



CATHOLIC EDUCATION MINISTRIES

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August 4, 2022

Dear Parish Faith Formation and Youth/Young Adult Ministry Leader,

Welcome to a new catechetical year! We are excited for a “life-giving” year of growth in faith and leadership. CEM is very excited to welcome a new team member, Christine Pinto, Associate Director for Faith Formation. Christine comes with a wealth of experience and expertise as a strong leader in parish ministry in the Willmar area for the past 19 years. It will be great for you all to meet Christine and see how she and the rest of CEM can assist your ministries.

There are several opportunities this year for networking and on-going formation, see the enclosed schedule for the year. We would like to highlight a few options that are coming up. This information and more can be found on our website: <https://stcdio.org/cem/>.

Our **Faith Formation/Youth/Young Adult Ministry Leader meetings** are called “**The Well.**” “The Well” is open to all who are leaders in Faith Formation and Youth and Young Adult Ministry with parishes in the Diocese of Saint Cloud. From time-to-time, parish leaders are welcomed to bring guests who serve as catechists and volunteers. The purpose of the gatherings is for ministers who serve in these areas to come together in prayer, support, networking, and discipleship. “The Well” gatherings are primarily led by the participants and the host parish or ACC. Catholic Education Ministries supports and serves as a primary resource from the diocese for these gatherings. See enclosed schedule.

Sunday, August 21 4 p.m. – Monday, August 22 p.m. – Beginning of the Year Retreat – All parish catechetical and youth ministry leaders are invited to join us for a beginning of the year retreat at the Central Minnesota TEC Center in Belle Prairie. Our theme for the retreat is, “It is *well* with my soul.” Our focus will be to gather as leaders to pray, share faith, network and support each other in ministry and to look ahead for ways to collaborate in ministry. The cost is about \$30.00. To register for the retreat, please follow this link: <https://forms.gle/1dRavQcnGnNrJfeq5>. For any questions contact Kristi or Kent at the emails or phone number at the bottom of this letter.

Thursday, September 1 from 10:30 a.m. -2:00 p.m. - New Catechetical Leader Day at the Saint Cloud Pastoral Center. Are you, or someone you know new to their position? This orientation day is meant to help those new to their position (within the past 2 years) become familiar with the events, meetings, expectations, procedures, and staff that are unique to the Saint Cloud Diocese. To RSVP, please register here <https://forms.gle/4nJpj1mFGDxbT2n76> or call or email the CEM team.

Emmaus Institute for Ministry Formation: CLASSES ARE FORMING! REGISTER NOW. The Diocese of Saint Cloud is continuing this initiative to form lay ministers. The Emmaus Institute is an intellectual and ministerial formation program for lay ministers and potential Latino/Hispanic diaconate candidates from the diocese, in partnership with Saint John's School of Theology and Seminary. Its purpose is to create well-formed ministers who will serve the mission of the Gospel in their families, parishes and Area Catholic Communities. Whether you are currently serving in volunteer or paid ministry, or have a personal interest in theological formation, Emmaus Institute has a place for you. For more information, visit <http://stcdio.org/emmaus-institute/> or contact Kristi Bivens.

Sunday, September 11, 12:30 – 5:30 p.m. – Diocesan Youth Council and Parish/ACC Youth Leadership Training. High School Peer Leaders are invited to participate in a training to better learn how to work as a team, lead ice breakers, lead prayer and retreats in their own parishes and ACCs. To register for this training, or to learn more about the day please visit: <https://forms.gle/WdiKti6nn6UGnnnD6> and feel free to reach out to Kent Schmitz.

Silence is a Bridge to God: A Contemplative Retreat and Prayer Group: Do you find yourself struggling to hear the quiet voice of God in all of the noise of the world? Are you longing for stillness? Contemplative prayer practices can lead us to a deeper awareness of the God who dwells with each of us. Beginning with a retreat on **Friday, September 16** from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., participants will be introduced to contemplative prayer. The retreat will be followed by six sessions to experience different forms of contemplative prayer in more depth. These will be Fridays: September 23 & 30, October 14, 21, & 28, and November 11 from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. The retreat and all sessions will include lunch and will be held at Saint John's University. Space is limited to 10 people. It is important to attend all sessions. For questions or to register contact Kristi Bivens.

Sunday, September 18, 2022 is Catechetical Sunday. On this day, in parishes across the nation, those designated by their community to serve as catechists will be called forth to be commissioned for their ministry. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role each person plays in witnessing the Gospel and handing on the faith to others. The theme this year is, **"This is my body given for you."** Free resources may be found by following the link below at: <https://www.usccb.org/committees/evangelization-catechesis/catechetical-sunday-2022>. Be sure to scroll down for the free resources.

Youth Events: Exciting things are happening for our youth this year. Connor Flanagan will be here to help us kick off our Saint Cloud Diocesan Senior High Youth Rally. It will be Sunday, **October 30, 2022**. Promotional and registration materials will be available online and mailed out soon. Our Middle School Youth Rally is being reformatted to a lock-in and is scheduled for **January 28-29, 2023**, and our annual Castaway Senior High Retreat is scheduled for **March 24 - 26, 2023**. Stay tuned for more details in the weeks and months ahead, contact Kent with questions.

Are you looking for a retreat for your Confirmation candidates as they prepare to receive the sacrament? **Diocesan Confirmation Retreats** are planned for this school year. They will be at Sacred Heart Parish in Sauk Rapids from 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on the following Saturdays: October 15, November 19, January 7 and February 11. Each retreat can host between 40-50 people, so sign up early at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4CACA729A2F49-september>. **This link is for confirmation coordinators. Please do not share with parents or students.** We are happy to accept one or forty students or as many as we have room for to accommodate parishes. Each parish is required to bring at least 1 adult leader per 8 students. Cost for the retreat is \$40.00 per student and \$15.00 per adult. As always, we are very willing to come to individual parishes or ACCs to lead retreats. Contact Kent to schedule.

May this catechetical year bring the wonderful encounter of Christ's love to you and those you serve. If we can be of any assistance during the year please call (320) 251-0111 or email kbivens@gw.stcdio.org or kschmitz@gw.stcdio.org or cpinto@gw.stcdio.org. We are here for you.

Blessings,

Kent Schmitz
*Associate Director for Adolescent
Catechesis/Youth Ministry*

Christine Pinto
*Associate Director for
Faith Formation*

Kristi Bivens
*Associate Director for Lay
Leadership Formation*