



# **Basilikids!**

## **Children's Ministry**

### **Handbook**

2016-2017

Welcome to a new year of children's ministry at the Basilica of St. Josaphat! There are new updates to children's ministry this year, so please read the ministry handbook for a thorough explanation of the mission and vision of Basilikids! Children's Ministry, information on the Sunday program, Sacramental Preparation information, and much more. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am looking forward to walking with you and your child this year.

In Christ,  
Samantha El-Azem, Director of Religious Education  
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## **Mission**

At the Basilica, we desire for children in our community to:

- **MEET** Christ and community.
- **GROW** in their knowledge of the Catholic faith and in discipleship and...
- **LOVE** God, the Catholic Church, and their neighbors.

## **Sunday Program**

Children (Grades K-6th Grade) will gather on **Sunday mornings** from **8:50am-9:50am** in the Parish Center to encounter Christ through engaging activities, dynamic teaching, and small group discussion. This year, we are focusing on learning "God's Story" and how our story is a part of God's story of salvation history. The goal of this year is help the children learn about their identity as a child of God and to help establish them in a relationship with Christ. Please see attached calendar for Sunday program dates and topics.

## **New Format**

To enhance the experience for the children, there will be several distinguishing groups within Basilikids: K3?-K5, Grades 1-3, and Grades 4-6. These three groups will meet in large group at the beginning of Sunday program for an activity and teaching. Then, they will split into grade-level small groups for the second part of the program. This will vary for any given week, but will typically follow this format.

## **Middle School Ministry**

Middle School students (Grades 7 & 8) are invited to join a small group during the Sunday Program time (8:50-9:50am). These small groups will also look at how God's Story is relevant to everyday life.

## **Basilicrew: High School Ministry**

For those in high-school (Grades 9-12), Basilicrew High School Ministry meets twice a month from 11am-1pm (see Basilicrew calendar) and gives teens an opportunity to share life and grow in their relationship with Christ. All high school teens are welcome. Those youth who are interested in receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation are asked to commit to one year (September-April) of Basilicrew. Confirmation candidates will also be invited to participate in a weekend retreat as well as service experiences within the Basilica parish community.

For more information, please contact Emily Burds at [emily@thebasilica.org](mailto:emily@thebasilica.org).

## **Sacramental Discernment & Preparation**

### ***The Process:***

The Sacraments are outward signs of inward realities given to us by Christ for the building up of His Church. The Sacraments are life-giving and life-long encounters with Christ where we receive God's Love and Mercy.

Because of this, process of prayer and discernment is needed as your child prepares to receive the Sacraments.. As your child enters into this process, it is encouraged that parents seek to help their child grow in their faith and desire to receive Christ in the Sacraments. For this reason, the Sacramental preparation process at the Basilica of St. Josaphat encourages families to prepare for the Sacraments together through a two-year process of required discernment opportunities.

Starting in 2nd Grade, families can begin this process of discernment. The first year is preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which begins in the fall with reception of the Sacrament in late Spring. The second year is preparation for the Sacrament of First Communion, which begins in the fall with reception in late Spring as well. Families can take as long as they need to prepare for the Sacraments and older children (4th Grade-11th Grade) are also welcome to enter into this discernment process.

### ***Discernment Opportunities:***

#### ● **Family Interviews:**

- The family (the child and at least one parent) will meet with the Director of Religious Education or a member of the Sacramental Prep Team at a scheduled time for a brief (30 min.) initial interview in the fall and a follow-up interview in the Spring before the reception of each of the Sacraments (Four interviews total in the 2-year process).
- These interviews are meant to serve as a way for the Director and/or member of the Sacramental Prep Team to get to know your child and your family and assist you in your discernment and preparation of these Sacraments.

#### ● **Preparation Retreats:**

- The preparation retreats are focused on providing the environment and formation for prayer and knowledge of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.
- There are two (2) retreats per Sacrament, four (4) retreats total in the 2-year preparation process.
- The child and at least one parent are required to attend.

#### ● **Sunday Program:**

- The Catholic Christian life centers around a lived relationship with Christ that is reflects God's Love in the world. The goal of Basilikids! and the sacramental preparation process is for children to MEET Christ and community, GROW in discipleship and knowledge of their faith, and LOVE God, the Catholic Church, and others. The Sacramental preparation process is not meant to be an end of it's own, but a strengthening support in a child's process of discipleship and lived relationship with Christ.
- Because of this, it is ***highly encouraged*** that children will be apart of our weekly Sunday program for at least the duration of their sacramental discernment, but hopefully for the years before and after their reception of the Sacraments.

#### ● **At-Home Preparation:**

- Parents are the primary educators of the faith for their children. Therefore, parents are encouraged to grow in their own faith and alongside their children during the process.

- To aid in this growth, the child and their parent(s) will be given a workbook at the first retreat to help in some at-home preparation activities that will facilitate this growth and discussion.

### ***Parish Membership & Baptism Certificates:***

To take part in the Basilica of St. Josaphat's Sacramental Preparation process, we ask that you are a registered member of our parish. If you are not, we would be happy to assist you in registering. If you are registered at a different parish, a letter of permission from your pastor is required to prepare here.

We also will need a copy of your child's baptism certificate by **December 1st, 2016**.

### ***Older Children & The Sacramental Preparation Process:***

Again, children who are older than the 3rd grade are welcome to join in the discernment and preparation process.

If your child is older than the age of 7 and is not baptized, they will need to prepare through a different process which culminates with them receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

## **How to Sign-Up**

To sign your child up for the Sunday program and/or the Sacramental Preparation process, please fill out the "**Family & Child Information Form**" for your family.

Then, submit \$50 per child (\$100 per family cap) either online via the Basilica website, cash, or check (written out to The Basilica of St. Josaphat). However, please keep in mind that no family will ever be turned away because of financial difficulty.

## **For the Parents**

### ***Parent Newsletters***

Every month, parents will receive an e-mail newsletter with up-to-date information regarding the schedule and upcoming events. These newsletters will also have helpful articles and websites with ideas of how to help cultivate a life of faith within the family.

## ***Involvement***

Parents are invited to discern if they are called to help with Basilikids! in a variety of ways. Please let Samantha, the DRE, know if you are interested in serving in the following ways by indicating your interest on the Family & Child Information Form:

- **Large Group Leader:**
  - Emcee the week and lead the large group teaching.
- **Small Group Leader:**
  - Lead small group activity and discussion for 5-6, grade-level specific children each week of Sunday Program.
- **Set-Up/Take Down/Craft Minister:**
  - Help program director set-up or take down Sunday preparations during the week. Or, as a craft minister, help with preparing crafts and/or activities for small groups as needed.
- **Substitute/Floater:**
  - Be available to jump in “as needed” on a week-to-week basis.
- **Sacramental Preparation Team:**
  - Help lead small groups and activities on Sacramental Preparation retreats (4 per year).

## **Inclimate Weather**

If we need to cancel Sunday program or a retreat due to incimate weather, there will be two ways you will be notified. First, please check your e-mail that you provided on your “Family & Child Information Form.” Then, check TMJ4’s website and television broadcast, where the cancellation will be listed.