

Religious Education Handbook

St. Ann Catholic Church 2016-2017

Welcome! I'm trying something new this year and paring down the existing handbook and eliminating the need for a booklet completely. This handbook will remain online year round for you to reference should you need it.

Thank you for registering your child for religious education classes this year. We look forward to helping you teach your children about the Catholic faith. While we do our part here are some things you can do with your children, read the Bible together, encourage your children to pray, pray together as a family, and keep taking them to Mass!

We do have some new changes this year, so continue reading to get up to speed. If you have any questions, be sure to ask.

Thanks,
Kelly O'Brien

Registration Policy

All students must be registered before they can attend class. Students can not be dropped off and parents try to make arrangements to register them at a later time. With that being said, you can bring them to class and register at the same time. Registration is available on our website and paper copies in the narthex.

Absences: If your child will not be able to attend class on a regular basis, please inform your child's catechist, so that arrangements can be made for classes missed.

Child Abuse Policy

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis requires that all persons who work with children in a parish undergo a criminal background check and complete the Safe and Sacred online training program designed to instruct volunteers on the signs and warnings of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. More information about this program can be found by clicking on the Safe and Sacred link on our webpage.

Discipline Policy

The best learning takes place in an orderly, respectful, and safe environment. Catechists are given directions to contact the coordinator of religious education when a child has become a discipline problem. If you are contacted by the CRE about a discipline problem involving your child, we ask for your cooperation. Catechists contribute their time to teach children about our faith and the importance of God in our lives. We ask that you emphasize to your children the importance of being cooperative with their catechist and participate respectfully in class.

All catechists have been asked to follow the procedures outlined here: If a discipline problem develops, the first thing the catechist will do is try to handle the problem one-on-one with your child. The CRE will be informed about the situation if it happens a second time, and may choose to write or call the parents to discuss the situation with them. If the problem occurs again you will be called and asked to take your child home for the day. As a final alternative, in order to insure an effective teaching and learning environment, unresolved discipline problems on the part of uncooperative students may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policy: Preschool through Grade 2

At the recommendation of the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, we have instituted a drop-off and pick-up policy for all children in preschool through second grade. A parent or guardian (not an older brother or sister) is required to drop off and pick up their child(ren) at the classroom door each Sunday. There are many reasons for this policy, the most important being the safety of your child(ren).

If, because of extenuating circumstances (such as a restraining order), there is someone who is not permitted to pick up your child (regardless of grade), please notify the coordinator of religious education immediately. It would be prudent to inform your child(ren)'s catechist of the situation as well. We want to cooperate in keeping all children safe.

Unless notified otherwise by your child(ren)'s catechist, please do not pick up your child(ren) any earlier than 11:45 a.m.

Family Information Changes

If your phone number, address, or other important information changes, please remember to notify the coordinator of religious education so that your records may be updated accordingly.

Emergency Medical Procedures

On the religious education registration form you will be asked to supply the name of an emergency contact person with their phone number. Likewise, you will be asked to sign the permission statement giving your permission for emergency medical personnel to treat your child in the event of a medical emergency.

The Religious Education office is supplied with a first aid kit for minor medical treatment (small cuts, scrapes, etc.). If a child is unable to complete a class session because of illness or minor injury, your child's catechist will call you (the parents) first, then the emergency contact person listed on the registration form.

In the event of a serious illness or injury, a catechist will call 911 to request emergency assistance. Parents will be contacted second. The emergency contact person listed on your registration form will be notified third and informed of what has happened. Next, the catechist will notify the coordinator of religious education who will, if necessary, contact Father Rob. A copy of your child's contact information is kept in their classroom.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a tornado warning, a fire, or other critical situation the catechists will evacuate the children from the building according to the fire and emergency evacuation plan confirmed by the Decatur Township Fire Marshall. During the course of the school year, the children will be given periodic test drills to help them master the evacuation procedure in lieu of an actual event.

Weather Related Closings

Cancelling Mass is highly unusual. In the event of bad weather, please use your best judgement. If you arrive at Mass and want to take your child home with you because of the weather, please do. Classes will not be cancelled, but it is not guaranteed that your child will be in their own class.

Visitors

Your children are welcome to bring guests! Please, let the catechist know your child has a friend staying for class. Help us ensure a great class by reminding both your child and his/her friend the expectations of class participation.

Sacramental Preparation

Sacrament Prep classes are available for all ages. In order to receive First Eucharist or Confirmation, all children must be baptized prior. If your child needs to be baptized, be sure to let Kelly know.

First Eucharist begins in second grade. The 2nd grade class is designed completely around First Reconciliation and First Eucharist preparation. If your child is passed the second grade and is in need of sacramental preparation, do not worry. This class is also open to third-fifth graders. Any higher grade will attend the middle school class and participate in a couple of extra classes geared toward both sacraments.

Confirmation is open to all 8th-12th graders. Classes are every other year. 2016-2017 is a Confirmation year. If your child is interested in being confirmed, sign make sure to check the Confirmation box on the registration form. Confirmation classes are held on Sunday evenings from 4-6 p.m. twice a month. A more detailed schedule and is available on the website.

New This Year For Sacramental Prep

Attending Mass is the absolute most important way to help your child grow in his/her faith. This year we are recording Mass attendance. Unfortunately, there has been a trend of parents only taking their children to class and missing Mass. At the back of church will be a binder for both Sacrament Prep classes. Students will need to sign in each week. Tracking their attendance helps us so much in the classroom. Mass attendance allows us to dive right in and work on the meaning behind the sacraments and allows us to skip the order of the Mass and roles within the Mass.

Mass Policy

A good religious education can only build upon the moral, spiritual, and religious formation that the children are receiving at home by you, the parent. As Catholics, celebrating mass and the Eucharist is central to our faith. One of the simplest ways to teach children about the importance of God in their lives is to bring them to mass with you. Please make every effort to attend a weekend mass with your children. It is inconsistent to have children attend weekly religious education classes and not participate in the mass.

Liturgical Service

Children will periodically be called to participate in special children's liturgies. As Catholics, participating in liturgical services is of vital importance and, as such, children should be highly encouraged by their parents to receive training as altar servers, lectors, ushers, greeters, and, in their teenage years, as Eucharistic ministers. Please be supportive in this matter.

Junior Ushers: Beginning this year all children registered for First Communion have the opportunity to sign up to be a junior usher. This role will include sitting in the front pew and being a bell ringer as well as helping take up the collection and bring up the gifts. This is a great way for the children to learn more about the Mass and helps prepare them to be servers, if they choose to do so after their First Communion.

Fees

All monies collected from religious education registration fees are put back into the parish fund. Money allocated for religious education from the parish fund are used for books, teaching manuals, classroom supplies, resource materials, videos, workbooks, paper and other necessary expenses. We do not make a profit off of religious education classes.

Prices for 2016-2017

Sacramental Prep:

First Communion \$40

Confirmation \$50

Non-Sacramental Classes:

First Student Pre-K, K, 1st, and 3rd-8th \$20

Subsequent Children \$17

If you are in need of financial assistance to help with the registration fees, please let Kelly know. Cost should not keep any child from attending religious education classes.