

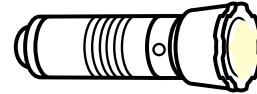


UNRAVEL
t h e
MYSTERY

**BLESSED SACRAMENT
FAITH FORMATION
HANDBOOK
2024-2025**

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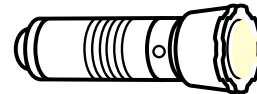
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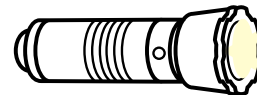
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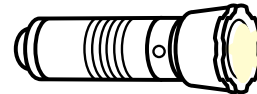
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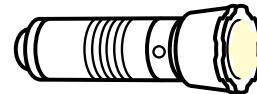
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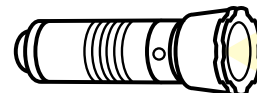
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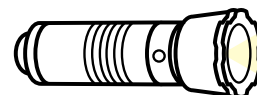
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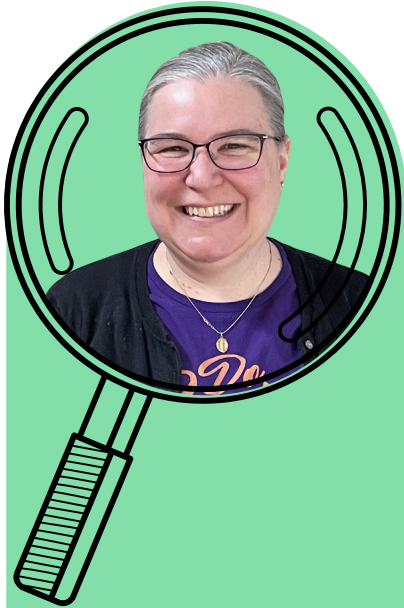
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Meet the Faith



**CORINNE
CATHCART**

*Director of Faith
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Coordinator of
Children's Faith
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&
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**FAVORITE MYSTERY
SERIES**

Trixie Belden



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&
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**FAVORITE MYSTERY
SHOW**

Scooby-Doo!



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Office Professional*



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FAVORITE MYSTERY

Marriage

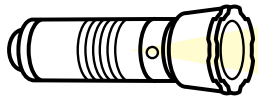
“The very first truth I would tell each of you is this: ‘God loves you.’ It makes no difference whether you have already heard it or not. I want to remind you of it.

**God loves
you.**

Never doubt this, whatever may happen to you in life. At every moment, you are infinitely loved.”

-Pope
Francis,
Christus vivit

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Families,

Welcome! We're so glad you're joining us for another fantastic year of Faith Formation! This year, we'll explore salvation history as we Unravel the Mystery, our theme for 2024-25! We'll follow the story of God's people from Creation to Revelation and learn about God's great mystery of love and salvation! (Spoiler alert: it may seem a little rocky for awhile, but it sure has a happy ending!)

Fun and fellowship with our parish family is a part of what makes Blessed Sacrament a special place. Our Family Fun Events, open to parishioners of all ages, help us to build that community. You'll see some of our traditional events returning this year along with a couple of new additions. Check out page 5 for the dates and mark your calendars! Everyone is invited to join our parish family for these events, and to bring along a friend or two!

I invite you to check out pages 2 and 3 of this handbook to get to know the creative and inspiring members of our Faith Formation Team, and, just for fun, their favorite mystery or mystery writer! They're all looking forward to praying, learning, and growing in faith with you this year. Don't hesitate to call or email with any questions you might have.

As always, Faith Formation this year is packed with love, joy, and Jesus! Join us as we Unravel the Mystery together! God has written such a great ending to our story! You won't want to miss it!

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corinne Cathcart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Corinne Cathcart
Director of Faith Formation

Parish Family Fun Events

OCTOBER 5:

*Trivia
Night*

NOVEMBER 2:

*All Souls'
Day
Event*

NOVEMBER 24:

*Advent
Family
Event*

JANURAY 11:

*Game
Night*

FEBRUARY 1:

*Art
Show*

MARCH 9:

*Lent
Event*

Elementary Faith Formation

AGE:

*Preschool-
5th grade*

MEETING TIME:

*Sundays,
9:30-10:45
am*

MEETING LOCATION:

Social Hall

SEPTEMBER	22 29	Kick-off Event Class 2
OCTOBER	13 20 27	Class 3 Class 4 Class 5
NOVEMBER	10 24	Class 6 Advent Event
DECEMBER	08 15	Class 7 Class 8
JANUARY	12 26	Class 9 Class 10
FEBRUARY	02 09 23	Class 11 Class 12 Class 13
MARCH	09 23	Lent Event Lesson 14
MAY	04	Easter Egg Hunt + Social

Hello!

Elementary Faith Formation is back with another year of whole-family Faith Formation! Since we believe that parents are the first and most important catechists of their children, we want to empower all of our parents to raise faithful, faith-filled, life-long Catholics! Every class is designed to help children and parents engage in meaningful prayer and discussion that continues all the way home and into their daily lives. With music, games, crafts, activities, and snacks, our classes are fun and accessible to everyone.

Corinne

Children's Liturgy of the Word

AGE:

*Preschool-
5th grade*

MEETING TIME:

*Sundays,
11 am Mass*

MEETING LOCATION:

*Vestibules
in back of
church*

The Liturgy of the Word comes after the Introductory Rites at Mass and includes the readings, the Homily, the Creed, and the Prayer of the Faithful. Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW) takes the same components and interprets them into child-friendly language and themes. The goal is for the children to "graduate" into Mass with an understanding of both the Sunday gospel and the underlying structure of the Mass.

SEPTEMBER 22
29

JANUARY 12
16

OCTOBER 13
20
27

FEBRUARY 02
09
23

NOVEMBER 10
17

MARCH 09
23

DECEMBER 08
15

APRIL 13
27

Vacation Bible School

VBS is held in conjunction with Assumption BVM Parish.

AGE:

*Preschool-
5th grade*

DATES:

*June 9-12,
2025*

LOCATION:

*Blessed
Sacrament*

Middle School YM Sunday Program

AGE:



MEETING TIME:



MEETING LOCATION:



SEPTEMBER	22	Kick-off Event
	29	Lesson 1
OCTOBER	06	Lesson 2
	13	Lesson 3
	20	Tag Night
	27	Halloween Party
NOVEMBER	03	Lesson 4
	10	Lesson 5
	17	Lesson 6
	24	Lesson 7
DECEMBER	08	XLT + Adoration
	15	Christmas Party
JANUARY	12	Lesson 8
	19	MLK Day Event
	26	Lesson 9
FEBRUARY	02	Lesson 10
	23	Lesson 11
MARCH	02	Lesson 12
	09	Lesson 13
	16	Lesson 14
	23	Closing Event

*Hey
there!*

Welcome (or welcome back!) to a fantastic year of Youth Ministry!

This year, 6th-8th grades will be focusing on Salvation History by learning the stories of their Biblical family of faith and exploring how their lives are touched by those stories. We are going to experientially come to understand what it means be made in the image of God and how each of our stories fits into God's great love story for all people of all time!

Christine

Middle School Youth Ministry After-School Program

AGE:



MEETING TIME:



MEETING LOCATION:



OCTOBER	10 24
NOVEMBER	07 21
DECEMBER	05 19
JANUARY	09 23
FEBRUARY	06 20
MARCH	06 20

Hello!

Do you have a middle schooler who loves serving and making a difference in the lives of others? This program is for them! Students get to brainstorm, organize, and complete their choice of service projects that spread joy, love, and Jesus to our neighbors across our parish, our community, and our world through service! Service projects are done both in-house and out in the community. Contact Christine if your child is interested in this program!

Christine

High School YM Sunday Program

AGE:

*9th-12th
grades*

MEETING TIME:

*Sundays,
6-8 pm*

MEETING LOCATION:

*Parish
Center*

SEPTEMBER	22	Kick-off Event Lesson 1
	29	
OCTOBER	06	Lesson 2
	13	Lesson 3
	20	Tag Night
	27	Lesson 4
NOVEMBER	03	Lesson 5
	10	Lesson 6
	17	Lesson 7
DECEMBER	08	XLT + Adoration Christmas Party
	15	
JANUARY	12	Lesson 8
	26	Lesson 9
FEBRUARY	02	Lesson 10
	23	Lesson 11
MARCH	02	Lesson 12
	09	Lesson 13
	23	Closing Event
APRIL	26-27	Y2Y Retreat

Welcome!

This school year, Sunday Night Small Groups will Unravel the Mystery with focus on the Eucharist and the Pascal Mystery for part of the year. We hope to help students embrace the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist — Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity — and to reveal God's enduring presence in the Catholic Church. In discussions of the Pascal Mystery, we hope to invite students into a deeper relationship with Christ by looking at how we are called to put our hope in Christ and make him our firm foundation.

The high school students, with the help of their small group leaders, will then choose their topics from a range of options offered in Life Teen, based on their interests. Life Teen consists of resources that provide solid Catholic teaching and youth ministry experiences for youth in middle school through high school. Please join us on Sunday Nights 6-8pm!

Melissa

Youth 2 Youth Retreat

April 26-27,
2025

The Youth 2 Youth Retreat is a yearly retreat for high school students, held in the spring at Camp Rotary. The retreat is planned and facilitated by high school students who have previously participated in the retreat. This retreat helps teens recognize God's presence in many ways through prayer, worship, witness talks, God Time, games and much more!

Team Meetings

AGE:

10th-12th
grades

MEETING TIME:

Mondays,
6:15-8:15
pm

MEETING LOCATION:

Parish
Center

SEPTEMBER	03 16 30	
OCTOBER	14 27	Discernment
NOVEMBER	11 25	
DECEMBER	08 09	Adoration
JANUARY	13 27	
FEBRUARY	10 24	
MARCH	10 24	
APRIL	07 21 25-27	Retreat

Students who have already been to the retreat may participate as members of the the Youth 2 Youth team. This team works September-April to plan the two-day retreat. Students grow in their own faith while creating an environment for others to develop and grow in their relationship with Jesus. The Retreat Team should plan to be at Camp Rotary April 25-27.

Youth Outreach Program

AGE:



MEETING TIME:



MEETING LOCATION:



SEPTEMBER	09 23	Parent Meeting Meeting 1
OCTOBER	07 21	Meeting 2 Meeting 3
NOVEMBER	04 9-10 18	Meeting 4 Wreath Sales Meeting 5
DECEMBER	02 08	Meeting 5 Adoration
JANUARY	06	Letter writing campaign
FEBRUARY	03	Meeting 6
MARCH	17 22 22-23	Meeting 7 Chili Cook-off/Euchre Easter Flower Sales
APRIL	14 28	Meeting 8 Meeting 9
MAY	05 09	Meeting 10 Meeting 11
JUNE	02	Meeting 12



The Youth Outreach Team is an opportunity for those in high school to put their faith in action by reaching out to others in service. In order to participate in the mission trip, each member is required to have a minimum of 25 service hours with the team each year. Some of these hours will be filled by helping out with various fundraising projects.

Sacramental Preparation

BAPTISM

Please contact the Faith Formation Office (989-835-6777) anytime during your pregnancy to register for required parent baptism classes or fill out the form online.

For Adults seeking baptism, please call the Faith Formation Office to inquire about joining the Church and attending OCIA classes.

CONFIRMATION

For years, young people in the Diocese of Saginaw have received this Sacrament in the 2nd grade, before receiving the Eucharist for the first time. However, in 2021, Bishop Gruss decided that “discernment and preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation should begin at a minimum age of 12 to 14 years old.” In addition, he is requiring parishes to prepare youth for this Sacrament through a two-year process using a program called *Purpose* from Life Teen. Parish leaders will accompany youth on this journey of preparation and will guide youth as they discern when they are ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Our first group of students who have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation in their 2nd grade year are now entering 6th grade. Because the Bishop is asking that preparation for Confirmation begins no earlier than 12-years-old, we will begin our first round of Year 1 prep in the fall of 2025, when this group of students is entering 7th grade.

To learn more about what this program will look like, including when your child can expect to participate in the program, please visit the Confirmation page on our website by scanning the QR code.



Sacramental Preparation

To prepare for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, a child must:

- Be Baptized Catholic or other recognized denomination.
- Be a member of the parish at which he or she will be receiving the sacraments.
- Be at least seven years old at the time of reception of the sacraments.
- Be enrolled and participate in at least two years of Faith Formation before the reception of the sacrament. The student may prepare for the reception of the Sacrament during their second year of Faith Formation.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

First Reconciliation preparation begins in October with a Parent-Child Session that includes family prayer, activities for kids, information for parents, and registration for the program. Families may choose to attend either of two dates for this event. During October and November, families work together at home on their First Reconciliation books. In December, the children gather at church for their Jesus Experience Day when they participate in retreat-style activities and celebrate the sacrament.

PARENT/CHILD SESSION:



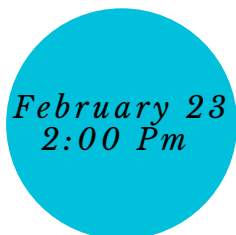
JESUS EXPERIENCE DAY:



FIRST EUCHARIST

Similar to First Reconciliation preparation, First Eucharist preparation consists of Parent-Child Sessions offered in February and early March, family book-work at home during March and April, and a Jesus Experience Day at the end of April. In May, we'll have a required practice day and First Eucharist Masses at each Mass on *May 17-18*.

PARENT/CHILD SESSION:



JESUS EXPERIENCE DAY:



FIRST EUCHARIST MASSES:



We need you!

A successful Faith Formation program is only possible with the help of awesome adult volunteers. We invite you to participate in your child(ren)'s Faith Formation in whatever way your gifts, talents, or passion lead you! Below are lists of some of the positions for which we need parent volunteers. Please contact the respective program coordinator if you would like to volunteer in one of these areas. And if you would like to be involved in some way that is not listed, please let us know!

CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION

Sunday Program

- Photographer
- Kitchen help

Sacraments

- Jesus Experience Day helpers

Children's Liturgy of the Word

- Teachers
- Aides

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

Sunday Program

- Small group leaders
- Subs
- Photographers
- Set up/clean up help

After-School Program

- Aides

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

Sunday Program

- Small group leaders
- Subs

Youth 2 Youth

- Adult leaders
- Retreat drivers

Outreach

- Adult leaders

Policies

A

ACCIDENTS

First aid is administered only in minor cases, as an emergency treatment, until the injured person is placed under professional care. It is the parent's responsibility to notify our office of any changes in emergency information that occur during the year.

ADMINISTRATION

All concerns and questions should be handled by the appropriate program coordinator. Parents may contact the Faith Formation Director for further assistance after having tried to address the question/concern with the appropriate person.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance at Faith Formation meetings is important. Every effort should be made to keep absences to a minimum.

B

C

CHANGE IN ANY INFORMATION

Please keep us informed of any change of contact information. This will help us keep in contact with you about opportunities or items of importance to you or your family.

COMMUNICATION

We will communicate with you primarily through Eva (see more under "Eva"), which is the platform we use to email and text our newsletters. Updates are also in our parish bulletin and on our website. Handouts may occasionally be sent home with children. Feel free to call with any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

CRIME-FREE POLICY

Illegal activity will not be tolerated at Blessed Sacrament Parish or sponsored events. Weapons (including but not limited to guns, firearms, daggers, knives with a blade over three inches, pocket knives, iron bars, clubs, brass knuckles, explosive devices, or facsimiles of weapons used in a threatening or frightening manner) are not permitted on Blessed Sacrament property or sponsored events. The administrator (Pastor, Faith Formation Director, or Program Coordinator) reserves the right to determine what constitutes a weapon. A child/youth that violates this may be subject to expulsion from Faith Formation.

D

DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary actions will convey basic Christian values. Discipline methods will include modeling and encouraging expected behavior, involving children/youth in setting clear and consistent rules, redirecting children/youth to acceptable activities and meeting with individual children/youth to discuss concerns. If a child/youth has difficulties, parents will be consulted to discuss the problem and solution.

DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIALS

The Program Coordinator shall determine the suitability of any printed materials for distribution within the classroom.

DRIVING CHILDREN/YOUTH

Adults driving children must submit a driver information sheet annually requiring minimal acceptable liability limits for a privately-owned vehicle of \$500,000 combined single limit. The driver shall have no more than six points on his/her driving record. A copy of a valid driver's license is needed. Drivers must also have completed VIRTUS and a background check.

The booster seat law requires all children to be in a booster seat until they are 8 years old or 4' 9" tall. All other passengers are required to wear seatbelts.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

The possession or use of legal or illegal drugs or alcohol by children/youth is strictly forbidden except in accordance with a physician's direction, i.e. asthma inhalers. A child/youth who violates this may be subject to expulsion from Faith Formation.

E

EVA

Eva is the program that we use to send out email newsletters to various church groups. Elementary Faith Formation, Middle School YM and High School YM (as well as these programs' sub-groups) have their own newsletters that are emailed each week. To sign up for these emails, scan the QR code on the respective group page in this handbook.

F

FAITH FORMATION AT HOME

Although we encourage children/youth to attend Faith Formation sessions and activities within the community, we understand that, at times, a child must be home-schooled. Please contact the appropriate Program Coordinator to see if it is possible to complete a specific program within the home.

FIELD TRIPS

Parents must submit formal written permission before children/youth are allowed to participate in field trips. We cannot accept permission by phone.

FUNDRAISING

The entire parish community, through its stewardship program, supports Faith Formation. Fundraising projects are kept to a minimum and must follow parish guidelines.

G

H

HARASSMENT & BULLYING

Persons who engage in harassment, bullying, or threats of violence are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion. Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Michigan Elliot-Larson Civil Rights Act.

I

J

K

L

LOST & FOUND

Blessed Sacrament's "lost and found" is located in the west entrance of the Parish Center. Any lost articles may be reclaimed in this location. After a reasonable period of time, unclaimed articles will be given away to charitable organizations.

M

N

O

P

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

The Church recognizes that parents have the primary right and obligation to educate their children. Parents should, therefore, view this program as an extension of the religious training received at home--not as a substitute for it.

The goal of the parish staff is to assist parents in this awesome responsibility. The Catechism of the Catholic Church #2226 states: "Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents."

As Catholics, we have an obligation and opportunity to attend Mass each weekend and teach our children about the Mass by word and example. It is the parents' right, responsibility and opportunity to ensure their children attend Mass weekly. Faith Formation does not take the place of Mass nor does it fulfill the obligation and opportunity of participating in the Mass.

PARISH RESOURCE CENTER

The center includes sections devoted to: Catechesis, Youth Ministry, Liturgy, and the Parish Circulation Library. Reserve books, magazines, and other periodicals may not be taken from the resource center. Books may be borrowed from the Circulating Library. All new materials must be approved by the Faith Formation Team Leader.

PUBLICITY & RELEASE INFORMATION

If you do not want your child's work or photograph to appear in publicity materials, please contact the Faith Formation office.

Q

R

REGISTRATION

Registration is required to participate in Faith Formation programs. Registration generally begins in the spring for the following school year.

Our registration fee is \$45 per child and \$120 maximum per family.

No one will be denied registration due to financial difficulties. Please mark "scholarship" on the registration form or contact one of the Program Coordinators if the registration fee is a financial burden for your family.

Children must be four years old by September 1 to register for the four-year-old program.

S

SACRAMENTS

Baptisms are celebrated at weekend liturgies throughout the year. Baptismal preparation sessions are required for parents.

Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA): Adults interested in becoming Catholic enter the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults.

OCIA Adapted for Children: Children over the age of seven, who ask for baptism or at the discretion of their parents or guardians, are prepared for initiation similarly to the adult process. This process can also accommodate baptized children who have not celebrated Confirmation or First Eucharist. The process is centered on forming the entire family. All sessions are for all ages.

Reconciliation and First Eucharist: Children who wish to complete these sacraments are expected to complete two consecutive years of Catholic school or Faith Formation, the second of which is the year of preparing for the sacraments. (For example, a second grader in sacramental preparation needs to have participated in Faith Formation or Catholic school in the first grade.)

Students follow the requirements prepared by the parish for the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Arrangements for reception of these sacraments are made through the Faith Formation office. Our sacramental preparation programs require parents and children to attend instructional sessions in order to effectively prepare at home for reception of the sacraments. Also, all children receiving these sacraments are required to attend a morning retreat. The dates, time, and place of these sessions are publicized in advance in the Sunday bulletin and Eva.

There have been many changes to how and when the Sacrament of Confirmation is received in the Diocese of Saginaw. you can read more about those changes in the Sacramental Preparation portion of the handbook.

SEVERE WEATHER

If Midland Public Schools are closed because of inclement weather, then all daytime (before 6 PM) parish events, including Faith Formation and parish offices, will be closed. A decision will be made for evening meetings and activities, which will be communicated on the website. Either all evening meetings and activities will take place or all will be canceled.

On Saturdays, Sundays, and weekdays when school is not in session, a decision to cancel all events (daytime and evening) due to inclement weather will be made by 7 AM.

When Midland Public Schools announce the early dismissal of students due to weather conditions, Blessed Sacrament's Faith Formation is included.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Blessed Sacrament Parish is a welcoming and faith-filled community. We shall provide a supportive and caring learning environment to all Faith Formation children, including those with special needs. Together, parents, catechists, youth leaders, and staff, will determine how best to meet each child's needs, which may include special arrangements. The Faith Formation team shall be cognizant and respectful of families' rights of confidentiality.

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is time, talent, and treasure. It takes all of us working together to make these wonderful programs succeed. We ask you to share your time or talent with us in some capacity. Please call the office if you can help us in any way.

SUPPORT A YOUTH

The youth at Blessed Sacrament are truly blessed to have many ministry opportunities. We provide scholarships to any youth with a financial need. Please consider supporting a youth financially in a parish-sponsored event. Your gift will make it possible for a youth to participate in a conference (\$600), a social event (\$10-75), a retreat opportunity (\$10-60) or an extended service trip (\$440). "Sponsor a Youth" envelopes are available in the Faith Formation office. Your donation is tax-deductible.

T

U

V

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers must agree to communicate authentic Catholic teaching and traditions as outlined by the present curriculum. Our catechists continue life-long formation through the diocesan basic formation program.

To keep our children safe, volunteers who work with children must participate in VIRTUS, have a background check, and sign the "Standards of Ministerial Behavior Acknowledgement" form as outlined by the diocese.

W

WEBSITE

Check out the website blessed-midland.org for the latest happenings and upcoming events.

X

Y

Z

