

Youth Faith Formation 2026-27

Religious Education and Sacramental Prep for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist:

Any students 1st - 8th grade are invited to attend Religious Education (RE) at St. John XXIII for the 2026-27 school year, alternating Wednesday nights from September - April. 2nd graders or those who have not received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist, are invited to participate in Sacramental Preparation classes which meet alternating Wednesday nights. Sacramental Preparation is to be done in conjunction with either attending Catholic Schools or attending Religious Education. Students in both RE and Sacramental Prep will come each week. There is a tentative schedule at the end of the document.

Catholic School students are welcome to attend Religious Education classes if they would like.

This year there are 2 groups for Religious Education which will alternate weeks: Aquinas Group (A) will meet the first and third Wednesdays of the month and Borromeo Group (B) will meet the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. The two groups are named after Saints: St. Thomas Aquinas is the patron Saint of students and St. Charles Borromeo is the patron Saint of religious education and catechists. The group names are to differentiate which weeks students come to RE.

Both Aquinas Group and Borromeo Group have two times: Early Class and Late Class depending on the group of students. The "Early" class is 5:15 - 6:45 pm and is for 1st - 4th grade RE (Aquinas Early) and Sacramental Prep (Borromeo Early). The "Late" class is 6:45 - 8 pm and is for 5th - 8th Graders. They only come to one or the other (Aquinas or Borromeo). So all students will have both a group and a time: Aquinas Early, Aquinas Late, Borromeo Early, and Borromeo Late. This chart gives a visual representation:

Group Name and Weeks	Early Class: 5:15 - 6:30 pm	Late Class: 6:45 - 8 pm
Aquinas Group = 1st and 3rd Wednesdays + Family Nights	Aquinas Early: 1st - 4th Grade RE	Aquinas Late: 5th - 8th RE (Option 1)
Borromeo Group = 2nd and 4th Wednesdays + Family Nights	Borromeo Early: Sacramental Prep (usually 2nd Grade)	Borromeo Late: 5th - 8th RE (Option 2)

* All classes and times are subject to change based on class enrollment and catechists.

Both Aquinas Group and Borromeo Groups will attend family nights (see tentative schedule below) where all members of your family (parents, siblings, grandparents, etc.) are invited and encouraged to attend. You may choose as a family to attend either Early or Late session no matter which session(s) your student(s) normally attend. If students attend family nights alone, they need to come to their dedicated class time, so they can be with their catechist.

Students/Families will be expected to do home lessons during their off weeks. Students will read 1 chapter for the next class and fill out their homework for their reading.

Families will also have a lesson to do together. Parents are primary educators in the faith, so we are providing opportunities to assist you in your role. Students will turn in their homework at their next class. It is encouraged to keep Wednesdays as your day to work on Religious Education no matter if you are at home or at St. John XXIII.

Confirmation:

Confirmation is for 9th graders (and older if they have not yet been confirmed). Confirmation Classes will be the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month from 4-5:30 pm. Sabrina Marte will lead the classes. She can be contacted at s.marte@dbqarch.org.

Youth Group:

Now that we are in the Cedar Rapids Area West Pastorate, there will be more youth group opportunities. There will be a middle school youth group and a high school youth group this year. The Middle School Youth Group for grades 6-8 will meet once a month on a Sunday at St. John XXIII or St. Jude depending on the season. The High School Youth Group (Grades 9-12) will have opportunities for youth group on Sundays at St.

John XXIII and Wednesdays at St. Jude. A calendar will give exact days, times, and locations. You do not need to register for Youth Group, but you can reach out to Sabrina Marte at s.marte@dbqarch.org if you would like to be included in communications or if you have questions.

Youth OCIA:

If a student has not received any Sacraments and they would like to be initiated into the Catholic Church they will enroll in OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) with their parents' permission. Older students who have been Baptized, but have not received their first Reconciliation, first Eucharist, and Confirmation, can also reach out to Jerica for OCIA. Interested families should contact Jerica to set up a time to meet and then they can register online. Youth OCIA includes students ages 7 - 17. There is no fee for OCIA, but students may purchase a Bible/Bible Story Book.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS):

CGS Level 1 is available for 3 - 6 year olds through St. Jude. This faith formation program uses Montessori teaching techniques to teach children about God and the Church. Classes are Wednesday evenings. More information and registration can be found on the St. Jude website and here:

<https://judes.org/wednesday-night-faith-formation>. Registration for St. John XXIII students opens in August.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

Children's Liturgy of the Word meets every Sunday during the 10:30 am Mass at St. Jude. Students are invited a couple minutes before Mass begins and go to Thaddeus Hall. Students return during the preparation of the gifts. No registration is required.

Catechists/Helpers/Subs/Volunteers:

Our program is made possible through our catechists, helpers, subs and volunteers. If you know someone who would make a great catechist, please invite them to consider. If you are interested, please prayerfully consider the opportunity. Contact Jerica if you are interested.

Sunday Obligation

God commanded that we keep holy the Sabbath day. We do this by worshiping God and resting from tasks that impede worship. As Catholics, we are bound to attend Mass on Sundays (or the vigil on Saturday nights) and holy days of obligation. This is an essential part of our Faith because it is where we hear the Word of God, worship in community, and receive the Eucharist, which is truly Jesus' Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. It is, therefore, also an essential part of our Faith Formation Programs. We can try to teach your students the Faith, but formation can only go so far if it is not being put into practice and lived out in the family and by going to Mass each week.

If you/your family have been missing Mass, I invite you to start coming. I encourage you to go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving the Eucharist if you have been away. The graces you will receive from the Sacraments will strengthen you for your journey! Feel free to reach out if you would like support with your journey back to Mass and/or Reconciliation.

Our Mass times and Reconciliation times for our pastorate have recently changed as we are now part of the Cedar Rapids Area West Pastorate. The schedule is as follows:

Our new Sunday Mass times and locations are:

Saturday 5 pm at St. Michael, Norway
Saturday 5:30 pm at St. Jude, Cedar Rapids
Sunday 8 am at St. Jude, Cedar Rapids
Sunday 9 am at Immaculate Conception, Van Horne
Sunday 10:30 am at St. Jude, Cedar Rapids
1st Sunday of the Month in French 2 pm at St. Jude, Cedar Rapids

Reconciliation times and locations are:

Saturday 4-4:30 pm at St. Michael, Norway
Saturday, 4:30 - 5 pm St. Jude, Cedar Rapids
Thursday at 5 - 5:20 pm at St. John XXIII

Or by appointment by contacting:

Fr. Nick March n.march@dbqarch.org or Fr. Frantz Augustin f.augustin@dbqarch.org

Registration:

Due August 23, 2026

The button for registration for 1st - 9th graders faith formation can be found on the St. John XXIII website under Faith Formation -> Religious Education and here:

<https://www.stjohn23cr.org/religious-education-program>

The cost of the programs/materials is \$90 each. If a student is in an RE class AND a Sacramental Prep class, they should select the book fee in the Books and Bibles section so they get a discount for the second set of materials (\$50 instead of \$90).

There is a \$200 max for each family excluding Bibles/Books.

Bibles/Books:

Each family is expected to have at least one Catholic Bible (ex. NAB, NABRE, RSV-CE, RSV- 2CE, NRSV, etc. You can Google it - it should have 73 books). If you are in need of one, there are two options available for purchase through us: the St. Joseph Bible is NABRE hardcover for \$25 and the Great Adventure Bible which is what we use in class and it is RSV-2CE for \$40.

There is also a great book we sometimes use in class called, "The Story of All Stories" by Word on Fire. It is a Catholic story Bible that shares the stories of the Bible in a way kids (and adults) can understand and it has beautiful illustrations to go with the stories. I recommend this for families, but it is in no way required. (It could make a great Christmas gift too). It is \$40.

RE and Sacramental Prep Tentative Schedule:

The final Schedule is coming soon along with other program schedules. (If any dates change on the final schedule for RE I will note it, so you know which changes occurred when we send out the final schedule to those who have registered).

Reminder: Aquinas Early = 1-4, Aquinas Late = 5-8 (option 1)

Borromeo Early = Sacramental Prep, Borromeo Late = 5-8 (.option 2)

ALL=Family Nights: pick either early or late class to come as a family unless noted otherwise with an asterisk *.

Aquinas:	ALL:	Borromeo:
September 2	September 16, 24*, 30	September 9
October 7, 21	October X	October 14, 28
November 4, 18	November X	November 11
December 16	December 2	December 9
January 20	January 6	January 13, 27
February 3	February 10**, 17	February 24
March 3	March 31	March 10, 24
April 7, 21	April 27 or 29***	April 14

*September 24th is a Thursday at 5:30 pm: Opening Year Celebration with Mass

**February 10 is Ash Wednesday: Attend Mass as a Family (Mass times TBD)

*** April 27 or 29: End of Year Celebration with Mass. It will be on a Tuesday or Thursday at 5:30 pm.

Sacramental Prep:

In addition to the above class times during Borromeo Early and Family Nights, students will have the following with dates TBD (Schedule coming soon):

Reconciliation Retreat (likely in December), Reconciliation Interviews, First Reconciliation (likely in December), First Eucharist Retreat with Rehearsal (likely in April), First Eucharist Interviews, First Eucharist (likely in April)

Faith Formation Contact Information:

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Jerica Christensen at j.christensen@dbqarch.org if you have any questions. You may also reach out to Sabrina Marte for Confirmation at s.marte@dbqarch.org.