

ST. PATRICK
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
2022-2023
PARENT HANDBOOK

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MISSION

MISSION STATEMENT

The Religious Education program aids parents in fulfilling their responsibility to inform the child of truths of our faith as well as to form the child as a follower of Jesus and as a responsible member of the Church and greater community.

THE “PLAN” FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

It is the hope of the Religious Education (RE) program that each child will be one who...

Prays, **L**oves, **A**cts with justice, and is **N**ourished by faith. These areas: prayer, love for God and neighbor, morality and justice, and faith should be developed within the child’s faith life through our program. The ideal is that by the time the student leaves the program after high school, they will be people of faith competent in these areas.

LITURGY

“Religious education therefore must involve the student in his/her faith community and in that community’s liturgy.... It teaches, it forms community, it forms the individual.” (NCCB, “Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education”). The Mass is the focus of our public worship of God and the focus of our parish worshipping community. Students will attend prayer services through the year. We also expect families to regularly attend Sunday Mass.

CURRICULUM

TEXT BOOKS

Grade K: “Allelu” (Our Sunday Visitor Publishing)

Grades 1st-7th: “Alive in Christ” (OSV)

Grade 8: “Chosen” (Ascension Press) *supplement*: “Called to be Catholic” (Loyola Press Publishing)

Grade 9: “Chosen”

Allelu

“... interactive lessons for children to complete in class and bring home for additional family support. These colorful innovative sheets can serve as the child’s placemat at the dinner table, reinforcing key rituals for every home environment while serving as a conversation starter to help parents discuss Catholic teachings. Includes prayer, Scripture, and a profile of a Saint in every lesson.”

Alive In Christ

“... invites children to hear God’s invitation to a personal relationship through his Word, helps them discover and learn the Church’s teaching in precise theological language, and teaches them how to live as Catholic disciples.”

Chosen

“Designed to offer young people a life-changing experience as they journey through their Catholic faith in all its richness and vitality...”

Chosen utilizes a powerful and effective methodology with lessons designed to capture teens’ attention and present the faith in new and unexpected ways. Featuring multiple dynamic presenters in visually stunning, fast-paced videos, along with fully integrated written materials for students and leaders as well as a rich offering of free, online resources...”

Called to be Catholic

“...provides young people with a comprehensive presentation of the key teachings of the Catholic faith.”

PRAYERS & PRACTICES LESSONS

Each grade has a prayer or practice they should master by the end of that year. It is recommended that these be said or reviewed each week in class and at home. If you have any questions on how to help your child learn these at home please contact his/her teacher.

Kindergarten: Our Father

1st Grade: Hail Mary, Glory Be

2nd Grade: Act of Contrition (in textbook), Grace Before Meals

3rd Grade: The Apostles' & Nicene Creeds

4th Grade: Examination of Conscience & Corporal Works of Mercy

5th Grade: How to say the Rosary & its Mysteries

6th Grade: Spontaneous Prayer & 10 Commandments

7th Grade: Praying with Scripture, 7 Sacraments, & Beatitudes

8th Grade: Types of Prayer & 7 Gifts of the Spirit

9th Grade: Review

CIRCLE OF GRACE

This is a program required of all RE programs and Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. It helps children to understand their own (and others) dignity in mind, body, and spirit. Its age appropriate lessons include things such as good/bad relationships, safe/unsafe situations, boundaries, etc. For more information, please contact the RE office or visit <https://archomaha.org/circleofgrace/>

PRO-LIFE

As a way to teach the sanctity of all human life, each year we present lessons on pro-life topics from the textbook. These topics range from kindness to human dignity to abortion. The lessons are presented in an age appropriate manner, and are presented in October. In addition, throughout the year, and especially at our October Rosary, we pray for the unborn, families helped at the Bethlehem House or Essential Pregnancy Services, the elderly, and all those in need to protect their human worth.

PRAYER PARTNERS

Near the beginning of the year, each class will be assigned elderly parishioners or couples as their prayer partners. The class will pray together for their partners at RE, and students should be encouraged to pray for them privately during the week. Classes may also send their partners notes, cards, crafts, etc. during the year.

1+ PLAN

The 1+ Plan is the home component of the Religious Education curriculum, that asks parents to commit their families to daily, weekly, and yearly activities. It enables families to build on what their children are learning in class by living it out at home. The 1+ Plan is a three year program with a different focus each year: Prayer/Sacraments, Charity/Service, and Adult Faith Development.

CLASS DETAILS

REGISTRATION

Registration forms are emailed and available to print on the parish website in March for the next year. Enrollment is done on a "first come, first served" basis. Tuition is \$85 per child for 1 or 2 children and \$230 total for 3 or more. Tuition is also waived for volunteer Catechists, Co-Catechists, or parish employees.

PARISH REGISTRATION

Generally, all RE families should be registered with St. Patrick's. There may be special circumstances when this is not necessary. However, when a child is receiving a sacrament through St. Patrick's, your family needs to be registered parishioners.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Students are primarily placed in classes randomly. At times, a class may be kept together from one year to the next. This is mostly done in 7th-8th grade while they are preparing for Confirmation, and if a teacher is moving with them. Students will only be allowed to switch class times/teachers if there is enough room in the other class, and for the following reasons: family scheduling & behavior issues.

REWARD SYSTEM

Many teachers utilize a reward system for accountability. Points, etc. are accumulated based on things such as behavior in class and returned homework. Points are then used to determine prizes or rewards. Ask your child's teacher for more information.

HOME PAGES/HOMEWORK

In an effort to keep parents involved in the religious education of their children, home pages, newsletters, and other materials will be sent home regularly. Students may be asked to bring something back as homework. Please help your children with this. Please make sure your children are bringing something home or sharing what they've learned. If it has been a few weeks and your child has not brought any family pages back to class, a call may be made home by some teachers.

ABSENCE AND TARDINESS

It is important for your child to be present, especially in the sacramental classes. For absences a phone call from the parent is requested to the office. If we have not had prior notice, we assume that the child should be in class. We may call you to determine the child's safe whereabouts. *When a child is absent, that week's lesson (and worksheets, homework, etc) will be sent home the next time they are in class. The teacher may request missed work to be brought back finished.*

Generally, students should not arrive more than 5-10 minutes early to class. Those coming after school will have supervision before classes begin, but should not arrive before 3:30. All students arriving more than 5 minutes early will gather in the commons before class begins. If a student arrives after attendance cards have been picked up will need to stop by the office on their way in.

No student may leave the parish premises during class time or during a parish activity without parents notifying the office or their teachers.

Chronic absence and tardiness will be addressed with a call/email to parents from the office.

DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP

On Wednesday, parents may line up to drop off and pick up students along the curb closest to the building (see diagram). 6th grade students will serve as safety patrol at dismissal. Parking is not allowed on the curb – it is for drop-off/pick-up only: cars should not be there more than 15 minutes before dismissal.

On Sunday morning, if your family is not attending 10am Mass, you should park in the parking lot and meet your children at the door/curb or pick them up in another area of the parking lot (north end) so as not to cause congestion at the church doors for those attending Mass.

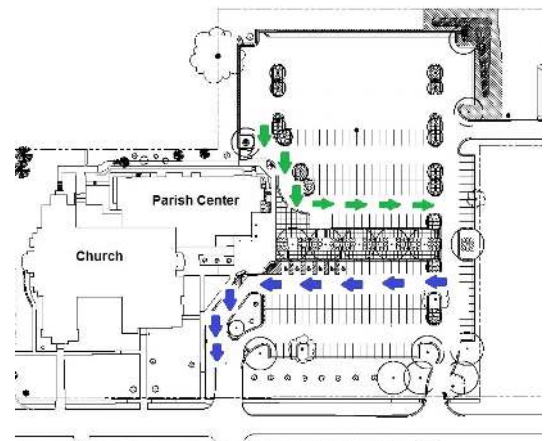
Kindergarten and 1st grade teachers will dismiss to older siblings and adults at the classroom before taking any remaining students up to the parking lot.

SECURED ACCESS

Doors into the Parish Center and Education Center (exterior and/or at the bottom of stairs) have controlled access. The doors generally lock 5 minutes after class starts and open 5 minutes before class dismisses. Anyone wanting to come in during class will need to use the intercom system for admittance.

DRESS CODE

In order to have a program conducive to prayerful, learning, and Christian values, some clothing may be



deemed inappropriate. For this reason, the following guidelines should be followed: 1) shorts and skirts must be of reasonable length, 2) any revealing tops/ripped tank tops should not be worn, 3) clothing with inappropriate slogans or graphics, and 4) boys should not wear hats in the building.

DISCIPLINE

To contribute to the Christian learning environment, each Catechist will present rules to the class. Failure to adhere to the rules has four steps: 1) Verbal warning, 2) In class consequence (e.g. moving seat), 3) Being sent to the office (not as punishment, but to help solve the behavior problem), 4) Parents will be called. Catechists also may contact parents about behavior issues before they come to the office. For more serious behavior (violence, bullying, etc.) the teacher or Director will call parents after first offense.

STUDENT RESPECT

As a Christian activity, Religious Education should always be a place of welcome and support for all students. That means regardless of a student's abilities, social behavior, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, gender, etc. they will always be treated with respect by the Catechist and fellow students. Issues regarding this should be brought to the attention of the Catechist or Director.

FOOD

No food or drink should be brought to class unless it is a day of a party or for a special occasion. Students can eat a snack before class begins. Snacks will not be provided regularly in class.

VISITING THE CLASSROOM

Parents are always welcome to visit their child's class. They need not make prior arrangements, and can "drop in" at any time. You are especially welcome to class for Back to RE night, October Rosary, Christmas Program, Adoration in January, Stations of the Cross, and May Crowning.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

St. Patrick's Religious Education Program observes the school closing policies of the Gretna School district. If Gretna Public Schools cancels school or evening activities, our classes or activities for that evening are automatically cancelled. Emails and texts will also be sent out announcing cancellations.

FIRE AND SEVERE WEATHER

In case of fire, routes are posted throughout the Religious Ed. Center (REC). 5th grade students will serve as fire patrol. One fire drill will be performed each year. In case of tornado, children will go to designated areas until the threat has passed.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Students receive special, intense preparation for Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. This is done in cooperation with the parent/guardian. Students will receive the sacraments only if they are adequately prepared. It is in the best interest of the student that sacramental preparation be done through the RE program, instead of at home.

Students in Gr. 2 ordinarily receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist for the first time. For students that have not attended RE classes in the 1st grade, additional material may be sent home for parents to use. Meetings are scheduled during the year so that parents may review the content of preparation, deepen their own understanding of the sacrament being received, and help prepare their children for receiving these sacraments.

Preparation for Confirmation begins with students in the spring of 7th grade and requires candidates to participate in a retreat, special projects, and service activities. Confirmation is received in spring of 8th grade.

Instruction is available for older students who have not received the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and First Communion. Please contact the Director or Pastor for more information.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Those students with intellectual or learning disabilities are still welcome to be a part of the RE program.

At times, this may require the presence of a special volunteer (if available) or parent in class. Some families may also choose to prepare their child at home for sacraments using adaptive materials provided by the Director.

AT HOME RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

It is the right of a parent to choose to do religious education at home for their children. Preferably, these families will use the same books and materials that are used in class. If a family uses another text or source for at home religious education, the Director or Pastor may ask to review materials used. It is strongly preferred that children preparing for First Reconciliation/Communion and Confirmation attend weekly classes at the parish. If not, they still will be asked to participate in parish expectations, meetings, and retreats.

MISCELLANEOUS

COMMUNICATION

Communication from the Catechists and Director with parents will be done primarily through email, so it is very important that families provide an email address to the office. Also used will be the parish website, the Sunday bulletin, and notes sent home with students. Regular mail will seldom be used.

It is also important for parents to communicate with Catechists and the Director to relate any issues in class, absences, etc.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency information is on file in the RE Office. The office should be alerted to any known allergies that a child may have and other health problems which could influence the child.

In case of illness or injury, parents will be contacted by phone. Parents must arrange for the child's transportation home. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency phone numbers will be called. Children are not allowed to walk home if sick or injured.

In the event of an emergency that requires immediate medical attention, the parents or emergency contact will be notified and the child will be transported by ambulance, if necessary, to the hospital at parent's expense.