



Saint Clare of Assisi

CATHOLIC CHURCH

2022-2023

Youth Formation Handbook

Our mission:

To accompany our youth as they grow into dynamic and visible disciples of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church.

† Welcome and Congratulations!

You and your family have made the decision to educate and form your teens in the ways of loving, knowing and following our Savior Jesus Christ. You do so through the fullness of the Christian faith, that is, the Catholic Church. As your parish family, we stand with you and by you to encourage, support and love you. We all want to be pleasing to the Lord and accepting of his holy will. Let us all strive to become saints!

This handbook outlines the policies and procedures for our Youth Ministry program for grades 6 through 12. If you have questions or concerns, please let us know.

God's many blessings to you and your loved ones!

Father Gregory West, Pastor

WE'RE
HERE
FOR YOU

† Our Hopes and Vision



Pope Francis prayed that our church "may be full of joyous, courageous and committed young people who can offer the world new testimonies of holiness." (Christus Vivit)

We believe that our teens have so much to offer the church and the world around us. As a parish community, we are committed to being present to our youth and walking with them in order to mentor, guide, and teach them. USCCB document, *Renewing the Vision*, says "The entire Church... must empower young people... We must ensure that young people are well equipped for their special mission in the world." We will offer many opportunities for Worship, Socialization, Leadership, Catechesis, Service, and more. We want our young people to be well rounded as they strive for their fullest potential. As they pursue sainthood. This is something that demands the work of the entire church, and we must always have our eyes open to encounter Christ in the faces of our youth.

† Youth Formation Experiences at Saint Clare of Assisi

Middle School - EDGE (Grades 6-8)

EDGE exists to create a place of community and faith for our middle school students. All year long we put together fun events that the students will love and get excited about.

All middle school youth are welcome to participate, no matter what school they attend. Participants can even invite friends who are not registered in our parish. The more your child attends, the more fun they will have and the more they will learn about our faith and what it means for the way they live, act, and serve as part of the body of Christ. See below all our programs included in EDGE:



EDGE Venture Bible Study (Grades 6-7)

Our program includes opportunities for catechesis where our students will mainly learn about Scripture and Catholic Tradition and how it is relevant in their life today. This year, we will achieve this with the "Venture" Bible Study. Any middle school student can join this group. We'll eat pizza, play games, and dive deep into our faith and tradition.

EDGE Events (Grades 6-8)

Our program is also designed to go beyond catechesis. It is to be relational. Each month our EDGE ministry will host a social or recreational event for the students to connect with their friends in an environment that is centered on Christ.

Pizza and Praise

While this is open to all ages, our pizza and praise nights are the ideal place for youth to come together to worship in Eucharistic Adoration, followed up by a quick walk to Orlando's Pizza to eat and hang out. Parents are encouraged to join.

XLT

Be sure not to miss our XLTs. The abbreviation stands for EXALT, as we gather with youth groups all around the Charleston area for an upbeat and exciting night that also includes Eucharistic Adoration and Confession. Come check out the inspiring guest speakers, great worship music, and of course, dinner is always included. The entire family is welcome to attend.

Sacrament of Confirmation (Grades 7 & 8)

When a middle school student reaches 7th grade they are invited to begin their journey towards receiving Confirmation. During the next two years, students are encouraged to still participate in all our EDGE events.

Our Confirmation program is designed, as all our other programs, to form disciples; that is, a church living as *one body in Christ* and being witnesses of faith to the world around them. It is typically a two year process. The first year sets the foundation. In the second year, they will be formally prepared for the Sacrament.

Students needing preparation for Baptism, First Reconciliation and/or First Holy Communion in grades six through eight, please contact the parish office (info@clare.church).

Pre-Confirmation Prep - Year 1

Students interested in beginning this journey will be given a personal journal full of prayers, family activities, video links, and reflection pages to write their thoughts and questions. This journal will help each person discover what ignites their faith, and will lead the candidates through prayer and action in the natural setting of their home life. Along with all the home activities, it includes a Mass journal that is to be completed each Sunday when participating in Mass. They will follow the timeline presented in the journal, and when completed, they are to submit their journal before registering for Year 2 the following year. *Journals will be picked up at the parent orientation meeting on August 28, 3:00 p.m. in the PAC*

Confirmation Prep - Year 2

In the second year, all candidates meet together twice a month for formation, fellowship, and prayer. They will also attend a Confirmation Retreat, participate in serving the community, and complete a discernment conversation (previously known as an interview).

All candidates must turn in a sponsor form and complete a written reflection on a service project and their saint name. Guidelines and forms can be found on the website.

clare.church/confirmationprep

Here is a few more important details:

Confirmation Classes

There will be a total of 13 classes for our Year 2 Candidates. Classes will be 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 12:15 - 2:00 p.m. in the BEHS PAC. Our classes will include time for community, catechesis, and prayer. Our goal is to make the classes fun and engaging, while giving your child the best formation possible.

While there is never any perfect schedule that will meet the needs of every family, our hope is to help *as many families as possible*. That is why Confirmation classes run the same time as First Communion classes, Clare's Kids, EDGE Venture Bible Study, and are immediately following the 11:00 a.m. Mass. *You can drop off all your kids at once, and we will always provide pizza!*

Retreat

Our retreat is usually the favorite part for most candidates. The retreat provides an opportunity for the youth to take a break from regular daily things and focus all their attention on their relationship with God. They come back with stronger friendships, conviction, joy, and a deeper relationship with God.

For any student not able to make the Confirmation Retreat, you may substitute the following:

- Diocesan Jr. High Rally
- EDGE Middle School Retreat

Service Project

We believe there should never be a limit to what we give, so we do not require a set number of hours to check off. Instead, we ask our youth to come up with a meaningful act of service they can do or to regularly plug-in to a parish ministry or our S.O.S. (Service On Saturday) events.

Towards the end of the year, each candidate will submit a written reflection about the importance of serving our neighbors.

Discernment Conversation

Towards the end of a Candidate's preparation, they will meet with someone on our Parish staff to discern their commitment to their faith. It is an opportunity for the candidate to testify on their own belief in what the Church teaches and share how they intend to live out their faith beyond Confirmation.

Catholic School students:

Students receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation in their parish and not in the school they attend. While the student's school will

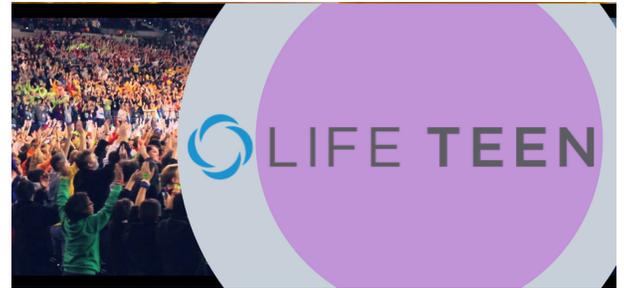
provide a strong catechetical foundation, our program is designed to unite our parish family and foster a deeper spiritual life within each individual student, no matter their foundation. While assignments completed at school, such as Saint reports and service projects will be accepted at the parish, all other components of Confirmation Prep will be completed in the parish.

A mandatory Confirmation rehearsal will be held for all year two candidates and their sponsor at the end of the year. Sponsors and Candidates must be in attendance. After the rehearsal, we invite all family and friends to be part of a Holy Hour to pray for all our Candidates.

High School - Life Teen; Grades 9-12

Life Nights

Our high school teens gather every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month at 5:00 p.m. in the Parish Office. Life Nights are open to all students in high school. Our participants are always welcome to invite friends along as well. Dinner is provided each session, and every night includes some community building activities, catechesis, small groups, and prayer.



Pizza and Praise

While this is open to all ages, our pizza and praise nights are the ideal place for teens to come together to worship in Eucharistic Adoration, followed up by a quick walk to Orlando's Pizza to eat and hang out.

XLT

Be sure not to miss our XLTs. The abbreviation stands for EXALT, as we gather with youth groups all around the Charleston area for an upbeat and exciting night that also includes Eucharistic Adoration and Confession. Come check out the inspiring guest speakers, great worship music, and of course, dinner is always included.

Youth Core Team

Our High School students also have a unique opportunity to be active leaders in our parish community. We look to our high schoolers to help with Confirmation Retreats, Confirmation Classes, and Clare's Kids. Our Youth Core Team goes through intense training over the summer to prepare them for a year of service and leadership.

In order to participate, one must apply and be accepted. Applications can be found online.

Events

Lastly, we also offer amazing events all year round. Our biggest events include the Fall Retreat, Summer Camp, and the Diocesan Youth Conference. Keep your eyes open though, as we may spontaneously decide to go camping, white water rafting, paintballing, do a lock-in, or even go surfing.

Students needing preparation for Baptism, First Reconciliation and/or First Holy Communion in grades six through eight, please contact the parish office (info@clare.church).

† Calendar Dates:

Family

EDGE

Confirmation

Life Teen

Some dates may be subject to change due to conflicts with Bishop England's calendar. Exact dates and times for larger events and retreats may be subject to change due to availability of location.

Sunday, August 28	Mandatory Parent Session	3:00-4:15 p.m.	PAC
September 9 or 10	EDGE Kick-Off Event	TBA	TBA
Sunday, September 11	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Sunday, September 25	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Sept 30 - Oct 1	Life Teen Retreat (tentative)	Full Weekend	TBA
Tuesday, October 4	Pizza and Praise	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Holy Cross & Orlando's
Sunday, October 9	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Friday, October 21	EDGE Halloween Fun Night	6:00-8:30 p.m.	TBA
Sunday, October 23	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Sunday, October 30	Trunk or Treat	12:00-1:00 p.m.	BE Parking Lot
Wednesday, November 2	Pizza and Praise	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Holy Cross & Orlando's
Saturday, November 5	Jr. High Rally	All Day	Cardinal Newman HS
Sunday, November 13	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Sunday, November 20	Confirmation Year 2 Retreat (tentative)	All Day	TBA
Sunday, December 4	XLT	5:00-7:00 p.m.	BE PAC
Tuesday, December 6	Pizza and Praise	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Holy Cross & Orlando's
Saturday, December 10	Family Movie Night	6:00-8:30 p.m.	Bishop England
Sunday, December 11	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Friday, December 16	Life Teen Christmas Lock-In	All Night	TBA

Sunday, January 8	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Sunday, January 22	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
February 4-5	EDGE Retreat	Saturday-Sunday	Camp St. Christopher
Tuesday, February 7	Pizza and Praise	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Holy Cross & Orlando's
Friday, February 10	EDGE Bowling Night	5:00-8:00 p.m.	Stars and Strikes
Sunday, February 12	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Sunday, February 26	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
March 3-5	High School Youth Conference	Full Weekend	Columbia, SC
Tuesday, March 7	Pizza and Praise	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Holy Cross & Orlando's
Sunday, March 12	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Saturday, March 25	Charleston Zipline Adventures	All Day	Awendaw, SC
Sunday, March 26	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Monday, March 27	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	6:30-8:00 p.m.	PAC
Tuesday, April 4	Pizza and Praise	6:30-8:00 p.m.	Holy Cross & Orlando's
Sunday, April 23	EDGE Venture Group (Grades 6-7)	12:15-2:00 p.m.	Room 109
	Confirmation Year 2 Class	12:15-2:00 p.m.	PAC
	Life Night (Grades 9-12)	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Parish Office
Sunday, April 30	XLT	5:00-7:00 p.m.	BE PAC

**Summer Events may include: Life Teen Banquet, Life Teen Leadership Conference, Camp Hidden Lake, Camp Covecrest, Steubenville Youth Conference, Adventure Trip, Surf Retreat, Work Camp, River Tubing, etc... More information on these events will be released later in the year.*

† Deadlines for Confirmation Prep

Pre-Confirmation Prep Year 1

Checkpoint #1	November 13	Submit final page of section 1
Checkpoint #2	February 5	Submit final page of section 2
Checkpoint #3	April 2	Submit final page of section 3
Checkpoint #4	May 1	Submit final page of section 4

Confirmation Prep Year 2

October 9	Submit Permission Form for Confirmation Retreat
October 23	Submit Sponsor Form
March 27	Submit Saint Report and Written Reflection on Service Project
May TBA	Confirmation Rehearsal and Holy Hour
May TBA	Confirmation Mass
June 4	Mystagogy Dinner

**All work may be submitted by email or in-person.*

† Registration

Registration is available online at clare.church. Payment is due at the time of registration and can be paid online. Baptismal certificates must be on file in the parish office for every child enrolled in Faith Formation. A copy of a First Holy Communion certificate needs to be on file for those enrolling in Confirmation Prep. If you have not yet submitted a copy of these certificates, there is a place to upload on the registration form.

† Tuition

Tuition for the 2021-2022 school year

EDGE Venture Bible Study (edit up top).....	\$70 per student
Pre-Confirmation Prep Year 1	\$70 per student
Pre-Confirmation Prep Year 1 + Venture Bible Study and ONE FREE event with EDGE.....	\$85 per student
Confirmation Prep Year 2.....	\$70 per student
Life Teen.....	FREE
RCIT.....	\$70 per student
Retreats and Events.....	Vary in Price (pay later)

† Attendance Policy

Mass

Weekly participation in Mass is a fundamental and necessary factor in deepening your child's faith and equipping him/her for discipleship. Parents who sign up their children in our Faith Formation program commit to living this out as a family.

EDGE & Life Teen

Unless you are in RCIT, where on-going faith formation is required, there is no penalty for missing a Life Night or EDGE Night. However, we strongly encourage consistent and regular participation so that our students may gain the most out of their experience.

Confirmation

Candidates in Year 2 are to attend at least 10 out of 13 classes. Of course, attending all classes is how you will get the most out of the experience.

Candidates in Year 2 are also to check-in at each Sunday Mass and Holy Day of Obligation. We ask that each candidate show a minimum of a 75% attendance rate. Keep in mind how good it is for your child to frequently participate in the Sacramental life of the Church. It is there that we encounter Christ and receive the grace that more perfectly binds us to His heart.

More information will be covered at the mandatory parent session on Sunday, August 28, 3:00 p.m.

How Check-In for Sacrament Prep will work:

1. Each member of your household who has a phone is to text STCLAREAPP to 833.245.5310 to get a link for downloading the app.
2. Complete the profile section for yourself: first and last names, email address, your mobile number, and your profile picture. Each member of your household is to do the same from their own phones. This will then link your profile to our parish database for your household.
3. Up to two hours before arrival at weekend Mass at the BEHS PAC, please do the following:
 - Open the MY CLARE app.
 - Select EVENTS from the bottom navigation bar.
 - Then select EVENT CHECK IN.
 - Select all of your household members who are with you at Mass. The app will generate a barcode that you will scan at our check in stations (iPads) located in the hallway immediately outside the PAC. This will record your attendance.

Missed classes or an absence at Mass due to sports or other extracurricular activities, even with advance notice, is not considered excused. In the event of a prolonged illness that results in absences, please contact the parish office so that we may offer the help and support needed.

† Arrival/Dismissal

EDGE Venture Bible Study and Confirmation Prep Year 2

Your children's safety is of the utmost concern to us.

- Parents or designated persons must sign students in and out.
- Children will be released only to a parent/guardian or a designated person. If someone different is picking up your child, we must be notified in writing before the class or event begins.
- Please be on time to pick up your children at the end of class or event. Do not pick your child up before the children are released at the end of class or event.
- The only open entrance for EDGE and Confirmation will be the metal gate behind the PAC (pathway between the PAC and nursery)

† Communications

Email will be our primary form of communication. Please check your email's spam folder if you are not receiving our parish bulletin or Faith Formation emails. If you unsubscribe, you will no longer receive information from our office.

If we need to cancel Faith Formation classes for any reason, we will send out an email.

† Cell Phones

Students in EDGE, Confirmation, and Life Teen are expected to use their cell phones responsibly and respectfully. If the phone becomes a distraction, it will be kept by an adult volunteer and returned at the end of the session. Any use of social media that speaks negatively about another student, an adult leader, our programs, or our church could result in disciplinary action. However, we highly encourage our students to use social media as a platform to share their faith and God's love with others.

† Empowering God's Children

Every parish in the Diocese of Charleston is required to offer a class on "Empowering God's Children: Teaching Safety" each year to all students. If parents would like to opt out their child from this class, they must complete the opt-out form included in their registration. This year's class will be held on Sunday, October 16, 12:00-1:00pm

† Expectations of Behavior

Our goals encourage Christian attitudes and growth in self-discipline. We are a community based on the shared acceptance of the message of Jesus Christ. We expect the following from our students:

- Students will be respectful of themselves and others, especially adults. The use of "Yes, Ma'am," "No, Ma'am," "Yes, Sir," and "No, Sir" is expected.
- Students will respect the rights of other students to learn and the catechist's responsibility to teach.

- Students will contribute in a positive manner to the learning environment.
- Students will follow the overall class procedures.

If a student displays conduct disruptive to Faith Formation volunteers or another student, the catechist will give the student the opportunity to change his/her unacceptable behavior. If the unacceptable behavior continues, the student will be asked to confer with the catechist and parents after class.

If the unacceptable behavior continues during another Faith Formation class, the parents will be notified of the need for a conference with the Director of Youth Ministry. Should the unacceptable behavior continue after the conference, the student will be readmitted to class only with a parent joining them until such time as the unacceptable behavior stops.

† Attire

Students are to maintain a modest appearance. This appearance may be casual, but respectful. Appropriateness of attire will be determined by an adult leader in consultation with the Director of Youth Formation.

† Special Child Custody Situations

It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide copies or documents to the parish office related to child custody and restraining orders, if applicable, and to personally make the Director of Youth Ministry aware of any unique concerns related thereto.

† Special Needs & Learning Disabilities

We highly encourage you to share with us if your child has a learning disability or special need so we can best help your child learn while they are in our Faith Formation programs. If you would like, please feel free to arrange a meeting with the Director of Youth Ministry to discuss how we can help your child excel in their Faith Formation class.

† Role of the Parents in Youth Formation

We, the parish, alone cannot teach your children everything they will need to become disciples of Christ.

A common presumption in our culture is that the teaching of the faith is mostly the responsibility of the school or parish. However, our faith teaches that *parents are the primary catechists to their children*. Parents teach not only with their words but often, more importantly, with their attitudes and actions. Children learn about the world, others, and themselves from the ways their parents approach each of these. Recently, a study conducted by the National Study on Youth and Religion found that *the majority of teenagers named their parents as their number one spiritual influence*.

Saint John Paul II often referred to the family as “*the domestic Church*” because parents provide a child’s first and primary example of faith. Catholicism is seen in such a home as a way of life which pervades all moments of one’s day rather than an obligation to be fit into one’s weekend schedule.

When parents present their children to be baptized, the priest or deacon asks if they understand the great role they have.

"You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?" The parents answer, "Yes."

This means that parents *promise* to bring their children to Mass each and every weekend as well as every Holy Day. They *promise* to nourish their children in the faith of the Catholic Church through faith formation and the sacraments.

This Baptismal promise also implies that parents will go as a family to the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year.

Parents also promise *to be good stewards of this parish*. They will model by their actions and attitudes a sense of joy and charity about sharing their God-given gifts—time, talent, and treasure with the parish community and the community at large. Recognizing that everything we have comes from God, parents understand that we are but stewards (caretakers) of these gifts and our ultimate responsibility is to share them with others. Children will naturally learn this joy of sharing as their parents engender in them and model for them the importance of stewardship.

We want to partner with you and support you in this mission you have taken on in bringing up your children in the faith. All that we offer in Youth Ministry is focused on this goal.

† Service Opportunities for Parents

Opportunities for service, both in the classroom and outside of it, will be offered each year. Look for those opportunities within each program and in other parish announcements.

**We are excited to see what the Lord
will do this year in your child's life!**

And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. -Colossians 1:9-10