

**2006/2007  
Staff Listing  
For  
Faith Formation for Children & Youth Ministries**

Glenn Valois . . . . . *Faith Formation Director*

Martha Zeyen. . . . . *Elementary/Middle School Faith Formation  
Coordinator*

Ana Garcia . . . . . *Middle School Youth Minister*

Raquel Cagigas . . . . . *High School Youth Minister/  
Confirmation Program Coordinator*

Therese Fenzl . . . . . *Sacraments & Christian Initiation of  
Children (CIC) Coordinator*

Glenn Valois . . . . . *Family Program Coordinator*

Glenn Valois . . . . . *Intergenerational Faith Communities Coordinator*

Sandi Wilson . . . . . *Pre-School Program Coordinators*

Denise Young . . . . . *SPRED Coordinator*

Sharon Hanson . . . . . *Administrative Assistant*

Kathy Works . . . . . *Administrative Assistant*

Diane Pitts . . . . . *Parish Council Representative*

## ***Program Goals and Information***

The elementary Program is the tool for the catechetical training of students in Kindergarten through Fifth grade. This program offers a traditional classroom approach to teaching essentials of the faith. Kindergarten classes meet in the homes of catechists and first through fifth grades meet in the rooms at St. Augustine Hall and St. Elizabeth Seton as well as in some homes. Classes meet Monday through Friday afternoons from 3:45 to 4:45pm and Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 6:15 to 7:15pm. Various activities and methods support the regular text materials provided to each student. Monthly prayer themes highlight the spiritual activities of the program. The Elementary Program strives to integrate the teachings of the Church at age appropriate levels and give students a sense of belonging to the great Body of Christ which we call the Church!

### ***Elementary Faith Formation – Grades K – 5***

Mission Statement: The Elementary Faith Formation Program of the Catholic Community of Pleasanton will provide each child in grades K – 5 with the values of the Gospel as proclaimed by Jesus Christ, and will hand down the traditions of the Catholic Faith through a catechetical curricula that has been inspired by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council and authorized by the Bishop of the Diocese of Oakland. This curriculum will compliment the journey of faith of each child according to its psychological, emotional, and spiritual development.

### ***Grade Level Goals***

Each grade attempts to engage children in the journey of faith that is appropriate to their level. In order to do this, certain goals help provide a focus which enables the catechist to support the needs of their pupils.

The theme for the Kindergarten level is that *God loves me*. It is supported by the following goals: to help each child know that they are special and loved by God; to encourage each child to recognize that God has given them gifts of love, family, friends and creation; to teach each child the Sign of the Cross.

The First Grade students are given a basic orientation of liturgy and prayer in addition to being given a sense of community. The three persons of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and our relationship to each are discussed through references to creation and Scripture. The importance of prayer is interwoven into the overall theme of the year.

The Second Grade students are given a deeper understanding of belonging to the church community. They learn that we can celebrate God's forgiveness and how to reestablish relationships with others and God. The students also learn that through the liturgy we listen to the Word of God and celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Prayer continues to be an integral part of the work done during this year.

The Third Grade students are introduced to the basic concepts of social justice. They review the traditional marks of the Catholic Church and learn that membership in the church is open to all. The sacraments are reviewed along with the Apostle's Creed. They see that all of us are called to service in to those around us.

The Fourth Grade students learn some of the elements of moral decision making through a study of the commandments and the sacraments. They are shown a deeper understanding of the Lord's Prayer. Prayer continues to be an important part of the course of study for this year.

The Fifth Grade students focus on an in depth study of the sacraments indicating that they are sacred signs as well as celebrations. The Holy Trinity is presented showing how each person of the Trinity relates to the sacraments. The Church is also seen as a sacrament, the sign to the world of God's love for all of God's people. Both God's people and the things of creation are seen as signs of God's presence in the world. The students receive an understanding of what it means to be followers of Christ and to faithfully live the life of a follower of Christ.

## ***Policies and Procedures***

***Student Attendance:*** Attendance sheets must be turned in to the Faith Formation office each week. It will be returned to your mailbox for the following week. If a child must be absent from class, parents are asked to call the Faith Formation office. If a catechist does not receive a notice that a child is going to be absent on a specific day, the catechist should call the parent to verify the absence. If a child is absent 2 weeks in a row the catechist must call the parents to verify status. If a child misses 3 weeks in a row the catechist should notify the coordinator for follow-up.

***Catechist Absences:*** Catechists who need to be absent should call the office to inform the secretary of the situation. It is the responsibility of the catechist to locate a substitute. If it is necessary to cancel a class it is the catechist's responsibility to call each family in the class.

***Catechist Arrival:*** Catechists should be in the classroom at least 15 minutes prior to the start of class. This enables the catechist to be able to greet each child as he/she arrives for class and allows class to start on time.

***Holidays:*** Legal holidays and seasonal vacation from classes will coincide with the Pleasanton Unified School District calendar. The Faith Formation office will be closed during these times.

***Communicating with Parents:*** It is recommended that the catechist stay in communication with your students' parents during the year enabling the catechist to develop a relationship with the parents. This can be done through a group e-mail after class describing what went on in class. If you have a special concern or question for a specific parent, this could be addressed through an individual e-mail. Parents also like to hear positive things about their child, such as a cute question or being very helpful in class. Open communication can also help to alleviate discipline problems down the road.

***Elementary Discipline:*** There are times when a child can become disruptive to the environment in which the catechist needs to accomplish the task at hand. Should a disruption take place, the following steps should be followed:

- Ask the child to check his/her behavior and cooperate with the task at hand in the classroom.
- If the disruption continues, the child should be sent to the Elementary Coordinator. This should happen as soon as it becomes apparent the child is either unwilling or unable to control his/her behavior.
- The coordinator and catechist will attempt to guide the child's behavior pattern toward building community. After a second or third attempt at this effort, the catechist or coordinator will notify the parents by telephone as to the child's behavior in the classroom.
- If the situation warrants, a conference with the parents may be arranged with the Elementary Coordinator and/or the child's catechist.
- In some cases a Behavioral Contract may be required.

**General Safety Issues:** The safety of all connected with the Faith Formation Program is a primary concern. This includes students, catechists, younger siblings and parents dropping off or picking up students. Please remind your students of the following:

- No running or ball playing in the hall.
- No balls, toys or games should be brought from home.
- No roller blades or skateboards
- No wheeled shoes

These requests are made to insure the safety of all those present in the hall during scheduled class times.

**Drop-off and Pick-up:** Since our program is very large, there are certain procedures that we have asked our parents to observe. They are as follows:

- Students, parents and catechists are asked to enter the building using the front doors off the parking lot.
- Children in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades should be must to the classroom at the beginning of class and picked up at the classroom at the end of class. Students can not be dismissed unless an adult is present to pick him/her up. If a parent wishes an older sibling to pick up a younger sibling, prior arrangements are required.
- Students in grades 3 and above may wait for rides outside the building in the patio area
- Students should arrive no more than 5 minutes prior to the start of class.

**Cleanliness:** The catechist is responsible for the general cleanliness of the classroom. Please be sure to empty the wastebasket and the recycling container in the appropriate bins in the hall near the kitchen. Close the windows, doors, turn off the lights and put the room back in "good order" (chairs under tables, vacuum if necessary, etc.) before departing. There are small cabinets on the walls of each classroom containing cleaning supplies for the tables, rugs and white boards.

**Cabinets:** Each catechist has a cabinet for supplies, personal resources, etc. Your personal supplies with your name and grade when placing them in the cabinets. Please be sure to lock all cabinets before you leave the room. One cabinet is labeled "Shared Supplies". These supplies are to be shared by all catechists who use the room during the week. Please return these supplies to the proper place at the end of class so that they are available to the next catechist. Cabinet keys will be distributed at the beginning of the year. Return your key to the office at the end of the program year.

**Catechist Supplies:** Each catechist will be supplied with the necessary supplies for his/her class. Each catechist is responsible to be sure that the supplies are available for use in class each week. At the end of the Faith Formation year all catechist materials and unused supplies are to be returned to the Faith Formation office.

**Mailboxes:** Each catechist is given a mailbox located outside of Room 3. This mailbox will be the main vehicle for distribution of any materials to the classes each week. **It is important that you check your mailbox before class each week.**

***Duplicating Materials:*** Materials to be copied should be attached to a *Duplicating Request Form*. These forms are available in a mailbox outside Room 3 and on the Faith Formation website. Requests should be submitted one week prior to use. There is also a mailbox to submit requests. You may phone in requests as long as we have an activity master for your grade.

***Visual Aids and Equipment Requests:*** Fill out a *Video Request Form*. These forms are available in a mailbox outside room 3 and on the Faith Formation website. Requests should be submitted one week prior to use. You will be contacted in advance if there are any problems with the request. Any video not in our library or the parish library must be cleared with the coordinator before it can be shown in class. Video requests may also be made by e-mail to the Faith Formation office.

***Field Trips:*** Catechists must have a permission slip for each child attending the field trip. The coordinator must approve all field trips before permission slips are procured. Driver forms must be on file in the Faith Formation office one week prior to the field trip.

***Catechist Supervision:*** The Coordinator may periodically supervise Catechists. This involves a pre-supervision interview, classroom supervision and a post-supervision interview. Supervision is an excellent tool that enables and empowers us to grow in our ministries of catechesis. The catechist will receive a self-evaluation as well as an evaluation from the coordinator. The catechist will preview all evaluation materials in advance.

## **Characteristics of the Primary Grade-level Child (ages 5 – 8)**

### THE PRIMARY GRADE CHILD:

- Draws his/her knowledge and reactions from his/her personal world, centered in his/her home and family, his live experiences with them.
  
- Is primarily interest in the world of the concrete, the real, the world around him/her. Cannot handle abstract concepts.
  
- Is egocentric, self-centered, likes to be "first," the center of attention; not interested in much group activity.
  
- Has a relatively short attention span, needs much bodily activity to balance quiet times; responds enthusiastically to strong rhythms.
  
- Learns primarily through his/her senses; needs to touch, to feel etc.; needs to involve his/her whole body in the learning experience.

### SO THE TEACHER SHOULD:

- Introduce him/her to the concept of "family of God" in preparation for later development of a sense of community. Develop his/her personal relationship with Christ who will lean him to the Father. "Christ loves me," "Christ meets me in the Eucharist and in penance."
  
- Fill your lessons with many examples of his/her real world. Stress God's love for him/her in creation as evidenced in the world around him/her that he/she knows.
  
- Give him/her many opportunities to tell "his/her stories," but help him/her to "take turns" and share with his/her classmates.
  
- Plan to alternate listening activities with doing activities; change activities often (10-15 min.) plan rhythmic experiences in song and gesture.
  
- Plan your lessons to give him/her many sensory activities; painting, drawing, finger paint, pantomimes; allow him/her to touch, to handle.

## **Characteristics of the Intermediate Grade-level Child (ages 9 – 11)**

### CHARACTERISTICS

- Period of transition
- Discarding of childish patterns of behavior
- Seeking to develop his/her own attitudes independent of adults.
  
- Conduct inconsistent and disorganized
- Restless, sensitive and moody
- May revert to infantile habits as nail biting, tears, etc.
  
- Age of gang influence
- Strong motivation in group competition
- Teamwork cooperation
- Loyalty to group and family
  
- Hero worshipper
- Drawn to heroes of his/her time in all areas.
  
- Longer attention span
- Increased memory detail
- Sees detail more clearly than main ideas
- Interested in concrete and real, not abstract
  
- Increased master of "tool skills" especially reading
  
- Is a collector
- Is a model builder par excellence

### CLASSROOM APPLICATION

- Understand this inconsistent behavior to be a necessary concomitant to growth
- Maintain a long range view to see you through this transitional period.
  
- Enforce clear limits on behavior
- Maintain sense of humor with firmness
- Don't be personally hurt by strange behavior
  
- Can be introduced to Old Testament characters as his/her ancestors.
- Works well on group projects, class booklets, murals, etc.
- Enjoys boys versus girls drills
  
- Can be helped to experience Jesus as living today
- Can be introduced to people in the Bible as heroes
  
- Activities can run 15 to 20 minutes
- Make use in current events in revealing ideas of Christianity
- Can memorize doctrinal formulas after understanding them
  
- Can be motivated to explore on his own
- Supplementary books, etc., should be available for outside reports
  
- Can be channeled to religious topics as models, posters, etc.

## ***HELPFUL HINTS FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR***

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR** is nothing more than providing a child with the “keys” to achieve **RESPECT** of **SELF** and **RESPECT** for **OTHERS**. Jesus had a lovely way of putting it when he simply told us to “**LOVE ONE ANOTHER.**” The following are some “hints” that have worked. Take them and make them your own.

- Hint #1: The Catechist must always presume that each child before him/her was created GOOD and is a living, loving CHILD OF GOD.
- Hint #2: The Catechist must always come to class PREPARED!
- Hint #3: Children thrive on structure. It is important to provide that structure FROM YOUR FIRST DAY in the classroom.
- Hint #4: Allow the children to participate in making the “Code of Behavior” for you class. Keep the rules SPECIFIC and BRIEF.
- Hint #5: BE CONSISTANT! Hold each child in the class accountable for the class rules.
- Hint #6: Reward good behavior as soon as possible. Let the parents know of their child’s good behavior.
- Hint #7: EXPECT children to be nothing less that wonderful and tell them so!

## **WHAT TO DO WHEN ALL THE “HINTS” HAVE BEEN PUT TO WORK WITHOUT SUCCESS**

1. Remind the child of the class rules. (That is your first warning.)
2. Act immediately. Do not be long suffering. Tell the child to remove her/himself from the group to another part of the room to think about what she/he should do to come back.
3. Send the child to the office.

[If you are a Home Catechist: After the first warning, give the class an activity, take the child to an adjoining room and talk about how you are expecting the child to behave. (Don’t spend too much time at this.) If the behavior still persists CALL THE PARENTS and let the parents speak with the child. Removal from the class may be the best result for everyone.)

## ***FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES***

Everyone must participate in the fire drill.

When the fire alarm is sounded:

- The catechist calls for "Silence" in the room, then directs the children how to proceed.
- The students closest to the windows and doors will immediately close the windows and doors.
- The catechist directs the class to proceed out of the room through outside doors in single file. All classes will proceed to the far side of the parking lot by the trees and assemble by class.

Rooms 3- 5 will walk toward the front of the building and proceed to the parking lot and assemble by class.

Rooms 6 – 8 will walk toward the back of building, use walkway to the roadway and proceed to the parking lot and assemble by class.

Rooms 13 – 15 will walk toward the back of the building, proceed along the back of the building to the roadway and proceed to the parking lot and assemble by class.

Rooms 16 – 17 will walk toward the front of the building and assemble by class in the parking lot.

Office personnel will proceed out the front of the building and assemble with the students and catechists at the far side of the parking lot.

- The catechist will take their class attendance sheets with them and will call roll once the children have assembled in the parking lot.

**Be sure each child is accounted for.**

**FAITH FORMATION  
EARTHQUAKE PROCEDURES**

1. As soon as an earthquake is felt, **direct the children to walk away from the windows and outside doors. GIVE THE "DROP" COMMAND**, tell the class to DROP to their knees, clasp both hands behind their necks, close their eyes and protect their face with their arms, making their bodies as small as possible.
2. **STAY CALM.** Take hold of your attendance sheet and your emergency forms.
3. **STAY WITH YOUR CLASS AT ALL TIMES.**
4. After the major shaking has subsided, if you are on the **church side of the hall, use the outside doors and proceed to the center of the parking lot in front of the church.** If your class is **on the field side of the hall, use the outside doors and proceed to the center of the parking lot in front of the church.** Be as far as possible from any building structure, electrical wires or trees.
5. **Take attendance** of your class and make sure everyone is accounted for.
6. **DO NOT DISMISS A CHILD WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION FROM PARENT OR D.F.F.**
7. **Remain in the parking lot with your class** until further instructions from D.F.F.
8. The catechist will assume full responsibility for his/her class during this earthquake procedure.

**DO NOT DISMISS YOUR CLASS UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.**