ST. JOHN BREBEUF
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM
8301 North Harlem Avenue
Niles, Illinois 60714
(847) 966-3269

DIRECTOR: Mrs. Patricia Moritz

2011/2012

CATECHETICAL THEME:

"DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME"

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the St. John Brebeuf Religious Education Program is to bring the young people of the parish closer to God through the community of the Church. Together we learn, share, and celebrate our faith. With the help and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, we witness the Gospel and our Catholic Tradition.

We recognize that the knowledge of Christ is the primary focus of all catechesis. We are committed to foster both parent's and children's knowledge of Christ and their relationship with Him into action in their everyday lives.

GOAL:

The goal of St. John Brebeuf's Religious Education Program is to assist the students in developing their relationship with God. Through the use of creative activities, prayer, community experiences, and service, the students learn about their faith and the tradition of the Church in order to develop a life of prayer and a sense of service for others.

Our program is committed to provide the highest quality catechetical education for students. We are also committed to supporting parents in their role as the primary catechists for their children.

We acknowledge that our relationship with Christ requires ***regular worship***. This worship is central to our life as a faith community and includes Sunday Mass, communal prayer services, devotions, and opportunity for Reconciliation. Knowledge of Christ and personal relationship with Him must lead to action in the world. St. John Brebeuf's Religious Education Program will seek to provide opportunities for the students and their families to be of service in their community and the wider world.

Therefore, we believe that these three elements: Catechesis, Worship, and Service will form St. John Brebeuf's Religious Education Program into a Christ-centered community of believers.

The program offers opportunities for active faith growth through catechesis to young people in the parish, (Grades 1- 8 who attend public school). It assists the parents in fulfilling their duty as primary religious educators of their children.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

As stated in the National Catechetical Directory:

"as you know, parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. They educate or catechize informally, but powerfully by example and instruction. They communicate values and attitudes by showing love for Christ, and his Church and for each other, by reverently receiving the Eucharist and living in its spirit.

Parents nurture faith in their children by showing them the richness and beauty of lived faith. When children are baptized, the Church community promises to help foster faith. It keeps this promise by its own witness as a worshiping, believing, and serving community."

As stated by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin:
"Parents are their children's most important religion teachers. They teach mainly by example -- by mediating the love of Jesus to their offspring...A faith-filled home is, therefore, essential if formal religious instructions is to have its best result..."

1. By enrolling their children in the religious education program of the parish, parents or guardians, automatically accept responsibility of providing an environment of Christian living in the home. **Family participation in the Sunday Liturgy is perhaps the best way to instill the sense of belonging to a community that puts their faith and trust in God.**

2. Our expectation is that the student faithfully attends all 8 years of Religion. The goal of the SJB Religious Education Program is to provide a learning environment that builds upon the previous year for a richer more comprehensive religious education experience.

3. Religious education is expected to be given priority stature over other activities (i.e..athletics, scouts, band, etc.) and its value established in the minds of their children. **Therefore, the students should not attend or participate in games, scouting, band, etc. during their religious education class time!**

4. Parents are expected to attend all scheduled meetings.

5. Report cards are issued two times during the year. The first report card is given at the parent/student/catechist conferences in January (***required***). The second report card is given at the last class (and indicates advancement to the next grade). A final exam given in April must be passed in order to be promoted.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Students enrolled in the Religious Education Program are expected to attend all classes. ***Important:*** All students are expected to come prepared (with books) to every class, be on time, and to complete all homework assignments.

2. If the student is ill or for some other reason cannot participate in class, the parent/guardian must call the Religious Education Office (847-966-3269) before class begins. If the student is tardy, he/she must stop at the office (Room 1) before going to the classroom.

3. When preparing for a sacrament, no more than two absences per year are allowed without permission from the Director.

4. A final exam covering the year's material is given in April and must be passed in order to advance to the next grade.

5. New students coming into the Parish Religious Education program will be placed by the Director in accordance with prior religious instructions.

6. Students creating a disturbance will be sent to the office. After being sent to the office the second time, the student's parents will be called so that a meeting between the parents and the Director can be arranged.

7. Students enter and exit only through the front school doors.

8. Students will wait in the school lobby until directed to go to classrooms.

BEHAVIOR CODE

1. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and Christian manner. Students are expected to respond respectfully and positively to all directions of the catechists, director, and all other personnel.

2. Students will respect the rights of all other students and the people who are in charge of their religious education.

3. Students are to respect the building and the contents of the building (desks, chairs, etc.). We share this space with many other people, and we want to be proud of the way we keep this space looking neat and clean.

4. Students ***MAY NOT*** use the following while in the school building:

   a. GUM/CANDY/FOOD b. CELL PHONES

c. I-PODS

d. ALL ELECTRONIC GAMES

e. ROLLER SHOES

5. Students are encouraged to use bathrooms ***before or after*** class. Use of bathrooms during class time is a distraction and will be allowed only in an emergency.

PARKING LOT PROCEDURE

On Wednesdays from 4:30 - 5:10 p.m. and on Thursdays from 6:00 - 6:40 p.m., the lane closest to the school will be reserved as a "safe zone" for the students to be dropped off and walk to the front of the school. On Wednesdays the school parking lot will be **SHUT DOWN** to all car entry and exit from 6:25 - 6:40 p.m. On Thursdays the school parking lot will be **SHUT DOWN** to all car entry and exit from 7:55 - 8:10 p.m. This is necessary for the safety of our Religious Education students dismissing and walking to their cars. After all of the children are safely in their cars, the Niles Police security guards will then dismiss vehicles beginning with the first cars in the north end of the lot.

Also closed are the lanes in front of the school. You may park in the main Church lot and walk over to school to pick up your children. Please be extra careful when exiting that lot. The staff is concerned with the safety of your children as they walk to and from classes. During a good part of the year it is dark when students are dismissed, and we must be extra cautious of our younger students getting to their cars. Please be courteous and observe the direction of the Niles Police Security.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the coming year will be held in April, 2012. Watch for the mailing containing the Registration Form and other pertinent information which will be sent to all families registered in the program during the current year. Parents can re-register in person or by mail. Registration information for new families is published in the parish bulletin and several area newspapers during the spring and summer. After July 1, 2012, a $40.00 late fee will be charged. After August 1, 2012, a $50.00 late fee will be charged.

ADMISSION POLICY

Any child is welcome to attend St. John Brebeuf Religious Education classes. We have classes the following days and times:

Grades 1 - 8 Wednesdays as scheduled - 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Grades 1 - 8 Thursdays as scheduled - 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
(Families have choice of either day.)
All classes are held in St. John Brebeuf School.

All new families are required to bring a copy of their child's Baptismal Certificate **unless** the child was baptized at St. John Brebeuf. Any student transferring from another Religious Education program must bring a copy of their Baptismal Certificate **AND** a copy of their last year's report card or transfer showing their attendance at the other school.

If a student has missed a year or two of Religion, then home schooling must be completed prior to entering the regular grade level.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is higher for those who are not registered parishioners of St. John Brebeuf. Our computer system requires entry of a church envelope number in order to receive the parishioner tuition rate. We request that you bring a current church envelope with you when registering so that we can record your parish registration number. If no envelope number is provided, the non-parishioner rate is charged.

The 2011/2012 tuition rates are as follows:

	Parishioner	**Non-parishioner**
1 child		$175.00
		$245.00
2 children	$235.00	
	$305.00	
3 children		$295.00
		$365.00
4 children		$355.00
		$425.00

If you cannot pay the total amount at registration, monthly payments will be arranged. **Please have all payments finished by April 2, 2012.**

A fee of $25.00 will be charged for any returned checks. A $50.00 non-refundable registration fee is included in the tuition.

We accept checks, money orders, or cash. ***If paying with cash, you must pay in person to the office staff and be sure to receive a receipt!***

If you cannot afford the tuition and/or fees, ***please let us know***. No child will be denied Religious Education because of inability to pay.

There are fees for the children who will be receiving the Sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Confirmation. Many things must be bought for the students in these classes (extra supplies, special books, etc.). Thank you for understanding.

Fees for Sacraments:

First Reconciliation/First Eucharist	$70.00
Confirmation	$65.00

ENTRANCE AND DISMISSAL

When you bring your children, please drop them off in the school parking lot. The cones will be out so there is a safe place for the children to walk along the school building.

As the children arrive for class, they must wait in the front school lobby until five minutes before the bell rings. At that time, a supervisor will walk the children down to their classroom. For the safety of the children and to avoid confusion: **NO PARENTS MAY ENTER THE SCHOOL BEFORE THE CHILDREN ARE IN THEIR CLASSROOMS.** If you have business in our office (Room 1), you may enter the building **AFTER** the children are in their classrooms.

You may pick up your child at the front school entrance. The children may not leave from any other doorway nor may they walk alone to cars parked in the parking lot. Do not tell your child that you will be parked by the gym or

on Harlem Avenue, etc. and expect them to find you. **Please meet your child at the front entrance. This is for the safety of all children! In consideration of the staff's schedule, a fee will be charged for any children left at the school 10 minutes after the closing bell.**

If any student is allowed to walk home or ride their bike, we must have a written permission letter on file from the parents.

Niles Police Security personnel will handle the parking lot traffic (according to the procedure on P. 4) after each class. It is expected their instructions and directions will be followed for the safety of all children.

Only Religious Education personnel will be allowed in the halls. This is for the safety of the children and teachers.

After class, the teachers will escort each class to the Lobby. Parents will pick them up at the door.

EARLY DISMISSALS / ABSENCES

If your child needs to leave early, please let the Director know ahead of time. The child must bring a note from his/her parents prior to the beginning of class. The note will be approved by the office and sent to your child's catechist.

If your child must be absent because of illness or family emergency, please call the Religious Education Office (847-966-3269) and let us know. If we are not available to answer the phone, leave a message on our voice mail.

Parents are also responsible for helping their children make up the class work they have missed. Arrangements to do so may be made with the child's catechist.

ATTENDANCE

Promptness and attendance at all classes are expected for the full class period. Generally more than three unexcused absences during the course of a year will be considered unsatisfactory unless it is shown that sufficient tutoring has been done by the parents or some qualified person. Excessive absence during any of the eight years of our Religious Education Program will call into question a child's readiness to receive the various sacraments.

If your child does not attend **AT LEAST 75%** of the classes, he/she will **NOT** be allowed to move to the next grade. If there is a question about this, you may discuss it with the Director. If your child is late for class, they must check in

at the office before going to class. Students who arrive after 5:00 p.m. on Wednesdays or 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays are considered tardy. Because tardiness is disruptive to the group and causes the student to miss valuable time, **excessive tardiness** will be brought to the parent's attention.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

If your child has a medical problem, please note it on the registration and medical forms. Medication **CANNOT** be given by any Religious Education personnel. Please give any needed medication to the students either before or after class.

Parents will be notified in case of an accident or illness at school. If a parent cannot be reached, Religious Education personnel will contact the person designated by the parent at the time of registration. **PLEASE** make sure we have the name and phone number of someone we can reach in case of emergency.

SECURITY

As a safety measure, all outside doors will be locked. All persons entering the school **MUST** check in at the office. Only Religious Education personnel will open the doors after class has begun.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

If weather is bad enough to close the school during the day, Religious Education will probably not be in session either. Please check the following website for information on closings**:** **www.EmergencyClosings.com.** Also you can listen to the following radio or T.V. stations: WGN - AM (720), WMAQ-AM (670), WLS-AM (780), WLS - FM (94.7), WBBM (78), WUSN- FM (99), and WFLD-TV (32). We will leave the closing message on our voice mail (847-966-3269) and our parish website under Religious Education: **www.sjbrebeuf.org**

VOLUNTEERS

We are always in need of people to help with our program. If you are interested, please contact the Director, Mrs. Pat Moritz.

CUSTODY ISSUES

If parents are divorced or separated, we presume both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide ***written*** evidence that he/she has the sole right. This confidential information will be kept on file in the Religious Education Office.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

By law, the State of Illinois requires us to inform the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) of any allegation/suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The Religious Education Program of St. John Brebeuf Parish recognizes that each of the sacraments is a gift from the Lord. To realize the value of each gift, it is necessary that the community reflect and prepare itself to celebrate each sacrament. For this reason, the following policies have been developed by the Parish Staff in conjunction with the teaching personnel of our parochial school and Religious Education Program. It is our hope that these policies will help us all -- catechists, parents, and children -- to recognize that the sacraments are sacred moments in the lives of Christians through which they are intimately related to Christ and to the life of the Church.

BAPTISM - the sacrament through which a person is incorporated into the Church and shares its mission in the world. (National Catechetical Directory - #115)

Most children entering the Religious Education Program or parochial school have been baptized as infants. It is becoming increasingly more common, however, to meet with school age children who are either unbaptized, or baptized but uncatechized. To meet the need of these children, special sessions will be set up in addition to the formal religious education classes. With the support and involvement of parents and sponsors, these catechumenal sessions are designed to prepare older children for Baptism or reception into the Church through a Profession of Faith.

RECONCILIATION - the sacrament that continues Jesus' work of forgiving and reconciling. It celebrates the prodigal son's return to the eternally merciful Father, renewing the sinner's union with God - and also with the community, inasmuch as our sins harm our brothers and sisters.
(National Catechetical Directory - #124)

In keeping with the Archdiocesan directives, children in our sacramental program

are prepared for Reconciliation in 2nd grade. The total program for First Reconciliation consists of:

1. **One Parent Formation Meeting on 9-26-11 at 7:00 p.m. in the P.M.C.** - covering such topics as moral development and conscience formation, sin, forgiveness and reconciliation, our renewed understanding of the sacrament and its manner of celebration.
2. **Child Formation** - through family involvement and classroom instruction.
3. **Group Celebration of Reconciliation** - involving parents and children, with individual First Confession on November 19, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. for students and families.

EUCHARIST - the center and heart of Christian life for both the universal and local Church and for each Christian. All that belongs to Christian life leads to the eucharistic celebration or flows from it.

(National Catechetical Directory - #120)

The usual age for the first reception of this sacrament is that of the seven or eight year old child. Therefore, the children of our parish are normally prepared for First Holy Communion in Grade Two. One complete year of formal religious instruction must immediately precede a child's enrollment in the Eucharist Program.

In our Parish the Eucharist Program is composed of:

1. **One Parent Formation Meeting on 1-17-12 at 7:00 p.m. in P.M.C.** - providing an overview of the theology of the Eucharist and of the children's classroom preparation, together with a detailed explanation of the so-called "practical" aspects of the celebration itself.
2. **Child Formation** - through family involvement and classroom instruction.
3. **Jesus Day - April 28, 2012 - 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.** A special mini-retreat for those preparing for their First Communion.
4. **Group Celebration of First Communion** - the students receive The Bread of Life for the first time in two groups on May 12, 2012, at 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. or on an individual date (TBD) if your family so chooses.

CONFIRMATION - renews and strengthens the Christian's baptismal call to witness to Christ before the world. It emphasizes the

transformation of life by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in His fullness. Confirmed Christians claim as fully their own the new life into which they were first initiated at Baptism.

(National Catechetical Directory - #118)

Preparation for Confirmation at St. John Brebeuf Parish is an eight-year process in religious education, culminating in the young person's conscious decision to request and to receive the sacrament.

The following schedule lists required dates for the Confirmation Program:

1. **Gr. 8 Parent AND Student Meeting on10-11-11 at 7:00 p.m. in the P.M.C.** - designed to update parents' understanding of the sacrament, its historic development, as well as its importance in helping the Christian community recognize the challenge to help others grow and mature in the Christian life; also sponsors of the children will be part of this formation process.

a. Presentation by the Parents of Confirmation Candidates in Church on Sunday, October 16, 2011, at the 9:00 a.m. Liturgy.

2. Gr. 8 Students AND Sponsors Afternoon of Reflection on 10-29-11 from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. in the P.M.C.

3. Gr. 8 Confirmation Retreat on 2-18-12 all day in the P.M.C.

4. Student Formation - includes classroom instruction and activities, retreat, and service projects.

5. Parish Celebration of Confirmation - Confirmation will be celebrated on March 10, 2012, at 1:30 p.m.

(Rehearsal will be held on Monday, March 5th from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. in the Church. Candidates and their Sponsors need to be present at the Rehearsal.)

6. 7th Grade Parent and Student Meeting on 4-24-12 at 7:00 p.m. in the P.M.C. General meeting to outline the Confirmation Program requirements and parent involvement.

Further, parents are encouraged to support their children's efforts by witnessing to them the importance of each of the sacraments in their own lives. This is particularly true of the Eucharist. Parents are strongly urged to accompany their children to Mass each weekend. It is assumed and expected that parents and children will attend Mass regularly.

SPECIAL SACRAMENTAL SESSIONS - If a child enters the Religious Education Program after the second grade and has not celebrated the sacraments of Reconciliation or Eucharist, the child is not able to receive the sacraments until he/she has been in the Program for one full year. At the beginning of the next year in the Program the **PARENT** makes contact with the

Director of Religious Education to arrange for preparing the child for the reception of the sacraments. For First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation, a minimum of two years preparation is required.

CATECHESIS (INSTRUCTION)

The Catechesis follows the guidelines given in the Catechism of the Church. The special focus of each year's study is outlined below. The textbook series we use in our program is **WE BELIEVE** published by the Sadlier Publishing Company©2011.

Grade 1

The children learn that God loves us and that God has created the world and each of us. Jesus is God's greatest gift, and Jesus invited all people to be his followers. The Church carries on the works of Jesus, and we become a part of the Church through our Baptism. The children learn how we celebrate our faith at the Eucharist, and through all the feasts and seasons of the year.

Grade 2

In second grade, the focus is on Jesus, who is with us always. He sends his Holy Spirit to help the church grow. Through our Baptism and Confirmation, we receive grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit to strengthen us. The children are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and they will learn Jesus' Great Commandment, as well as the Ten Commandments. Their preparation for their First Eucharist will be a major part of their lessons this year.

Grade 3

The third grade will focus on the Church. Jesus has given us the Church, and sent the Holy Spirit to lead the apostles. We are members of the Church, and we learn what the members believe and how they pray. The children will learn about the Sacraments, and how they continue Jesus' mission of caring and healing for all people. They are called to this same mission of Jesus as disciples, and they will learn how Christians are to live and help the world.

Grade 4

In the fourth grade, the students will concentrate on learning to live as Jesus did. They will learn the Beatitudes, and the attitudes of value and respect for all people. The Commandments help them to love God and to love others. Each Commandment will be examined and studied.

Grade 5

The fifth graders will review their knowledge of the Sacraments. They will study Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist as Sacraments of Initiation, Reconciliation and the Anointing of the sick as Sacrament of Healing, and Holy Orders and Marriage as Sacraments of Service.

Grade 6

The sixth graders will center their learning on the Bible, and in particular, the Old Testament. They will receive their own Bible, and will learn that God has revealed Himself to us through the Bible. As they study the Bible's collection of books, they will be exposed to the stories of the people of faith who have come before us. They will learn about God's covenant with all humans, and will hear again how Jesus brings us the new Covenant, the new relationship with God.

Grade 7

The year of study for the seventh graders centers on Jesus' life, his teachings, and the sacraments he instituted. It presents Jesus' call to each person to become his disciple and the ways in which his teachings, his sacraments, and his Church nourish people for discipleship.

Grade 8

The eighth graders will begin their year of study with a focus on the beliefs of the Catholic Church. As they move closer to the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, they will spend intensive weeks of preparation on the content, ritual and meaning of this Sacrament. Through their studies, the 8th graders will learn to appreciate the gifts they receive in Confirmation and to give witness themselves through loving service.

THE NEW ROMAN MISSAL

You may have heard that there will be some changes to what we hear and say at Mass. Mass will remain the same, but some of the words will be different. The Sadlier text-books that we use will cover the changes with the students at their individual grade levels.

"Catechesis for prayer begins very early in childhood by hearing others pray; even small children can learn to call upon the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. In time, the child will become familiar with the various prayers and prayer forms and make them party of his or her life. Catechesis encourages daily prayer, family prayer, and prayer at special times, e.g., before and after meals."

(National Catechetical Directory - #145)

FAMILY PRAYER SERVICE

Together: God, you have given us this family to love and understand and care for us. Everyone in the family is special and important. We ask you to help each of us to grow as part of the_____ family and the parish family of St. John Brebeuf.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:41-47

"Each year his parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and

looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers." **The word of the Lord.**

Reflection Time

Prayers of Petition

Response: "Lord, hear our prayer."

1. That we may understand that every family is special, let us pray...
2. That we may understand that everyone in a family is important, let us pray...
3. That we as a family may be happy by working, playing, praying, and sharing together, let us pray...
4. For all the families of St. John Brebeuf Parish, let us pray...
5. For each of us that we may continue to learn more about our religion this year, let us pray...

Sign of Togetherness:

Leader: Let us pray for all these intentions together as we join in saying the "Our Father." (As a further sign of togetherness, the family may wish to offer each other a sign of peace or sign each other on the forehead with the Sign of the Cross.)

COOPERATION

I dreamed I stood in a church and watched
two sculptors there,

The clay they used was a young child's mind
And they fashioned it with care.

One was a teacher --- the tools used were
books and music and art;
The other, a parent, with guiding hand and
a gentle and loving heart.

Week after week the teacher toiled with a touch
that was deft and sure,
While the parent labored side by side and
polished a smoothed it ee'r.

And when at last their task was done,
They were proud of what they had wrought,
For the things they had molded into the
child could neither be sold nor bought.

And each agree that they would have
failed if they had worked alone,
For behind the teacher stood the Church,
And behind the Church, the home...

Author unknown...