presentations & activities. **Sacrament Prep Teams** have additional day & time responsibilities.