

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH OF CHRIST THE REDEEMER MANVILLE, NEW JERSEY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM POLICY HANDBOOK

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Our Religious Education Program exists for the purpose of witnessing the teachings of Christ by developing the spiritual attitudes and intellectual abilities of each student. All instruction will utilize Diocesan approved texts and remain faithful to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Church recognizes that parents have the primary right and obligation to educate their children. Parents should, therefore, view this program as an extension of the religious training received at home -- not as a substitute for it. It is our ardent prayer that the importance of this training be reflected in the lives of our parents by their desire to live in accordance with the precepts of Holy Mother Church. **Worship with your children.** Let them see the old and young alike in a common spirit of prayer and celebration. However, **they cannot bring themselves.** YOU, who are closest and most dear to them, and who will forever be their greatest influence, **must show them the way to God**, by your example. This is a requirement for the Religious Education of your child ~ **all students are expected to attend Mass on Sundays.** In addition, please do become familiar with your child's textbooks, inquire about classwork and aid them in their assignments and required prayers. The teachers will keep in touch with you through phone calls or notes/memos. You may request a teacher conference at any time.

All parents/guardians are required to attend an informational meeting with the Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL) and your child's Catechist on the first day of class. **This is a mandatory meeting and must be attended by a parent or guardian for each child in our program.** Parents will meet with the Pastor, catechist and PCL. Parent conferences will be announced.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Food allergies are a growing health concern for children across the county. Even a miniscule amount of the allergenic food is sufficient to cause a life-threatening reaction and inadvertent contact (via nose, eyes, mouth) can be sufficient to put a child in danger. It is the goal of Christ the Redeemer Parish to provide an allergen free environment for children with food allergies, so that they may enjoy a safe and respectful place to grow in faith.

Recognizing that strict avoidance of the allergen is the only way to prevent a potentially life threatening reaction, we ask your cooperation with the following policy: **No food and drink of any kind are permitted during parish religious education programs.** **This includes foods that are considered to be "safe".**

Parents and guardians of highly allergic children **MUST** make know the special needs of their child to the parish catechetical leader and catechist, so that all precautions will be taken.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Jesus asked us to love our neighbor as ourselves. As we all strive to follow Jesus, we shall be aware of showing respect for priests, teachers, fellow students and school property at all times. Any damage to school property will be the responsibility of the parents, including any financial reparations. Parents, encourage your child to live God's law of love in the classroom...**this is expected!** If a child is disrespectful, disruptive, or misbehaves in the classroom in any way, he/she will be issued a **Point for Parental Concern** to be signed by you, the parent, and returned to class. This will make you aware of a problem before it gets out of hand. Points will also be issued for failure to do classwork or homework. The **third time** a "point" is issued the child will be sent to the office and the Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL) will call the parents. Depending on the circumstances, a parent may be called to pick up their child. If the problem continues, the parent will be asked to attend the next class with their child. The use of cell phones, or other music listening devices are strictly prohibited. If used during class they will be confiscated by the teacher, and returned to the student's parent or guardian only. We ask for your full cooperation in these matters.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Since absence and lateness interfere with the class's progress, all students should make a sincere effort to be present and on time for class. **Absence from class requires a written and signed excuse from a parent** describing the nature of and reason for the absence. It is the Diocesan and Christ the Redeemer Parish program policy that **only three excused absences are permitted** for the year. Repeated and unexcused absence or absence for trivial reasons is not acceptable. Should this situation develop, the parent will be asked to meet with the PCL and/or Pastor. **Students are held responsible for all materials covered** in the regular class sessions. Assignments can easily be obtained by contacting your child's teacher or the PCL. If student is unable to attend class, please call the Religious Education Office at (908) 429-7849.

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

All students should not arrive more than 5 or 10 minutes before class time. There will be no supervision before this time and Christ the Redeemer Parish will not be held responsible for their safety. When dropping off and picking up, please ENTER the parking lot of Christ the King School on the Brooks Blvd. side. Students may **only** be dropped off directly in front of the breezeway doors on the Chestnut Street side of the school. If you prefer to park, please use the parking spaces away from the building. Cars will only be allowed to stop in the marked parking spaces. **Do not stop your vehicles in front of the breezeway doors and wait for your child/children.** Drivers are asked to be extra cautious when leaving the parking lot. Pickup for Grades 1-4 will be in parking lot 2. (Chestnut Street side) Pickup for Grades 5-8 will be in parking lot 1. (Brooks Blvd. side) through the breezeway doors. Older siblings can go with younger siblings.

In the interest of your child's safety, it is now required that a parent or responsible guardian pick up their child. Every child **MUST** be picked up at the breezeway door. No child will be allowed to go to their car without a parent or guardian. Please be on time. **If someone other than the parent or guardian will be picking up, a written note must be on file in the office.** Please provide a list of any alternative people who are authorized to pick up students. An ID will be required upon picking up. We do not recommend so, but if any student must walk to and from Religious Education, we must also have a written note signed by the parent on file.

Students will only be released early from class if a written notice, signed by the parent/guardian, is provided to the teacher and will only be released to the care of his/her parent or guardian.

HOMEWORK

Students must bring their books to class each week with a folder for all paperwork. Homework is a meaningful activity if it supplements or reinforces work done in class. Assignments are usually from their book, take home sheets, or the Bible, with the exception of special projects and extra work for Sacramental preparation classes. It also gives an opportunity for parents to get involved with their child's Religious Education. Gospel Reflections are required weekly for Grades 7 & 8.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be issued twice a year, after the mid-term testing in January and after the final testing on the last day of class in May. Reports will be given directly to the student .

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Sacramental preparation is a serious endeavor. The Diocesan policy for these classes states *“preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation entails two years of formal class instructions. No home study will be approved unless extenuating circumstances exist and the pastor, Parish Catechetical Leader and Diocesan Office of Religious Education concur.”* Instruction for and reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation (Penance) and Holy Eucharist should take place in the second grade. A mandatory Jesus Day Retreat must be attended by ALL children receiving First Communion. Parents are expected to attend the parent meeting planned for the same day as the Jesus Day Retreat.

Instruction for Confirmation begins in the seventh grade and continues through the eighth grade. **NO MORE THAN THREE ABSENCES WILL BE ALLOWED IN SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION CLASSES.** Confirmation candidates will be expected to complete a total of 20 hours of service project time. Seventh graders will perform 10 hours over the course of the year; eighth graders should complete 10 hours each of community, church and family service. A list of opportunities will be provided. The candidate will attend a mandatory one-day retreat together as part of the program. A special parents meeting will be held to inform you of all that is expected of the candidates.

SCHOOL HOURS AND LOCATION

All classes will be held at Christ the King School, 99 N. 13th Ave. Please follow the parking rules printed on page 2 of this handbook when dropping off and picking up your child/children. Classes will be held on Tuesdays and will begin at 5:30PM and end at 6:45PM.

REGISTRATION

Only registered members of Christ the Redeemer Parish are permitted to enroll in our program. Registration will be done on-line only.

Students will have successfully completed all eight years of religious education prior to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Should a break occur in their religious education, students will resume at the next grade level from the last successfully completed grade should they desire to return to the program. Students who miss First Communion will have to go through the RCIA Program. There will be no skipping of grades.

FEES

Tuition for the program at this time is \$140.00 for one child, \$240.00 for two children and \$330.00 for three or more children. This fee provides for the cost of the student's textbooks, supplies, audio-visual materials, a part-time director salary, teacher training, etc. Students in the Sacramental Programs (Grades 2 & 8) will be assessed a \$75 Sacramental Fee. This fee provides for the cost incurred with the reception of First Communion and Confirmation. No one will be turned away for inability to pay. In extraordinary circumstances, special considerations will be made. Late fees will be assessed if payment is not received by July 31st (\$50) or by September 1st (\$100). Contact the parish office if you are experiencing financial difficulties.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

Significant snowfall, ice or flooding may cause cancellation of classes. If public schools are canceled due to bad weather, Christ the Redeemer classes will be canceled as well. An automated telephone alert will be sent out to the contact phone provided by the parent on the registration form. All messages are sent out through the Parish office phone number - 908 725-0072. Please add this number to your phone contact list.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

If a catechist or PCL suspects that a child has been abused, NJ State Statutes require that the Division of Youth and Family Services be notified immediately by telephone or otherwise. (N.J.S.A.9: 6-8 et seq.). This is not a choice...it is the law!

DRUGS

Drugs are not allowed on the school or parish premises. Any student found to be in possession of an illegal substance will be detained until the police are notified and removed from the program.

RECORDS

Religious education offices are required to keep a permanent record file for each student containing progress reports, absentee notes, parent commitment to the handbook rules, behavioral notes, etc. Any parent wishing to view their child's files may make an appointment with the PCL or Pastor.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

In accordance with our Baptismal Promises, parents and students are reminded of their weekly responsibility to attend Mass in order to fulfill their Sunday obligation as members of the Catholic Church. Students will be supplied with contribution envelopes. One of these envelopes is to be brought to Mass every Sunday and dropped into the collection basket during the Offertory. These envelopes are recorded as indication of attendance at Mass. No more than five excused absences are allowed. Progress Books are given to all children and must be used for Mass attendance, activities and prayers.

DRESS CODE

Students are required to adhere to the dress code established by the Parish. During classes, students may be required to enter the Church for various reasons. Parents must ensure that their child/children are dressed appropriately for such occasions.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS!

I Mr., Mrs., Ms. _____ have read the Christ the Redeemer Parish's Religious Education Handbook and have discussed the issues with my child(ren). I will work with the Religious Education Office and the Parish by abiding by all policies stated within it.

My child(ren), (please list names and grade).

Signature of a parent/guardian

Date