

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION AND PROGRAMS**

### **THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

As the first in the Catholic Church's Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism is a time of special joy and blessing for each family. In seeking baptism for their child, parents make a public promise to journey with them, to be their first teachers, and to offer a guiding hand. In baptism, a child will be welcomed into our Church family. Because as members of the Church we are all connected to each other, the Assumption Parish Community is committed to partner with the family in nurturing the faith of a child. We provide families with the resources, guidance, and Sacramental preparation needed to continue to raise your child in the Christian Faith.

In order to schedule a baptism, parents make arrangements through the staff in the Parish Office. To help understand the full meaning of baptizing a child in the Catholic faith, all first-time parents are required to attend a baptismal preparation class. Baptism prep classes are held monthly and led by one of our deacons.

For more information call Liz Wilkey in the Parish Office at 973-539-2141.

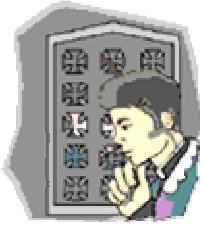
### **FIRST EUCHARIST**

Aside from formal preparation in the classroom, Assumption's First Communicants and their families are invited to participate in several parish-wide events that help them to understand the Sacrament and foster unity throughout the program. First Communicants from the Assumption School and Good Shepherd Programs are enhanced by the following activities:

- **Bread and Prayer and Share** – On a designated weekend, all First Communicants are encouraged to bring bread (preferably homemade) to Church with them. After the bread is blessed, communicants distribute their "bread" to a member of the congregation who they do not know. This individual is then asked to pray for the child and encouraged to leave a card or note for the communicant in the weeks leading up their First Communion celebration.
- **May Crowning** – Each year our May Crowning brings together all first Communicants of the parish and gives them a special role in the parish May Crowning. First Communicants process in with flags, banners, and streamers and sit with leaders in reserved seats. They also lead the procession at the conclusion of Mass to crown Mary. Together, First Communicants sing a special song they have all learned.
- **Holy Thursday Liturgy** – Our First Communicants are also invited to have a "bird's eye view" as parishioners' feet are symbolically washed at the Mass of the Lord's Supper. Children sit with leaders in reserved pews and join in the solemn procession as the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the Altar of Repose.
- **Blessing Cup** – As part of preparation, all children in the program paint and decorate their own ceramic "Communion" cup which is then kiln-fired and given to the child on the day of their First Eucharistic Celebration.

Contact our Religious Education Department at 973-267-5638.

## **FIRST RECONCILIATION**



Aside from classroom preparation, all children preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time are encouraged to attend a First Reconciliation workshop which is held one weekday evening. Children and their families rotate through four “stations” that utilizes stories, prayer, role-playing, board games and activity sheets.

Our Religious Education Department can be contacted at 973-267-5638.

## **CONFIRMATION PROGRAM**

Confirmation is the last Sacrament in our blessed series of what we call our "Initiation Rites". It is the Sacrament of the Holy Spirit wherein our gift of faith received at Baptism and nurtured through Eucharist and reconciliation, is strengthened and "Confirmed".

The two year Confirmation program consists of approximately ten classes plus one overnight retreat for the first year, and twelve classes plus one day-long retreat during the second year. It is after the year one retreat where the candidates receive the Rite of Entrance, and after the year two retreat where the candidates receive the Rite of Covenant. The candidates meet in a large group following the 5:30 p.m. Youth Mass and break out into small groups lead by a catechist and two peer ministers. The peer ministers are the youth of Assumption who have already received Confirmation; typically 11th and 12th graders under the guidance of the, Director of Assumption Youth Ministry. These youth volunteer their time and their talents to prepare the upcoming candidates for their confirmation.

Please contact Lisa Cosenza at 973-267-8519.

## **PRE-CANA**

All Catholic Dioceses require that those who are to be married Sacramentally are to be prepared through an “Engaged Encounter” week-end or a “*Pre-Cana*” program. Assumption has a thriving and successful Pre-Cana program in which we prepare over 70 engaged couples a year for the Sacrament of Matrimony. The program focuses on the main factors that can help either build or undermine the strength of a married relationship. Our objective is to give the engaged couples the understandings and skills to make their marriage work. In this ministry, there are many small group discussions which are lead by married couples who are Assumption parishioners.

For more information Carol and Rick Bourland 973-455-1944.

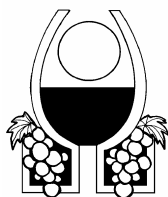
## R.C.I.A.

The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, RCIA*, is focused on the conversion of *Catechumens*, the unbaptized, and *Candidates*, those baptized in other Christian denominations or Catholics seeking to complete their sacramental initiation into the Roman Catholic faith. It is a process focused on conversion during an extended period of formation. It is we, the community, that ritually celebrate their conversion during the season of *Lent* as they are received into our community through the *Rite of Sending* when the Catechumens are sent to the Cathedral where the Bishop accepts their enrollment into the final phase of their journey as they become the *Elect* and enter into the final preparation for celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation.

The *Three Scrutinies* are celebrated during the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent when the Elect and Candidates are presented to the entire Church community as they receive *The Creed, The Ten Commandments, and The Lord's Prayer*, culminating in the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil when they are fully received into the Roman Catholic Church. These Scrutinies give the Elect and Candidates time to take more seriously the profound love of God and to deepen their awareness of the gift of God's love as they become more sensitive to that which keeps this love from transforming and recreating life and to strengthen them through God's grace so they can continue to move forward in their faith journey.

For more information please contact the Parish Office at 973-319-2141

### **EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION**



On the *First Friday* of each month, we have Eucharistic Adoration in Church from 7:30 am to 11:30 am. It begins with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament after the 7:00 am Mass and concludes with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. We ask people to sign-up beforehand to spend time in quiet adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

