

# The EDGE Parent Handbook



***“You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring them up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?”***

**2011 – 2012**

## Table of Contents

<b>Program Overview .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Definitions.....	3
The EDGE Two-Year Cycle.....	4
<b>EDGE Rules To Live By .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Called Off Because Of Rain, Sleet, Snow, or Teacher’s Workday.....	4
Full, Conscious and Active Participation.....	4
There’s Nothing Worse Than Christians Behaving Poorly.....	5
Classy Not Trashy.....	5
Don’t Be A Dope.....	6
Is There A Doctor In The House? Somebody Call 911!.....	6
<b>Key Dates .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Carpool Dismissal Map.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Parent Communications .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Youth Spirituality.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Media Rating Systems.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Course Material Checklist.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Replacement Costs .....	14

## Program Overview

The EDGE is a dynamic faith formation program offered by the St. Michael Middle School Youth Ministry to support parents in the Christian formation of their middle-school-age children. The program offers middle-school youth the opportunity for human and spiritual growth in a fun and safe environment.

Our program is known as "The EDGE" because the youth in this age range are on the edge of their teen years where they are changing physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Our mission at The EDGE is to help parents train their children in the practice of the Catholic faith by keeping God's commandments, celebrating the sacraments, developing a prayer life, and by loving God and our neighbors.

The **EDGE Core** program is our standard Middle School Faith Formation program which meets every Monday Night from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Our parish is huge and, as you can imagine, we work with a limited number of volunteer resources. **Therefore, it is important that each parent give at least 6 hours of their time throughout the year.** This means helping out 4 EDGE Nights – equivalent to one night per quarter.

### **More Than Balloons And Tunes**

We know our youth have been in the classroom all day, therefore we deliver our instruction in an engaging and interactive format (Large Group, Small Group) that meets the learning styles of today's Middle School Youth. This means we will cover our course content through a series of formats - skits, games, writing exercises, discussions, scripture readings, catechism exercises, puzzles, songs, and videos. This does not mean we stray away from teaching the faith, it only means we convey the message differently than what most of us older folks remember as CCD.

At the end of The EDGE year, your EDGER(s) should be able to navigate the Bible and Catechism as well as discuss the key content of our faith studied in the given year. This can be assured only if you as parents reinforce the learning at home through regular examples of authentically living and practicing the Catholic faith.

### **Definitions**

On the enclosed calendar you will notice a number of special dates that we would like to clarify for you:

<b>Retreat</b>	There are two EDGE retreats – one in the Fall and one in the Spring. These retreats focus on a key theme within our Catholic faith. Mass at the parish is an integral part of the retreat experience. During the retreat our youth build community and deepen their faith. This is a great opportunity for youth to make new friends  There is also one Diocesan retreat – Jamboree. This is a one day retreat held in the Spring and is planned by the diocesan department of Youth Ministry.
<b>Service Project</b>	There are normally four major service projects throughout the year. Our method is to teach EDGERs about serving in the parish, in the community, internationally, and intergenerational. This means we help with a parish based service project like the Thanksgiving Basket; an event within our local community such as Miracle League, a project overseas such as the Honduras Sister Parish mission; and a project that crosses generational lines like visiting a retirement home.

<b>Social</b>	We will conduct a number of social activities as well, so our youth get to know each other better and form a number of friendships through the ministry. When they are at Mass, at school, or out in the broader community they may recognize friends who support them in living out their Catholic way of life.
<b>Mass Nights</b>	These are special nights when The EDGE will gather as a ministry to celebrate Mass together. Celebrating the sacraments is important, and we want to encourage our youth to receive them regularly. There will also be reminders of Reconciliations throughout the year as well.
<b>Grace Events</b>	<p>These will be extra credit activities for youth who desire to dig a little deeper into the topics covered on a particular EDGE Night. EDGErs can turn in their assignments on the following EDGE Night for review. Those who successfully complete the Grace Event will be recognized for their extra effort.</p> <p>Completion of the Grace Event will mean the youth did not plagiarize their content, and they put a reasonable amount of effort into completing the project. This is not a required assignment; however, if the youth does select to attempt the project, they should strive to do a good job on it.</p>

## ***The EDGE Two-Year Cycle***

We follow a two-year cycle at The EDGE. What this means is all youth whether 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade are exposed to the same content and, after two years of The EDGE, we have studied all the major topics of the Catholic Faith – The Mystery of God in the Holy Trinity, Christian Morality, Church History, The Sacraments, Prayer, and Sacred Scripture. Our EDGErs are then prepared, if they actively participate, to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **EDGE Rules To Live By**

Before setting off on any journey we should always understand the rules of the road so we get to our final destination safely. Therefore, we are providing our standard ministry rules for you to consult.

### ***Called Off Because Of Rain, Sleet, Snow, or Teacher’s Workday***

To keep everything consistent, we follow the Wake County Public School System’s Traditional Calendar for days off from the EDGE. Also, in case of snow or inclement weather, if Wake County Schools are closed so are we.

### ***Full, Conscious and Active Participation***

Parents are the primary educators in the faith, and The EDGE program is one tool utilized in assisting parents with faith formation of their youth. Attendance is important to success in learning the content and getting the youth ready for the reception of Confirmation. If you have selected any of The EDGE programs as the primary method of faith formation for your youth, then they are expected to attend regularly and participate fully.

We will offer at minimum 31 hours of class instruction. If the youth is absent two consecutive EDGE Nights or misses an entire quarter of at-home study, you will be contacted. If two additional unexcused absences are documented or another quarter is missed, your youth will be dropped from the program without refund. Absences for sporting activities are not considered excusable absences and make-up assignments are given based on the missed lessons. We understand that our youth are busy these days and it is our job as responsible parents to help them prioritize the important things in life. Our relationship with God is one of those very important things that should hold higher priority. If you don't agree with this then The EDGE program may not be the appropriate choice for your youth's faith formation.

In the Diocese of Raleigh, preparation for Confirmation requires two consecutive years of faith formation which means if your youth is going to be confirmed in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, two years of full participation in The EDGE or EDGE@Home program will qualify, otherwise your youth will need to make up the missing faith formation prerequisites in the High School Youth Ministry program.

### ***There's Nothing Worse Than Christians Behaving Poorly***

All youth and adults participating in The EDGE are responsible for their own conduct. Participants in The EDGE programs are expected to:

1. Be courteous and respect other EDGErs and ministry guests.
2. Respect the property of others.
3. Respect the authority of adult volunteers and others in leadership roles.
4. Use appropriate language at activities and events.
5. Show kindness to others and give assistance when needed.
6. Be honest and honor commitments.
7. Strive for personal best and keep trying to improve.
8. Accept responsibility for personal choices.

### ***Classy Not Trashy***

The EDGE enforces a strict dress code. This is a program where the ultimate focus is on Christ and building solid Catholic virtues. Therefore, students are expected and encouraged to adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with their Christian dignity and an effective learning environment. Presenting a bodily appearance or wearing clothing which is disruptive, provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene, or which endangers the health and safety of the student or others is prohibited. Examples of prohibited dress or appearance include, but are not limited to, exposed undergarments; sagging pants; mini skirts; excessively short or tight garments; shorts which do not reach at least the wearer's fingertips when standing up straight; bare midriff shirts; strapless shirts; attire with messages or illustrations that are lewd, indecent, anti-Christian or vulgar or that advertise any product or service not permitted by law to minors; see-through clothing; attire that exposes cleavage; any adornment such as chains or spikes that reasonably could be perceived as or used as a weapon; and any symbols, styles or attire frequently associated with intimidation, violence or violent groups. Such garments are not consistent with our life in Christ.

If a student's dress or appearance is such that it constitutes a threat to the health or safety of others, distracts the attention of other students or staff from their work or

otherwise violates this dress code, the Youth Minister or the Youth Minister's designee may require the student to change his or her dress or appearance. A second or repeated violation of this policy may result in dismissal from the activity.

### ***Don't Be A Dope***

If any youth or adult volunteer is found in possession or under the influence of drugs or alcohol at any youth event sponsored by EDGE, St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, or the Diocese of Raleigh the following actions will take place:

- 1) The parents of the youth and/or the local authorities will be contacted.
- 2) Parents are expected to come to the event immediately.
- 3) Next steps will be discussed when the parents arrive on site.

### ***Is There A Doctor In The House? Somebody Call 911!***

If your child(ren) suffer(s) from any medical complications or illnesses, it is important to document those on this registration form. This information will be kept strictly confidential, but is necessary so that we may avoid any potential health risk or complications and to better serve the instructional needs of the student(s).

# Key Dates

Dates	Topics	Make-up Chapters
Monday, September 19, 2011	<b>Parents' Night</b>	<b>Parents' Night</b>
Tuesday, September 20, 2011	<u>At Home Material Distribution (Mult-Purp. Rm.)</u>	
Wednesday, September 21, 2011	<u>At Home Material Distribution (Mult-Purp. Rm.)</u>	
Thursday, September 22, 2011	<u>At Home Material Distribution (Mult-Purp. Rm.)</u>	
Friday, September 23, 2011	<u>At Home Material Distribution (Mult-Purp. Rm.)</u>	
Monday, September 26, 2011	<b>Opening Night</b>	<b>Chapter 1</b>
Monday, October 03, 2011	<b>Unit 1 - Lesson 1: The Gift of Faith</b>	<b>Chapter 2</b>
Saturday, October 08, 2011	<b>Fall Retreat Lock-In: "Mystery" (Parish Ctr.) 5PM - Midnight</b>	
Monday, October 10, 2011	<b>Unit 1 - Lesson 2: The Holy Trinity</b>	<b>Chapter 3</b>
Monday, October 17, 2011	<b>Unit 1 - Lesson 3: God the Father</b>	<b>Chapter 4</b>
Monday, October 24, 2011	<b>Unit 1 - Lesson 4: God the Son</b>	<b>Chapter 5</b>
Monday, October 31, 2011	<b>No EDGE (Teacher's Workday) ***Halloween***</b>	
Tuesday, November 01, 2011	<b>***All Saints Day***</b>	
Wednesday, November 02, 2011	<b>***All Souls Day***</b>	
Monday, November 07, 2011	<b>Unit 1 - Lesson 5: God the Holy Spirit</b>	<b>Chapter 6</b>
Monday, November 14, 2011	<b>Thanksgiving Baskets</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Baskets</b>
Sunday, November 20, 2011	<b>MASS Day (New Liturgical Norms)</b>	
Monday, November 21, 2011	<b>Advent Night (New Liturgical Norms)</b>	<b>Advent Night Online</b>
Monday, November 28, 2011	<b>Unit 2 - Lesson 1: The Promised Messiah</b>	<b>Chapter 7, 8 &amp; 9</b>
Monday, December 05, 2011	<b>Unit 2 - Lesson 2: Mary</b>	<b>Chapter 10, 11 &amp; 12</b>
Monday, December 12, 2011	<b>Rejoice Dance and Games Night</b>	
Sunday, December 18, 2011	<b>MASS Day</b>	
Monday, December 19, 2011	<b>Core Team Night</b>	
Monday, December 26, 2011	<b>No EDGE</b>	

Monday, January 02, 2012	<b>No EDGE (New Years Holiday)</b>	
Monday, January 09, 2012	Unit 3 - Lesson 1: Welcome to The Party	Chapter 13
Monday, January 16, 2012	<b>No EDGE (MLK)</b>	
Monday, January 23, 2012	<b>No EDGE (Teacher's Workday)</b>	
Monday, January 30, 2012	Unit 3 - Lesson 2: Marked By God	Chapter 14
Monday, February 06, 2012	Unit 3 - Lesson 3: Not By Bread Alone	Chapter 15
Monday, February 13, 2012	Unit 3 - Lesson 4: Wait, Didn't I Graduate	Chapter 16
Monday, February 20, 2012	<b>Lundi Gras Dance and Games</b>	
Wednesday, February 22, 2012	<b>***Ash Wednesday***</b>	
Monday, February 27, 2012	Lent Night	Lent pp. 285-288
Monday, March 05, 2012	Unit 3 - Lesson 5: The Return	Chapter 17
Monday, March 12, 2012	Unit 3 - Lesson 6: Comfort & Joy	Chapter 18
Monday, March 19, 2012	Unit 4 - Lesson 1: Called By God	Chapter 19
Saturday, March 24, 2012	<b>Spring Retreat Lock-In: "Fish" (Parish Ctr.) 5PM - Midnight</b>	
Sunday, March 25, 2012	<b>MASS Day</b>	
Monday, March 26, 2012	Unit 4 - Lesson 2: Two Become One	Chapter 20
Sunday, April 01, 2012	<b>***Palm Sunday***</b>	
Monday, April 02, 2012	<b>No EDGE (Spring Break)</b>	
Thursday, April 05, 2012	<b>***Holy Thursday***</b>	
Friday, April 06, 2012	<b>***Good Friday***</b>	
Saturday, April 07, 2012	<b>***Holy Saturday*** (Easter Vigil)</b>	
Sunday, April 08, 2012	<b>***Easter Sunday***</b>	
Monday, April 09, 2012	<b>No EDGE (Easter Break)</b>	
Monday, April 16, 2012	Unit 4 - Lesson 3: The Final Four	Chapter 21
Monday, April 23, 2012	Unit 4 - Lesson 4: Now Hiring	Chapter 22
Monday, April 30, 2012	Unit 4 - Lesson 5: The House That Christ Built	Chapter 23
Monday, May 07, 2012	<b>6th Grade Visit to EDGE</b>	Chapter 24
Monday, May 14, 2012	Unit 4 - Lesson 6: Mission: Possible	
Friday, May 18, 2012	<b>St. Bosco Festival</b>	
Friday, May 25, 2012	<b>EDGE@Home Closes at Midnight</b>	
Sunday, May 27, 2012	<b>***Pentecost***</b>	

# Carpool Dismissal Map

## Pick-up Procedures

We want to ensure another safe year on The EDGE, therefore we present you with our pick-up procedures.

**You have two choices:**

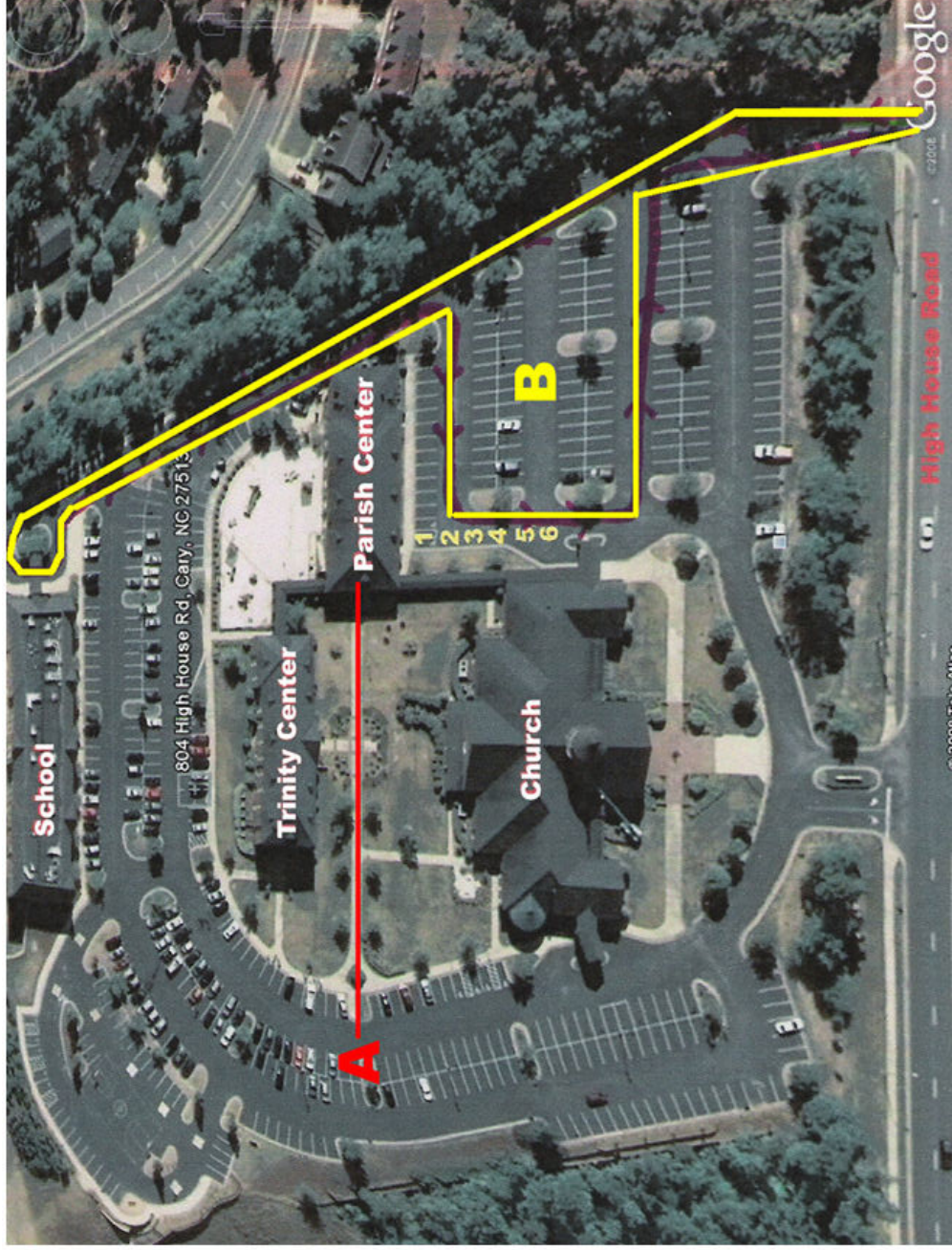
- 1) you can come into the parish center to claim your youth (**Zone A**) or
- 2) you may pull through the carpool lane (**Zone B**) to pick-up your carpool group of youth.

**Under no circumstances will we allow a youth to leave the program unaccompanied.** Please do not ask us to alter this procedure because it is to keep our youth and volunteers safe while dismissing a large of Middle School youth.

On average, with your cooperation this procedure should not take more than 15 minutes to complete.

Please refer to the different zones to the right and the corresponding procedures below.

Peace and Blessings,  
Mr. Tristan



**Zone A: Walk-In**

This procedure is for parents who will walk into the Parish Center claim their youth. Please park in lot A across the courtyard from the Parish Center. This keeps you out of the path of the carpool operations underway in lot B and protects pedestrians from continuous moving traffic.

**Zone B: Carpool**

This procedure is for our carpooling groups. Please pull into lot B and continue past the Parish Center towards the school. Then loop around the statue of Mary and proceed back toward the Parish Center. Our carpool team in orange vests will guide you the rest of the way through the queue and ensure an efficient pick-up of your group. Please be courteous to other carpooling parents by not parking in lot B, driving through Lot A and cutting into queue or cutting into the Carpool queue out of turn. We want to ensure another safe and fun year for all.

## Parent Communications

We use a number of tools to communicate with you about the program, so we would like to take this opportunity to point those out to you.

- **Parent Newsletter:** The newsletter is sent via e-mail, so it is important that you ensure [tevens@stmccary.org](mailto:tevens@stmccary.org) is on your safe sender list to avoid getting it caught in your spam folder. If you have not received any e-mails from us in two weeks, please check your junk mail folder. Sometimes e-mail security systems are very picky and that's a good thing, but we'd hate for you to be out of the loop.
- **Church Bulletin:** We post an announcement in the bulletin each week so be sure to grab it on your way in or out of Mass. It will include most of the same information, but due to limited space some information might be truncated. It is nonetheless a good fallback if you miss the e-mail newsletter.
- **E-mail:** If all else fails, shoot us an e-mail.
- **Phone:** Good luck with this option! If you decide to use the phone, you will most likely get voicemail. Please leave clear, concise messages so we are able to respond as efficiently as possible to your requests.

## Youth Spirituality

### [Retreats](#)

You will notice there are two major EDGE Retreats scheduled this year. The goal of these retreats is to open our youth up to a broader knowledge of the Catholic Faith in a fun, prayerful and safe environment.

As with anything we do, it is important that we have certified catechists and chaperones to help us make these events a success. If, you feel called to spend a powerful weekend with our ministry, please contact us at [tevens@stmccary.org](mailto:tevens@stmccary.org).

The price of the retreats is \$85/student and chaperones are free because their service is payment enough. The fee covers supplies, meals and activities. We hope you and your youth join us for a great time!

### [Sacraments](#)

We enjoy seeing our youth attending Mass with their parents. This is one of the best examples of living the Faith that we as adults can model for our youth. However, the reality is that some children aren't given this opportunity or example. Throughout the year we will encourage our parents and youth to attend Mass, and we have set four special dates aside

that will be punctuated as EDGE Mass Nights. We want to take time each quarter to celebrate together as a ministry so, please mark these dates on your calendar.

Reconciliation is a very important sacrament that allows us to experience the Lord's love and forgiveness. We will announce days throughout the year where we will celebrate as a ministry and as a parish. In the meantime, it is important that parents again set good example for their youth.

### [Prayer](#)

A good idea is to pray with your children often. We are supplying you with ample material to help you teach them how to converse with the Lord. Take a prayer a month and explain and pray it. You'll be amazed at what we'll accomplish by the end of the year.

# Media Rating Systems

## Music

**Recording Industry Association of America**

<http://www.riaa.com>

**Rating:** “Parental Advisory” Explicit Content

**Offensive Content Types:**

- sexually explicit themes,
- violence
- strong language

## Movies

**Motion Picture Association of America**

<http://www.mpa.org>

**Rating:** “G, PG, PG-13, R, NC-17”

**Offensive Content Types:**

- theme
- aberrational (inordinate) behavior
- intense or persistent violence
- nudity and sexually oriented nudity
- sensuality and adult activities
- strong or harsh language
- drug use and drug abuse

## Video Games

**Entertainment Software Rating Board**

<http://www.esrb.org>

**Rating:** EC, Everyone, Everyone 10+, Teen, Mature, Adults Only, RP

**Offensive Content Types:**

- mild or prolonged scenes of intense violence
- graphic sexual content
- mild or strong language
- suggestive themes
- crude humor
- mild blood and gore
- simulated gambling
- nudity

## Internet

**The Family Online Safety Institute**

<http://www.fosi.org>

**Rating:** Use web “Parental Control” tools on your computer to filter web content

**Offensive Content Types:**

- Nudity
- Sexual content

- Depiction of violence
- Strong Language
- User-generated content and whether this is moderated
- Depiction of other potentially harmful content such as gambling, drugs and alcohol

### Television

#### **Federal Communications Commission**

<http://www.fcc.gov>

**Ratings:** TV-Y, TV-Y7, TV-G, TV-PG, TV-14, TV-MA

#### **Offensive Content Types:**

- intense or graphic violence
- strong, coarse, crude and/or indecent language
- intensely suggestive sexual dialogue
- intense and/or explicit sexual situations/activity

### Radio

#### **Federal Communications Commission**

<http://www.fcc.gov>

**Ratings:** Probable the same as Music

#### **Offensive Content Types:**

- suggestive language
- Censors most content with bleep outs or cuts the call

## Course Material Checklist

Do you have the following?

	The New American Bible
	YouCat
	We Live Our Faith

### ***Replacement Costs***

One set of course materials are included in your registration fees. Should we need to re-issue any of the standard material the following prices will apply to you.

<b>Text</b>	<b>Cost</b>
The New American Bible	\$35.00
The New Saint Joseph Baltimore Catechism	\$25.00
We Live Our Faith	\$24.00

Thank you for being part of The EDGE, and we look forward to a joyful year of learning about our Lord, His Church and our Family in Faith.

Peace and Blessings,

Mr. Tristan L. Evans  
Assoc. Director – Youth Faith Formation