

**ST. MARY'S
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
PARENT HANDBOOK**



We will welcome you and your child. We will provide a safe environment for your child conducive to learning and provide the necessary materials for learning.

*****Parents, please see Parental Acceptance of Religious Education Handbook message on the last page.***

When your child was baptized, you promised to raise your child in the practice of the Catholic faith. St. Mary's Religious Education Staff recognizes and supports you in this life-long endeavor.

DIOCESE of ALLENTOWN GUIDELINES:



- St. Mary's follows the Religious Education Curriculum Guidelines provided by the Diocese.
- St. Mary's follows the Sacramental Preparation Guidelines set by the Diocese.
- St. Mary's fulfills the number of hours (26) for Religious Education set by the Diocese.
- **Textbook Materials:** St. Mary's chooses textbook materials that are approved by the Diocese and in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

- **Safety:**
 - ✓ St. Mary's is in conformity with Diocesan Safety Guidelines.
 - ✓ Our catechists, substitutes, adult aides, and office secretaries have had Pennsylvania and federal background checks, signed the code of conduct and sexual abuse policy form, attended a workshop on Protecting God's Children and have been trained as Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse.
 - ✓ Our teen aides have signed the code of conduct and sexual abuse policy form.

Youth Masses – 3rd Sundays of the month, 9am, October through April

IN ORDER TO BEST SERVE YOUR FAMILY:

Professional Development:

Staff members participate in ongoing formation through workshops, conferences, retreats and resources.

Catechists train through meetings and catechist formation classes.

ST. MARY'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

St. Mary's provides a Religious Education Program from Kindergarten (age 5) through level 12. St. Mary's provides resources directly to and for parents through:

- St. Mary's Philosophy and Mission Statement
- Yearly Religious Education Calendar
- A Parent's Guide to Prayer
- Child Safety Guide for Parents
- Parent Newsletters, 7 times a year
- Orientation Session for parents every September
- Adult Discussion meetings offered through the year to enrich your faith life
- Meetings on Sacraments at an adult level when your child/youth prepare for Sacraments
- Family Retreats in preparation for Sacraments
- Levels K-8:
Grade level syllabus with specific dates on which material is to be learned
"With My Family" pages in children's text
Homework that pertains to family life
- Especially for Families:
Children's Liturgy of the Word at the 9 a.m. Mass

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

For Center Based and Home Based Programs

- ❖ **Celebrate Sunday Mass** with your child so your family has the strength to live their faith and develop the habit of regularly praising God.
- ❖ Pray with your children and help them learn the traditional prayers appropriate for their age.
- ❖ Choose a religious education program that works best for your family and participate.

For Center Based Program at Religious Education Center

Promptness:

- Bring your child/youth to class on time. Pre-Level 5 classes begin at 10:30am. Junior High classes begin at 6:00pm.
- Children should not enter room until catechist is present.

Dismissal:

- ***If someone else has permission to pick up your child, indicate that on a signed note to be given to the catechist by your child.***
- For Elementary levels, pick your child up at the door of the classroom on time. Children will not be allowed to leave the classroom by themselves.
- For Junior High, youth will be dismissed to parent's cars at walkway directly in front of the main entrance to the Religious Ed. Center. Please note parking lot guidelines on the next page.

Communicate with Catechists:

- If your child has special needs to facilitate learning, inform the catechist or call the Religious Education office (610) 683-6454 to inform the Coordinator of Religious Education.
- ***If your child has any allergies*** that could affect them in class, notify the Coordinator of Religious Education.

JUNIOR HIGH PARKING LOT GUIDELINES



In an effort to keep everyone safe it is necessary for us to follow specific traffic patterns during dismissal of Junior High classes.

- Please do not park directly in front of the Religious Ed Center at any time. The yellow curb indicates that this is a fire lane.
- At drop off, all traffic will use a single lane directly in front of the R.E.C., and continue up and to the left to exit through the Religious Ed. Center parking lot.
- Dismissal for all classes will be at 8:00pm. Youth will be waiting on the walkway directly in front of the R.E.C. Please follow the guidance of the Traffic Control Volunteers.
- 4 cars at a time will park in front of the main entrance of the Religious Education Center to pick up students and again continue up and to the left to exit through the Religious Ed. Center parking lot, as at drop-off time.
- To park your car in the parking lot, please follow the one-way, one-lane flow of traffic as indicated for drop-off and pick-up.
- Each parent is asked to volunteer for traffic control once in the course of 3 years that your child is enrolled in junior high religious education.
- Selection of parents for Traffic Volunteer Control will be determined by a lottery system.

EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUR CHILD/YOUTH

- Bring the necessary textbook or materials to class
- Participate in class
- Respect the catechist, class members and their property.
- Do the assigned homework.
- Bring home notes that are meant for parents.

ABSENCES- For levels 1-8, if your child is absent from class, do the lesson at home with your child referring to the syllabus you receive on the first day. At the next class, your child must show the completed work to the catechist.

MANY ABSENCES- If your child is absent more than 4 times, we need to evaluate how best to help your child so that s/he can move on to the next level.

CANCELLATIONS:

For all levels, if we cancel classes because of bad weather, check www.wfmz.com/worshipclose or TV channel 69 (WFMZ). Catechists and aides will be called personally.

IN ADDITION, FOR JUNIOR HIGH LEVELS, catechists will call you at home .
FOR Senior High levels, please check your email and text messages.

For Home Based Program:

Staff with parents:

- will decide on the content of home-based gatherings and also worship and service opportunities at the orientation meeting.
- will lead gatherings, worship and service opportunities.

Parents:

- will participate in the parent orientation meeting.
- will provide religious education for and with their children/youth on a weekly basis.
- will participate in the home-based gatherings as a family. If unable to attend, a family will participate in a whole community alternative.
- are responsible for the safety of children in all whole community experiences.

**After reading the Parent Religious Education Handbook, please sign and date the form, below, and return it to the Office in the Religious Education Center to acknowledge receipt of the Handbook and accept the policies as set forth in the Handbook.

Cut slip below and return at next class meeting.

Parental Acceptance of Religious Education Handbook

I have read and understand the rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook. To the best of our ability, my family and I will uphold and abide by the policies listed within.

Signed: _____

Parent of: _____

Date: _____

