

ST. JOHN CANTUUS YOUTH FORMATION



Calendar for
2024-2025



“What kind of work can be more noble, than to cultivate the minds of young people, guarding it carefully, so that the knowledge and love of God and His holy precepts, go hand-in-hand with learning?

To form young Christians and citizens, is not this the most beautiful and noble minded way to make use of life, of all one’s talents and energy?”

St. John Cantius

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A Letter from Your DRE

August 2024

Dear CCD families,

Greetings from our Religious Education Program. If you are a returning family, welcome back! And if you are new to our program, we offer you a very warm welcome! We are glad you are here.

The Religious Education Program at St. John Cantius is very special due to the collaboration between the Religious and lay teachers & volunteers, and all of our enrolled families. Our beautiful Church and vibrant community provide a wonderful setting for us to grow closer to God and to be transformed and restored by Him. Our CCD program is here to support parents in their role as the primary educators of the faith. Our hope is to introduce the children to the treasures of the Church through the weekly instruction, and provide opportunities for you and your families to encounter Jesus in the Sacraments, especially as we come together each week for Mass.

We are so blessed to have wonderful teachers and volunteers who generously give of their time each week. Our program would not be possible without them and we are grateful for their service to the Church. They are looking forward to being with the children this year.

As we begin this new school year, let's pray for each other and our CCD program. Thank you for your commitment to the ongoing formation of your children, and for allowing us to partner with you.

Sincerely in Christ,

Mrs. Eileen Rowan

Director of Religious Education

Religious Education

First Communion Class (Ages 7- 8)

Classroom: St. Augustine - St. Joseph House

Email: firstcommunion@cantius.org

This class aims at preparing children for the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. The preparation begins in a year-long class in which children receive general instruction in their Catholic faith and a life lived in relationship with Christ. Learning how to pray, examining the difference between right and wrong, studying the Ten Commandments, and beginning to understand the importance of each sacrament are guideposts in starting each child's person life in Christ.



Instructor: Ms. Allie Kazalski was born and raised at the Jersey Shore. At 14 she went to Boarding School where she learned how to pursue her faith in a secular world. After missing her Catholic school culture, she moved to Wisconsin in pursuit of degrees in Political Science and Philosophy from Marquette. Allie has been an active Parishioner at Cantius since 2021. This is her first year of teaching First Communion and she is excited to introduce her students to the true presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

Old Testament Class (Ages 8- 9)

Classroom: St. Peter - St. Joseph House

Email: oldtestament@cantius.org

One of the foundational areas of focus for an authentically lived Catholic life is knowledge of our own tradition and heritage. Spending a year studying, reading, and praying with the books and stories of the Old Testament afford each child time to become personally familiar with these important stories and histories of our faith. Familiarity with the Old Testament naturally leads one to have a deeper understanding and appreciation for the New Testament.



Instructor: Br. Gabriel Ortiz-Jimenez, SJC was born in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. He grew up on the east coast of the U.S. in a Catholic family. After graduating high school, he attended college seminary. Discerning that this was not the right path, he worked as a religious educator and sacristan. Br. Gabriel began discerning with the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius as a postulant in June of 2022 and made his first profession of religious vows in August of 2024.

Religious Education

New Testament Class (Ages 9 - 10)

Classroom - St. Elias - St. Joseph House

Email: newtestament@cantius.org

Transitioning from a deeper familiarity of the Old Testament previously, children now begin to pour over the important passages of the New Testament. The four Gospel accounts should be texts that each student has a basic knowledge of and a personal relationship with. Beyond just a general knowledge of these writings, the hope of this class is that children will see and understand the Good News of Christ's coming among men.



Instructor: Br. Edward Anderson grew up in Evanston, IL. The third of five children. When his family began attending St. John Cantius Parish in 2009 he became very involved in the Youth Activities: Choir, Altar Serving, Summer Camps. All of these formative events and being surrounded by a group of strong Catholic friends led to his vocation with the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius. Br. Edward entered Postulancy in June of 2022. He is now a first-year professed Religious Brother.

Confirmation A (Ages 10- 11)

Classroom: St. Paul - St. Joseph House

Email: confirmationA@cantius.org

This first year of Confirmation preparation will begin the child's first steps towards an individual ownership of their faith. Building upon their knowledge of the Old and New Testaments, children in this class will start to examine the broader tradition of the Church as well as how to live a life of Catholic discipleship. Full participation in the life of the Church is the goal of this class: participation in which students are able to articulate their faith both corporately and personally.



Instructor: Br. Joshua Smerker, SJC was born and raised in Helena, Montana, where he spent much of his childhood outdoors, with a deep love for fishing and skiing. In the summer of 2021, he joined the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius and has been stationed at the parish since. This will be his second year assisting and teaching Confirmation A.

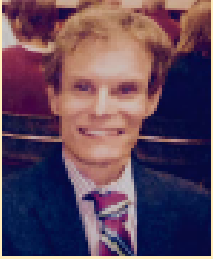
Religious Education

Confirmation B (Ages 11- 12)

Classroom: St. Therese Hall - St. Joseph House

Email: confirmationB@cantius.org

The program is structured as a pilgrimage towards the great day of Confirmation. It is to be completed only *after* Confirmation A and will contain three inseparable elements: Prayer, study, and witness. These will be expressed through class prayer, a retreat, discussion about friendship with Christ, a comprehensive review of the Catechism, supernatural destiny and purpose of life, and service to the poor, the elderly and the Gospel of Life.



Instructor: Mr. Bill Melichar grew up in the Chicago west suburbs and has been a parishioner at St. John Cantius since 1998. A graduate of Loyola University Law School, he volunteers as an attorney representing the best interests of children in guardianship cases. In 2018 he completed a master's degree in Dogmatic Theology *summa cum laude*.

Fundamentals of the Faith (Ages 12 - 17)

Classroom: St. Jude - Church Basement

Email: fundamentals@cantius.org

This course takes an in-depth look at the first half of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Benedict XVI, in his Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei* for the beginning of the Year of Faith in 2012, expressed the desire that many people will “feel a strong need to know better and to transmit to future generations the faith of all times.” The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is not a mere collection of doctrines. It provides the groundwork for understanding what we Catholics believe. The purpose of this course is to engage with the material and come to a better understanding (and love) of our Catholic Faith.



Instructor: Mr. Ed Huelke managed restaurants from Chicago to Washington DC to London, Kuala Lumpur and Sydney Australia. Studied music education and was a counselor at MacNeal Hospital in Berwyn. He's an Eagle Scout and St John Cantius parishioner since 2005. He's married with six children.

Additional Information

Primary Educators

St. John Cantius recognizes and respects the primary role of parents in the education of their own children. The means used for this education fall within the prerogative of the parents. However, the administration of the sacraments is the responsibility of the pastor.

- **Archdiocesan policy states:** *“The pastor or his designate shall determine the readiness of children in light of their disposition and preparation prior to the first reception of the sacraments.”* (Canons 777 & 914)

Therefore, it is not permissible to present your child for any of these sacraments unless and until the child has been determined ready by the pastor.

All classes begin promptly at 10:00 a.m.

and finish at 10:50 a.m.. Special arrangements can be made for those who might need to leave early (either to sing in a choir, or server for Mass.)

- All students in the First Communion Class will not be released from the classroom until a parent or sibling presents themselves to pick up the student. The other classes will be released on their own.
- If anyone other than a parent or sibling will pick up your child, please send an email authorizing what day this will occur.

Attendance

Email notification to the class instructor is necessary for an excused absence. More than *three unexcused absences* will result in the student to possibly be dismissed from the program.

- N.B. Programs, sports, recitals, vacations are not acceptable reasons for absence and are considered *unexcused*.

Additional Information

Class Cancelations

Classes may be canceled due to inclement weather. You will be notified by email either the night before or early morning should a class be canceled.

Behavioral Issues

If behavior problems occur the instructor will correct the student as needed. If problems persist the parents will then be notified and if necessary, the student may be dismissed from the program.

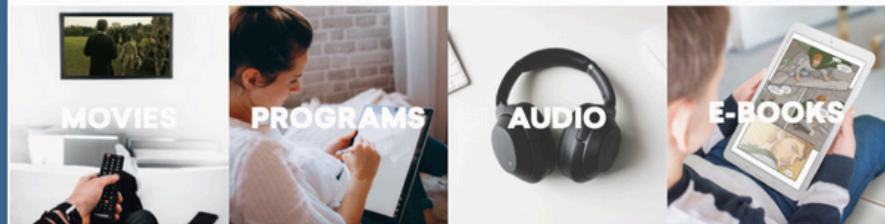
***Praesidium* - Empowering God's Children**

Sunday, January 12, 2025, each Religious Education Instructor will be teaching our annual “Teaching Safety - Empowering God's Children” class. This class fulfills the requirements of the Archdiocese of Chicago for all parishes and their Religious Education programs.

The class will be taught at an age-appropriate level. This year's lesson will focus on “Boundaries & Friendships.” It is important that all students attend this class.

If there is any reason that would prohibit a student from attending please complete the “opt-out” form and turn it in by Sunday, January 12th.

FORMED



This year St. John Cantius is partnering with FORMED to provide quality Catholic resources for the whole family.

Certain videos and other FORMED resources may be used throughout the year in our CCD classes.

Please use the QR code to register your family for free.





EST.

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CAFÉ SAN GIOVANNI

ST. JOHN CANTIUS PARISH CAFÉ

**Come visit the Café San Giovanni after
Sunday masses for coffee and refreshments.**

**All proceeds help support the
youth program!**



Religious Education Calendar

Fall Semester, 2024

10:00am in the Parish Hall:

August 25 - Registration Weekend

September 1 - Registration Weekend

September 8 - Orientation & Classroom Visit

September 15 - Class

September 22 - Class

September 29 - Class

October 6 - Class

October 13 - Class

October 20 - NO CLASS (Feast of St. John Cantius)

October 27 - Class

November 3 - Class

November 10 - Class

November 17 - Class

November 24 - Class

December 1 - NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)

December 8 - Class

December 15 - Class

December 22 - Class

December 29 & January 5 - Christmas Break

Religious Education Calendar

Spring Semester, 2024

January 12 - *Praesidium Class* (More information on Pg. 8)

January 19 - Class

January 26 - Class

February 2 - Class

February 9 - Class

February 16 - Class

February 23 - Class

March 2 - Class

March 9 - Class

March 16 - Class

March 23 - Class

March 30 - Class

April 6 - Class

April 13 - NO CLASS (Palm Sunday)

April 20 - NO CLASS (Easter Sunday)

April 26 - First Confessions

April 27 - First Communion, 12:30 p.m. Mass (NO CLASS)

May 3 - Confirmation Service Project (9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)

May 4 - Class

May 11 - Last Class

May 31 - Confirmation Retreat

June 7 - Confirmation, 7:00pm

June 22 - Corpus Christi procession with First Communicants

Religious Education Registration



Register for
Religious Education

Youth Choirs Registration



Register for
Youth Choirs



Youth Choirs

Choirs meet Saturday Mornings



Instructor:
Ms. Kelly Schuck

Holy Innocents Choir (Ages 5 - 8)

Classroom: Library - Church Basement

Time: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Email: holyinnocents@cantius.org

The Holy Innocents Choir is for young beginner vocalists, ages 5 - 8. The children learn to match pitch, develop rhythmic skills, sing intervals, and gain a rudimentary understanding of music.

This introductory children's choir is designed to develop the music skills of boys and girls so that they might advance into the St. Nicholas and St. Hildegard Choir.



Instructor:
Mr. Ed Huelke

St. Nicholas & St. Hildegard Choir (Ages 8 - 13)

Classroom: St. Augustine Classroom - St. Joseph House

Time: 9:30 a.m. - 11:00am

Email: nicholas@cantius.org

This year the St. Nicholas and St. Hildegard Choir will combine! Offering an opportunity for both grade school aged boys and girls to once again participate in a choir focused on singing hymns, part-singing, Gregorian chant and some polyphony.

Among the main goals of this choir is the development of musicianship, sight-singing, music history, and the spirituality of Sacred Music.



Instructor:
Fr. Nathan Ford,
SJC

Magnificat Choir (Ages 13 - 19)

Classroom: St. Cecilia Hall - St. Joseph House

Time: 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Email: magnificat@cantius.org

The Magnificat Choir of St. John Cantius Church is composed of high school students and young adult vocalists singing polyphonic choral music, Gregorian chant, and modern choral works. This choir sings music by Palestrina, Victoria, Lassus, Durufle, Bartolucci, Part and others.

Youth Choirs Calendar

Fall Semester, 2024

August 25 - Registration Weekend

September 1 - Registration Weekend

September 14 - Choirs

September 21 - Choirs

September 28 - Choirs

October 5 - Choirs

October 12 - Choirs

October 19 - NO CHOIRS (40 Hours Devotion)

October 26 - Choirs

November 1 - *Magnificat Choir Sings 7:30 p.m. Mass*

November 2 - Choirs

November 9 - Choirs

November 16 - Choirs

November 17 - *St. Nicholas & St. Hildegard Sings, 9:00 a.m. Mass*

November 23 - Choirs

November 30 - NO CHOIRS (Thanksgiving Break)

December 7 - Choirs

December 14 - Choirs

December 14 - *Magnificat Choir Sings, 7:30 p.m. Lessons & Carols*

December 15 - *Combined Choirs* Sings, 9:00 a.m. Mass*

December 21 - Choirs

December 28 & January 4 - Christmas Break

*Combined Choirs include:

Holy Innocents Choir, St. Nicholas Choir & St. Hildegard Choir

Spring Semester, 2025

January 11 - Choirs

January 18 - Choirs

January 25 - Choirs

February 1 - Choirs

February 8 - Choirs

February 15 - Choirs

February 22 - Choirs

March 1 - Choirs

March 2 - *St. Nicholas & St. Hildegard Choir Sings, 9:00 a.m. Mass*

March 8 - Choirs

March 15 - Choirs (*NO Magnificat Choir*)

March 22 - Choirs

March 29 - Choirs

April 5 - Choirs

April 12 - Choirs

April 20 - *Magnificat Choir Sings, 9:00 a.m. Mass*

May 3 - Choirs

May 10 - Choirs

May 11 - *Combined Choirs* Sing, 9:00 a.m. Mass*

May 17 - NO CHOIRS

May 24 - Choirs (*NO Magnificat Choir*)

May 31 - Choirs

June 7 - Choirs

June 14 - Choirs

June 15 - *Magnificat Choir Sings, 12:30 p.m. Mass*

Altar Server Training

Are YOU called to serve?



Server Registration

Altar Server Training

Instructors: Fr. Joseph Brom, SJC & Br. Juan Garcia, SJC

Our Parish altar servers provide a liturgical ministry for assistance at all parish Masses. Generally, after boys receive their First Holy Communion, they become eligible to be trained as altar servers. The Parish, preserving the tradition of men and boys serving at the altar, hopes to foster many vocations to the Catholic Priesthood.

Fall Semester

Training on how to serve the Mass according to the 2002 Missal (the 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.) will take place on six consecutive Tuesday evenings from 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. or Wednesday mornings from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Spring Semester

Training on how to serve the Mass according to the 1962 Missal (the 7:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.) will take place on six consecutive Tuesday evenings from 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. or Wednesday mornings from 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Altar Server Training

Fall Semester, 2024 *Training in the 2002 Missal*

Tuesdays

7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

September 24 - Training
October 2 - Training
October 8 - Training
October 15 - Training
October 22 - Training
October 29 - Training

Wednesdays

10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

September 25 - Training
October 3 - Training
October 9 - Training
October 16 - Training
October 23 - Training
October 30 - Training

Spring Semester, 2025 *Training in the 1962 Missal*

Tuesdays

7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

March 4 - Training
March 11 - Training
March 18 - Training
March 25 - NO Training
Feast of the Annunciation
April 1 - Training
April 8 - Training

Wednesdays

10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

March 5 - Training
March 12 - Training
March 19 - Training
March 26 - Training
April 2 - Training
April 9 - Training

St. Stephen's Guild



Meetings for 2024/2025

7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

September 10

October 8

November 12

December 10

January 14

February 11

March 11

April 8

May 13

June 10

St. Stephen's Guild

Instructors: Fr. Nathan Ford, SJC, Br. Juan Garcia, SJC

The St. Stephen's Guild was established at St. John Cantius in 2009 to foster the vocation of ministering at the altar.

The aims of St. Stephen's Guild are:

1. To encourage, positively and practically, the highest standards of serving at the Church's liturgy and so contribute to the whole community's participation in a more fruitful worship of God.
2. To provide altar servers with a greater understanding of what they are doing so that they may serve with increasing reverence and prayerfulness and thereby be led to a deepening response to their vocation in life.
3. To unite servers of different parishes and dioceses for their mutual support and encouragement.

This year the current members of the St. Stephen's Guild will meet monthly on the Second Tuesday of each month from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. for Compline, a formation talk about Serving by Fr. Ford, snacks and sports!

To apply for the St. Stephen's Guild: you must 1) be confirmed, 2) have served once a month for a year, 3) contact Fr. Joseph at servers@cantius.org and request an application.

Sisters to Saints



Meetings for 2024/2025

7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

September 3

October 1

November 5

December 3

January 7

February 4

March 4

April 1

May 6

June 3

**Instructors: Ms. Monika Culjak, Mrs. Carina Culjak,
Mrs. Jacqueline Haydon, Ms. Angela Pecora, and Ms. Alyssa Voccola**

Sisters to Saints is a group made specifically for girls ages 14 - 19 who are looking to explore Catholic femininity in the modern world.

This group meets on the First Tuesday of each month in the St. Therese Hall to discuss various topics that girls face in this day and age. The meeting topics range from the art of etiquette, what is true friendship, how to forgive, vocations and much more!



Follow us on instagram
[@sisterstosaints](https://www.instagram.com/sisterstosaints)



Join our email list for
more information!

Crusaders for Life



Instructors: Fr. Nathan Ford, SJC, Br. Gabriel Ortiz-Jimenez, SJC

The Crusaders for life is a youth-led grassroots organization promoting the culture of life from conception until natural death.

Members participate in a wide variety of events including monthly meetings, training sessions, the Illinois March for life, prayer vigils at abortion facilities, rallies and protests.

The Crusaders for Life meet on the Third Friday of every month in the Parish Hall. Any teens interested in getting more involved in the pro-life movement are welcome to join in. Meetings typically include a guest speaker, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, planning for future events, sports and social activities.

Crusaders for Life



Meetings for 2024/2025

September 20
October 18
November 15
December 20
January 17
February 21
March 21
April - NO MEETING
May 16

Praying at the Clinic

September 28
October 26
November 23
December - NO MEETING
January 25
February 22
March 22
April & May - NO MEETING

SAVE THE DATE: Illinois March for Life - March 23 - 25, 2025



Follow us on instagram
[@crusadersforlife_chicago](https://www.instagram.com/crusadersforlife_chicago)



Join our email list
for more information!

Don Bosco Days



We are EXPANDING!

This year we are expanding to four Don Bosco Days throughout the year!

Both Boys and Girls (ages 8 - 13) are invited to join us for our expanded Don Bosco Days! Each season we will host a day camp, beginning with Mass, and including formation talks (sometimes together, sometimes separate), time for prayer, activities, sports and more.



SAVE THE DATES

Friday, October 25, 2024

Friday, January 10, 2025

Friday, April 11, 2025

Friday, June 13, 2025

Be on the lookout each season for emails and posters with registration and more information!

Men's Work Trips



MEN - FIRE - MEAT - CHAINSAWS - WORK - PRAYER

All men of St. John Cantius Parish (13 and older) are welcome to join the Canons at their property in Lawton, MI for a weekend of prayer, fraternity and work on the grounds of St. Anne's Shrine!

Please register to attend and pack a tent, some food, and whatever you need to get dirty and do some hard manual labor!

Come for the whole weekend or just for the day!

SAVE THE DATES

Thursday - Saturday, September 5 - 7, 2024

Thursday - Saturday, March 13 - 15, 2025

Thursday - Saturday, May 22 - 24, 2025

Be on the lookout for emails and posters for registration!

SUMMER EVENTS 2025

CHOIR WORKSHOP

Monday - Friday, June 16th - 20th



Choir Workshop is Back!

Join the Magnificat Choir for their annual summer workshop, as they refine their musical skills in large ensemble rehearsals, private lessons, and attend classes on music history, sacred music, and much more!

There are only 45 spots available, and we will accept students on a first-come-first-serve basis!

More information to come in Spring of 2025!

WALKING PILGRIMAGE

Boys: July 6 - 11th
Girls: July 13 - 18th

The teens of our parish are invited to join in on a life-changing experience through our annual walking pilgrimage.

Typically walking around 80 miles within the week, they travel on foot to a beautiful shrine as they grow closer together in friendship and virtue.



More information to come in Spring of 2025!

SUMMER EVENTS 2025

ST. ANNE'S TRIDUUM

Wednesday - Saturday, July 23rd - 26th



St. Anne, the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary, has always been a special patroness of the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius. This long-standing tradition, in which three consecutive days are dedicated to St. Anne's intercession, is held every year with public Masses and devotions.

This July, 2025 we invite the faithful to come participate and *camp on the property for all three days, or just one.*

Camping will be available beginning Wednesday, July 23rd - Saturday, July 26th.

Masses for the Triduum will be offered:

Thurs. July 24, 5:00 p.m. Fri. July 25, 5:00 p.m. Sat. July 26, 10:00 a.m.

Keep an eye out for a full schedule and list of activities to come in Spring of 2025!

