

THE AUGMENTER

Webster's Definition:
augment (verb)—to make or become greater
augmenter (noun)

Newsletter for Families of St. Augustine Religious Education in Larchmont, NY

“God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.” – St. Augustine

Awaken My Heart, O God—Meeting God in My Heart Space

The essence of our religious education program is developing a relationship with Christ. Our lectionary and liturgical curriculum via the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies penetrates the heart of the message through the Sunday Gospel each week. If you want to know Jesus—listen, read and live his story. But it's not just learning the faith, but living the Gospel, so our faith becomes real and relevant in this 21st century.

This year we will offer another dimension at the outset of each class so that God becomes accessible. We will gather in Kenny Hall and enter our **heart space or heart room or heart home or heart cave**. The initial 10 minutes will be spent in going within by breathing,

silencing, imagining, and visualizing our heart space for God. This will be accomplished with **music, mindfulness, stories and puppets**, all by Sister Suzanne each week. It is an introduction into contemplative prayer, really meeting God in various ways. By this consistent ritual and routine of the quieting of each young person via their heart home, they will be ready for the Jesus Story and how to live the Story through their formal but engaged instruction.

Wednesday First Graders will start with music and movement in the cafeteria and then proceed to Kenny Hall for their special time with Sister Suzanne in their heart room followed by their classroom instruction.

Parents' Mindfulness and Choices Can Relieve Wednesday Hurdles

Since Wednesday afternoons after a full day of school are probably the worst times for religious education, I am suggesting some solutions. Please provide a **healthy snack** (fruit, raw vegetables, crackers, water) that can be eaten in the car on the way to St. Augustine's or in Kenny Hall prior to 3:30. Please don't give sugary snacks or drinks. Fourth graders think it is cool to stop at Manor Deli and buy more food than they can eat. Ordinarily their choices are not the healthy kind. The results are injurious to the child's welfare. Though most of the time Sr. Suzanne thinks she is a magician, she fails at the trick of turning a “wired child” into a peaceful and attentive person. Please help your child have the best experience in nurturing faith by giving what is needed for healthy growth in God's life.

What About Sunday?

Actually Sundays are probably the best time in the week to share the faith and engage the learners. Most catechists will confirm this premise. The only glitches in the Sunday program are being on time and consistent attendance. Please care enough to give your child the best. Being on time for class is a wonderful way of teaching them what is important. **Class starts at 9:00 a.m.** A phone message is expected if a child is absent.

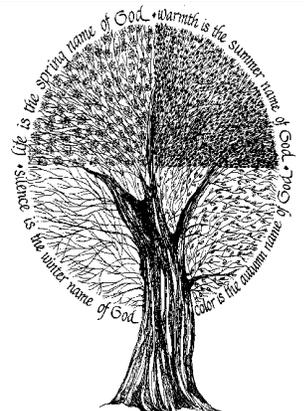
Sister Suzanne Duzen, SS.C.M.,
Director of Religious Education
Publisher of *The Augmenter*

Send suggestions for future articles to: srsuzanne@verizon.net

RESPECT—the Essence of Living the Faith

Wednesday evening classes have the advantage of giving middle schoolers some time away from the classroom before the religious education program. Hopefully a dinner or supper can be enjoyed as well. The challenge is the behavior of some learners who make the catechist's life a struggle and the other learners bearing the brunt of their disrespectful antics. **If any learner does not show respect for the rights of all to learn, and the catechist to teach, a parent of the learner in question, will be required to sit in the class each week. This should afford the learning to be accomplished for the common good. Please advise your child to be on their best behavior. Every catechist deserves RESPECT.** Volunteer catechists' dedication to 30 weeks of class time is an astronomical commitment. They are held in high esteem and every learner is expected to do the same. So the involvement and cooperation of parents in living our faith is appreciated.

The *Augmenter* logo expands our vision of God through the seasons. It reminds us of God's presence in the here and now of our community in Larchmont, where most of the streets are named after trees. It takes us into a new realm of naming God through the signs of the seasons and makes greater the marvel of who God is—life, warmth, color and silence.



What Parents and Young People Need to Follow for St. Augustine's Religious Ed Program

Wednesday afternoons for Grades 1– 4

Arrival:

- ◆ **Gr. 2, 3 & 4 enter the main doors to Kenny Hall from Larchmont Avenue** (only entrance available for safety reasons) and sit in assigned row of chairs.
- ◆ **Gr. 1 enters through the red side door to the cafeteria** off the parking lot and is directed to their assigned table.
- ◆ **Sister Suzanne provides care and supervision** from 3:15 p.m. on in Kenny Hall and the cafeteria.
- ◆ **At 3:30 p.m. the actual start time Sister Suzanne will provide an initial heart home time of prayer. Gr. 1 will have music and movement in the cafeteria, heart home time with Sr. Suzanne followed by procession to the classrooms.**

Dismissal:

- ⇒ **Pick-up for Gr. 2 for parents/caregivers** is done via the main doors to Kenny Hall from Larchmont Avenue in Kenny Hall.
- ⇒ **Pick-up for Gr. 1 parents/care-givers through the cafeteria side door leading to the parking lot in the back of the school to the cafeteria.**
- ⇒ **Gr.1 and 2 parents/care-givers must initial the exit chart for the child to be dismissed.**
- ⇒ **Gr. 3 and 4 via the main doors** led by their catechists on the first floor to Larchmont Avenue. **Parents and caregivers will wait on the sidewalk.**

Children with younger siblings will follow the exit of the youngest sibling.

Wednesday evenings for Grades 5 – 8

- ◆ **Entrance and exit will occur only through the main doors to the school near the Religious Ed office.** (This is the only door that will be open for safety reasons.) Gr. 5, 6, 7 and 8 will assemble in Kenny Hall. **At 7:15 p.m. classes officially begin with the gathering prayer and ritual.** After 7:15 learners must report to the office for a late slip to enter the Hall or classroom.
- ◆ **At 8:30 p.m. Gr. 5, 6, 7 and 8 will be dismissed via the main doors led by their catechist.** No learner may exit any other doors at dismissal for safety reasons.

Sundays for Grades 1 – 8

- ◆ Entrance and exit are via the main doors near the Religious Ed. Office. **ALL LEARNERS will assemble in Kenny Hall. At 9:00 a.m. classes officially begin with the gathering prayer and ritual.** After 9:00 all learners must report to the office for a late slip to enter the Hall or classroom.
At 10:15 a.m. the bell will ring for dismissal.
- ◆ Grades 1 and 2 will be dismissed in Kenny Hall with a parent/caregiver. **Grades 3-8 will exit only via the main doors to Larchmont Avenue.**

Special considerations, please, from your director:

- ◇ **Wednesday children may bring their own healthy snack and finish it by 3:30 p.m.**
- ◇ **No food may be brought into the classrooms by young people or catechists.** For special occasions Kenny Hall and/or the cafeteria will be used for any food consumption.
- ◇ **Parking is available in the parking lot behind the school, on Larchmont Avenue, Cherry Avenue and Elm Avenue.** Double parking is prohibited by the Larchmont Police. Extra moments of patience will provide safety for our children. We are grateful to the **Larchmont Police** for the traffic control and supervision they provide.
- ◇ Any young people without pickup will be brought to the Rel. Ed. Office where parents/caregivers will claim them.
- ◇ **Consistent attendance is expected.** If a learner has a total of three absences, an email will be sent to arrange for a conference with parents. Confirmation preparation begins at Baptism and continues throughout the years preceding this sacrament. A call from a parent to report an absence is expected .