

# **St. Charles**

## **Religious Education Program**

### **Parent Handbook**



**Rev. Louis Jerome**  
**Pastor**

**Ms. Kerry Quinn**  
**Coordinator of Religious Education**

**Mrs. Lorena Andrews**  
**Secretary**

September 2016

Greetings Parents,

Fr. Jerome and I would like to welcome you to the 2016-2017 St. Charles Religious Education Program (R.E.P.). We hope that you had an enjoyable summer!

It is with much excitement and joy that we, along with our Catechists, look forward to guiding and nurturing your child(ren) in their faith formation.

It is so very important that especially in today's world, that your child(ren) have a solid and meaningful foundation in our Catholic Faith. It is through their understanding and instruction that they follow in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior.

The Religious Education Office is open Monday - Thursday during the following times:

Monday & Wednesday 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Please note that on Monday and Wednesdays the office will not be able to accommodate parents from 3:00 PM - 5:25 PM. The children in our program are our first concern. If you would like to speak with Ms. Quinn or Mrs. Andrews, please let us know via e-mail or phone call and we will make time for you following dismissal. Should there be a matter that needs our immediate attention, please be patient and we will speak with you once the children are settled in the classroom

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the R.E.P. office at

(Office Phone) 718-979-6800

(Fax Number) 718-987-8158

(E-mail) [stcharlesccd10306@gmail.com](mailto:stcharlesccd10306@gmail.com).

Thank you for your cooperation in the above matters.

May God bless us all in the work of Christian Education, which we carry on in His name!

Sincerely,

Rev. Louis Jerome, Pastor

Ms. Kerry Quinn, C.R.E.

## *The Role of the Parent/Guardian*

At your child's baptism the celebrant offered this prayer for you as fathers and mothers: "God is the giver of all life human and divine...they will be the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith. May they also be the best teachers bearing witness to the faith by what they say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The parent/guardian has the primary and sacred responsibility to educate his/her child(ren) in the Catholic faith. The St. Charles Parish Religious Education Program is established to assist parents and families in fulfilling this responsibility.

In addition to instructing your children in Christian truth, we welcome the opportunity to assist you in fulfilling your primary obligation to help you teach your children to walk in ways of faith. This can only be done when each family places Jesus Christ and His teachings at the center of their lives through Sunday worship, family prayer and daily living of the Christian message. Regular attendance at Sunday Mass with your children is an essential part of their religious education.

Living a Catholic life is not accomplished by simply attending Mass or Religious Education classes. It is a lifestyle that is to be witnessed everyday by what we say and what we do at home, at work, at school and at play. It is essential to the child's growth and development in the Catholic faith that the parents live the life of faith at home; the effectiveness of the religious education process radically depends upon this. It is obvious that the values of parents become the values of the child. The child receives a "mixed message" which causes inner conflict when what is taught in Religious Education classes is not experienced by the child in his/her family.

\*\*\*We ask that the custodial parent/guardian inform the Coordinator of the rights of the non-custodial parent as these pertain to the child's participation in the program as well as release from the program.

<sup>[1]</sup>When the word "parent" is used in this document, it also includes anyone who may act as a child's guardian, whether grandparent, aunt, uncle, godparent, etc.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

### MASS ATTENDANCE

An integral part of our Religious Education Program is that the children are expected to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church. Learning in class can be truly effective only when one meets the Lord sacramentally at the altar.

- ★ Sunday Obligation
  - Weekend Mass schedule begins at 4 PM on Saturday evening and goes through Sunday evening.
  
- ★ Holy Days of Obligation:
  - Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God - January 1
  - Ascension Thursday - May 25, 2017 (40 days after Easter)
  - Feast of the Assumption of Mary - August 15
  - All Saints - November 1
  - Feast of the Immaculate Conception - December 8
  - Christmas - December 25
    - Please note that if the Holy day falls during the week, there will be a Vigil Mass. Please consult the bulletin for times.
  
- ★ What **does not** constitute a Mass Obligation fulfillment
  - Attending a Mass prior to 4 PM on a Saturday
  - Communal Baptismal service, Communion, or Confirmation etc. on a Saturday prior to 4 PM
  - Attending a weekend service at a non-Roman Catholic Church

### MASS ATTENDANCE CARDS

Students in grades 1-8 that are enrolled in St. Charles School and St. Charles Religious Education Program will receive Mass attendance cards.

- ★ **Mass Attendance will be carefully taken each week.**
- ★ **Students in our two -year sacramental preparation grades risk postponement of the sacrament if mass attendance is poor.**
- ★ **No adult or child is to submit a mass card for a child that did not attend mass. If this occurs, the R.E.P. Office will be notified. There are no excuses for this to take place.**
- ★ **If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent you from attending Mass weekly, please speak to the R.E.P. Office as soon as possible.**
- ★ **Vacation is NOT an excuse to miss Mass. If you are going to be away, you can find a church location and Mass times by visiting [www.Masstimes.org](http://www.Masstimes.org) .**

## MASS CARD PROCEDURE

- ★ Please make sure that **your child's name and class** (6-1, 7A etc) are clearly marked on each card. If there is a typo on the mass card, please make the correction and I will make a notation to correct the information for the following year. There is no need to make the correction every week.
- ★ Bring the mass card with you to Mass on Saturday/Sunday or the Holy Day of Obligation.
- ★ **Please check that the date of the mass card corresponds to the Sunday Mass that you are attending.** Mass Cards that are brought over to R.E.P. Office after Mass that have a past date will not be counted. If you took the wrong card, please write the correct date on the front.
- ★ **For Grades 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 ONLY:** Following the conclusion of Mass (once the priest leaves the altar) place your card in the basket provided in front of the Sanctuary. Please do not run up to and /or on the altar.
- ★ **For Grades 2 & 7 ONLY:** The student must hand their mass card to the priest after mass.
- ★ **If you forget to take your card to Mass:** please speak to the priest following Mass. You must bring a signed bulletin and attach your card with an explanation written on the back mentioning the mass you attended and the name of the priest you spoke with to the R.E.P. office the **next class day**. If you submit a St. Charles bulletin with no card/information attached, **it will not be accepted.**
- ★ If you miss Mass, a parent or guardian must write an absent note on the back of the card. These cards must be submitted to the R.E.P. Office on the first day back to class after **each** Mass absence. Please do not staple a group of mass cards together and put them in the basket, **they will not be accepted.**
- ★ **Cards put in the collection baskets will NOT be counted.**
- ★ **If a Holy Day of Obligation occurs during the week, cards will NOT be counted if they are put in the basket on the following Sunday without an explanation written on the back.**
- ★ **Cards for Sunday Mass will not be counted if turned in after one week from the date on the card with NO explanation.**

## ATTENDING MASS OUTSIDE OF ST. CHARLES

- ★ If you attend Mass at another Catholic Church, you must have a priest sign the church's bulletin. Please attach that bulletin to your card and bring them to the Religious Education office the **next class day**. Bulletins received without a mass card and/or a name written on it **will not be counted.**

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE ALTAR IS TO BE REVERENCED AT ALL TIMES!**

## **ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT**

In assisting with your child(ren)'s faith formation, we ask that the parents and guardians provide their child(ren) the support they need, as students of the Catholic faith, by assuring all assignments are completed in a neat and timely manner.

- ★ We have provided you with an outline of the curriculum taught at each grade level.
- ★ Review your child(ren)'s folder weekly for notices and assignments. eg. Advent projects, Lent projects, handouts etc. E-mail notifications will also be sent out.
- ★ Your child is provided with an outline of the lesson that will be completed each week as well as dates of tests and projects. Please prepare with the students for upcoming exams by reviewing their lesson each week.

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Students are given a homework assignment sheet for each half of the year and will be attached to the inside of their textbook. If your child is absent, this will enable them to keep up with the work assignment. There is no excuse for a child to not complete the lesson(s) that they missed or to not be prepared for an exam.
2. Students in grades 3-7 will be graded on their completed homework assignment. Each question is worth 1 point and 10 assignments will be counted as a test grade.
  - ★ I understand that the homework received in Public School is often very time consuming and I have asked the Catechist to allow the children to do their homework in class if there is time left during the session. Please check your child's book to make sure the assignment was completed.
3. Students are given two mandatory projects (Advent & Lent) during the course of the year. Your child will sign and date that they received the project. These projects are created to ensure that the children learn to appreciate the significance of the Church season as it is celebrated. We ask that you have your child work on the project each night so that they can grow as young Catholic Christians during the seasons of Advent and Lent. The children are given ample time to complete this work.
  - ★ The Advent Projects are distributed to each student at the class before the First Sunday of Advent.
  - ★ The Lent Projects are distributed to each student at the class leading up to or falling on Ash Wednesday.
  - ★ Please notify the R.E.P. Office as soon as possible if you need a replacement copy of the project.

## ASSESSMENT

1. “Since there is formal testing at each grade level, a certain amount of knowledge will be expected to be retained by each child who enrolls in the program. Children are expected to review lessons at home on a regular basis every week.” (ADNY)
  - ★ Students in **Grades 1 & 2** will be given an oral prayer assessment during the course of the year. Children will not receive a formal grade on these assessments, however it will be noted on the Progress Report
  - ★ Students in **Grades 3-6** will be given 4 written assessments over the course of the year based on the lessons taught. There will also be a written assessment of their prayers that will be given in each term. The homework assignment sheet will notify you of the dates and lessons covered for each assessment.
    - ★ Students in these grades will be provided with a review test the week before the test. They will be given time during class to complete the review sheet. Please make sure that they study and are prepared. No student will be permitted to bring home a review sheet for another student.
    - ★ Answer Keys to each review sheet will be e-mailed to the parents the week the child receives it in case of an absence. Should you wish to have a copy of the test, please make an appointment to come to the R.E.P. Office.
    - ★ Students who are absent the week the review sheets are distributed are expected to be prepared to take the assessment upon their return to class.
    - ★ Students in **Grade 7** will be assessed periodically on the lessons taught in class. Catechists will review with the students the week before the assessment.
2. Passing grade on all exams is 70%. If a student fails a test, they will write the question and the answer of the answers/prayers that were wrong 1 time on loose-leaf paper and have a parent’s signature on it. Upon returning to class, your child will give the catechist the work and your child will receive a 70 on that exam. If no work is handed in, the failing grade stands.
  - ★ “If a child does not fulfill grade level requirements, a meeting will be arranged with the parents, the catechist, and the Director/Coordinator of Religious Education to discuss the situation. The Director/Coordinator will decide if the child needs to repeat the year.” (ADNY)
3. “Progress Reports for the Religious Education Program only reflect class performance (participation and testing) and homework. They are issued twice yearly to indicate the strengths and weaknesses that the children are demonstrating.” (ADNY)

We ask that you kindly review, sign and return the Progress Report to your child’s Catechist by the following week.
4. It is imperative that you notify the R.E.P. Office if there are any issues that we should be made aware of to better help your child while they are in our care (ie. extra time with the assessment, trouble reading/focusing, etc.).
  - ★ Any information obtained is only told to his/her Catechist for the sole purpose of ensuring that your child understands the lesson.

## CURRICULUM

Themes and objectives for each grade level

\*Provided by the Archdiocese of New York Catechetical Office

### Grade One

**Theme:**

“God is our Father who loves us. Jesus is the Son of God who saves us. The Holy Spirit helps us to be holy.”

**Objective:**

To develop an awareness of God the Creator who gives us life and grace and promises us eternal life through Jesus.

### Grade Two

**Theme:**

“Jesus nourishes us and strengthens God’s life and grace within us.”

**Objective:**

To present Jesus as the model for Christian living, and to introduce the sacraments of Baptism, Penance and Eucharist.

### Grade Three

**Theme:**

“Jesus continues his life and work through the Church.”

**Objective:**

To deepen the child’s understanding of the Church and to help the child experience the church as a Christian community.

### Grade Four

**Theme:** “As God’s people we are called to live as Jesus did, choosing a life of love, characterized by obedience to God and service to others.”

**Objective:**

To help the children form their consciences according to the teachings of the Catholic Church and to learn the basis of Christian morality as taught in the Old and New Testament.

### Grade Five

**Theme:** “Through the sacraments, the Church celebrates Christ’s saving actions in our lives.”

**Objective:**

To help the child experience and understand the rites of the sacraments and so become a more conscious and active participant in the church’s sacramental life.

### Grade Six

**Theme:** “God’s saving actions are found throughout history. The Holy Bible, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, records God’s plan of salvation.”

**Objective:**

To understand the Old Testament as the revelation of God in history of a people, a revelation fulfilled in the New Testament.



## **Grade Seven**

### **(four themes)**

#### **Personal Growth, Part I: The Human Person**

The growth and change experienced during adolescence are part of the unfolding of God's plan for our development as fully Christian persons.

#### **Objectives:**

To develop in the young adolescent a sense of self-worth and self respect nurtured and strengthened by a knowledge of God's love. To acquaint the young adolescent with an understanding of the virtues necessary for a life of goodness and faith.

#### **Jesus and the Gospel Message**

The gospels reveal Jesus as the Savior and Risen Lord who calls us to advance the kingdom of God through discipleship.

#### **Objectives:**

To broaden the young adolescent's understanding of the gospels through a study of their formation, themes, message, and literary aspects. To help the young adolescent grow in a personal relationship with Jesus by encountering Him in the Gospels.

#### **Sacraments:**

The mystery of Christ continues in the church through the sacraments which are visible signs of the love and saving action of Jesus.

#### **Objectives:**

To help the young adolescent understand, appreciate and celebrate the continuing presence and saving action of Jesus in the church. To lead the young adolescent to a full and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church.

#### **Human Sexuality:**

Sexuality is a gift from God. It embraces psychological, spiritual and physical characteristics of men and women. We human beings need to integrate our sexuality into our total personality in order to develop into the persons God has called us to be.

#### **Objectives:**

To help the young adolescent appreciate the gift of sexuality. To assist the young adolescent in developing correct and positive attitudes concerning sexuality. To clarify for the young adolescent how the gift of sexuality can be misused.

- The above themes are taught through an organized curriculum that enhances the students knowledge of the following topics and how they can be incorporated into their everyday life.
  - \* The Beatitudes
  - \* The Four Marks of the Church/Hierarchy of the Church
  - \* The Fruits of the Holy Spirit
  - \* The Gifts of the Holy Spirit
  - \* The Mass (Holy Days, Gestures and Responses, Objects used at Mass)
  - \* The Seven Sacraments  
(includes a 6 session course pertaining to the sacrament of Confirmation)
  - \* The Ten Commandments

## **PRAYER**

The following thoughts were taken from [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org):

God invites us into a relationship with Him that is both personal and communal. He speaks to us through His Son, Jesus Christ, the Word-made-flesh. Prayer is our response to God who is already speaking or, better yet, revealing Himself to us. Therefore, prayer is not merely an exchange of words, but it engages the whole person in a relationship with God the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit.

The *Catechism* clearly defines prayer as a "vital and personal relationship with the living and true God" (CCC, no. 2558). Prayer is Christian "insofar as it is communion with Christ" (CCC, no. 2565), and a "covenant relationship between God and man in Christ" (CCC, no. 2564). ([www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org))

- ★ Your child will be provided with a grade level copy of the prayers that they are to know. The complete list of required prayers as well as additional prayers have also been included in this packet. We ask that you please make sure that your child learns these prayers.
  - Each year your child will be assessed on their prayers through oral or written assessments.
  - Please make sure that your child is saying their prayers every night.

## **PRAYER SHEET**

### **REQUIRED FOR GRADES 1-7**

#### **SIGN OF THE CROSS**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

#### **OUR FATHER**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

#### **HAIL MARY**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

#### **GLORY BE TO THE FATHER (Doxology)**

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

#### **APOSTLES' CREED (by the conclusion of 3rd grade this prayer should be memorized)<sup>1</sup>**

(1st) I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,

(2nd) and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

(3rd) I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

#### **ACT OF CONTRITION<sup>2</sup>**

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you, whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God have mercy.

#### **GRACE BEFORE MEALS**

Bless us, O Lord and these your gifts which we are about to receive from your goodness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

#### **PRAYER TO MY GUARDIAN ANGEL**

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Current Third Grade students (2016-2017) will begin studying this prayer in its entirety this year.

<sup>2</sup> This prayer will be introduced in First Grade and must be memorized by November of Second Grade.

## **REQUIRED FOR GRADE 5**

### **MEMORARE**

Remember, most loving Virgin Mary, never was it heard that anyone who turned to you for help was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, though burdened by my sins, I run to your protection for you are my mother. Mother of the Word of God, do not despise my world of pleading but be merciful and hear my prayer. Amen.

## **REQUIRED FOR GRADE 6**

### **HAIL, HOLY QUEEN**

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To you we cry, the children of Eve; to you we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this land of exile. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us; lead us home at last and show us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus: O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

## **REQUIRED FOR GRADE 7**

### **ANGELUS**

The angel spoke God's message to Mary, and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

(Hail Mary)

"I am the lowly servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word."

(Hail Mary)

And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

(Hail Mary)

Pray for us, holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Lord, fill our hearts with your grace: once, through the message of an angel you revealed to us the incarnation of your Son; now, through his suffering and death lead us to the glory of his resurrection.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **MAGNIFICAT**

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him. He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart. He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

## **ADDITIONAL PRAYERS GRADE 1-7**

### **MORNING PRAYER**

My God, I offer you today all that I think and do and say, uniting it with what was done on earth, by Jesus Christ, your Son. Amen

### **EVENING PRAYER**

Dear God, before I sleep I want to thank you for this day so full of your kindness and your joy. I close my eyes to rest safe in your loving care.

### **GRACE AFTER MEALS**

We give you thanks almighty God for these and all your gifts, which we have received through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **PRAYER BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Jesus, you are God – with – us, especially in this sacrament of the Eucharist. You love me as I am and help me grow. Come and be with me in all my joys and sorrows. Help me share your peace and love with everyone I meet. I ask in your name. Amen.

### **ACT OF FAITH**

O God, we believe in all that Jesus has taught us about you. We place all our trust in you because of your great love for us.

### **ACT OF LOVE**

O God, we love you above all things. Help us to love ourselves and one another as Jesus taught us to do.

### **ACT OF HOPE**

O God, we never give up on your love. We have hope and will work for your kingdom to come and for a life that lasts forever with you in heaven.

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

In 2002, the United States Bishops approved *The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* in an effort to protect children and youth from sexual abuse at all levels. Article 12 of the charter directs all dioceses to create programs and processes to teach children and youth about sexual abuse and its prevention. In the Archdiocese of New York, lessons on sexual abuse awareness for children in the parish religious education programs and schools will be integrated into the religious education program each year.

Our Catholic tradition has always affirmed the dignity of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God. Every person with whom we come into contact deserves to be seen by us as through the eyes of God. We know that ministry with children and youth, in particular, is a sacred trust. We at St. Charles Parish are committed to preserve, at all times and in all places, this sacred trust which is rooted in our faith in Jesus Christ.

There will be informational sessions and/or information packets offered during the catechetical year which will describe for you this sexual abuse awareness training and how it is being implemented in our parish.

We thank you for your support and interest as we partner to give our children the safest possible environment to grow in faith, in our parish, school and in our homes. (ADNY)

Provided by <http://www.archny.org/safe-environment-program>

The mission of the Archdiocese's "Safe Environment Program" is to insure the safety of children and young people who have been entrusted to our care in our parishes, schools, religious education classes, and other programs.

- ★ Every year, the children in our schools and religious education programs receive lessons in keeping themselves safe.
- ★ Our Safe Environment lesson plans have been fully revised to address each grade level with instruction and materials that are age-appropriate, user-friendly, and fully consistent with the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. The lessons are designed to promote respect for the dignity of the human person and virtuous living.
- ★ Our goal in revising the curriculum was to equip teachers, parents/guardians, and students with knowledge that can help keep children and young people safe while providing this instruction in a way that fosters the formation of Christian virtues. These revised lessons were developed by the Safe Environment Office of the Archdiocese, in consultation with professional educators and child safety experts.
- ★ In the weeks leading up to our "Safe Environment" lesson, you will receive the Parent Overviews for Grade \_\_. These will be sent home with your child, so that you can be fully aware of the lessons, and will be able to address at home any issues that you see fit.

## St. Charles Religious Education Program

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s),

The safety and well-being of all our children in our parish and school communities are our highest priorities. To serve the goal of creating a safe environment, every year in our schools and religious education programs, the children receive lessons in personal safety, as required by the *Bishops Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, which was adopted by the U.S. Bishops in 2002.

This year, our Safe Environment lesson plans have been fully revised to better address each grade level, with a lesson which is age-appropriate, user-friendly, and consistent with the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. These lessons are designed to promote respect for the dignity of the human person and virtuous living. Our goal in revising the curriculum was to equip teachers, parents/guardians, and students with knowledge that can help keep children and young people safe, while providing this instruction in a way that fosters the formation of Christian virtues. These revised lessons were developed by the Safe Environment Office of the Archdiocese, in consultation with professional educators and child safety experts.

The full lesson plans for each grade level can be reviewed online at <http://www.archny.org/childrens-curriculum/>. These lessons will cover such topics as internet safety, how to develop good boundaries in relationships, how to deal with uncomfortable or threatening situations, and how to get help from a trusted adult. Each year, parents/guardians will receive a short overview of the lesson that your child will receive during their Safe Environment instruction class period. This will enable you to reinforce the lessons your children have received, and to assure them of your support in their safety. Resources will also be available at the website noted above, to help parents/guardians further educate themselves and their children in this important area.

If you have any questions about the material presented in your child's Safe Environment lesson plan, please feel free to contact your principal or director of religious education.

We thank you for the sacred trust you have given us in the care and protection of your children. May the collective vigilance and efforts of the entire Catholic community renew trust and confidence. We must trust Christ's promise: "for God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26).

## **ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION**

The ***Parish Based Religious Education Program*** offers instruction to children who attend public or private (non-parochial) school. Currently, a seven year sequence of formation is offered to the Catholic children of the parish and they are expected to participate each consecutive year. The Religious Education Program is not a convenience for the reception of the sacraments of Confirmation, Reconciliation and Eucharist. It is an ongoing, continuing development of the Christian personality that offers and opportunity for catechists and children to meet regularly in order to learn about the Catholic Christian faith. Sacraments are not isolated events, but an integral part of the Christian life. Each level/grade in Religious Education adds to the development of the Christian life. Our aim is to provide a loving and caring Christian atmosphere in which our parish youth can grow in sound Christ like attitudes and values. (ADNY)

- ★ Registration does not carry over from one year to the next so families must re-register their children each year.
  - Our **re-registration** period generally begins in March of the current school year and continues through the end of school year and resumes in September of the next school year. **Please be sure to look for notices/e-mails/bulletin announcements regarding re-registration during the month of March.** We do provide an early-bird special for those who wish to re-register within the designated time. This includes any current family registering an incoming student for the following year.
    - If you would like to take advantage of the early-bird pricing but there may be a reason you are unable to make a full payment at that time, please speak to the R.E.P. Office as soon as re-registration begins so that an arrangement can be made. Arrangements will be made on a case by case basis.
    - There will be a late fee for all families who re-register after the posted deadline.
  
- ★ **The cost of tuition for Religious Education is an annual decision made by the Pastor with the guidance of the Archdiocese of New York and is subject to change.**
  - The tuition fees are used for salaries, subscriptions to periodicals, the purchase of books and pamphlets, classroom and craft supplies, professional enrichment of the director and the catechists, audiovisual resources, postage and copier expenses, etc. Having these resources at our disposal contributes to the quality of the program.
  
- ★ **New Family Registration** generally begins in April of the current school year and continues through the end of school year and resumes in September of the next school year.
  - A copy of each child's Baptismal Certification is required for entrance into the program.
  - **Transfer students** are required to submit transfer paperwork from the program they previously attended for entrance into our program which includes a copy of all sacramental certificates as well as a letter from the previous program stating that your child was enrolled and completed each prior grade.



## **Class Placement**

- ★ Parish Religious Education Programs are preparation for life. Children are expected to attend Religious Education classes continuously from grade 1 through 7. In almost all cases, children must have completed the first two years of the Religious Education program and received the sacrament of Reconciliation in order to receive the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.
  - To make our incoming first graders or any new students enrolling in our program feel comfortable you may request that your child be placed in a class with a friend from school.
  - Typically, depending on changes to enrollment and volunteers, the children will progress to each grade with their current class. There may be times that a class may be added or taken away and may affect your child's class. We ask for your cooperation should this happen.
  - By the first week of September, our class lists are compiled based on registration forms received. If your child is not registered by 2 PM the day of our Catechist meeting (you will be informed of the date), there may be a chance that he/she will not be able to be placed in that class.
- ★ A parent/guardian who would like to enroll an older child in the program who has had no previous formal religious education classes should plan to meet with the Director/Coordinator so an individual plan of study can be drawn up. This is especially important if the parent/guardian would like the child to eventually prepare to receive one or more of the sacraments.
- ★ Any child who leaves the Religious Education Program after receiving First Communion will (upon reentering the program) be required to complete the grade level(s) of curriculum missed. The placement of the child is determined by the Director/Coordinator after consultation with the pastor and the parent.

## **Transfer/Early Withdrawal**

If a child leaves the program before the completion of the catechetical year or at the end of the catechetical year, please advise the Director/Coordinator.

**Special Religious Education** is a ministry that responds to the religious and spiritual needs of persons with a physical, mental, or emotional disability which impairs their functioning in a regular classroom. Because of that disability the child may require individualized instruction in a small group, in a one-on-one setting, or, if assistance is available, may be mainstreamed into the regular catechetical program. In consultation with the parent, the Director will appropriately place each child in a program that will address his/her special needs and encourage further spiritual growth. (ADNY)

- ★ Our Special Religious Education Program is a parent involved class setting led by volunteers that work in the education field under the guidance of an educator familiar with working with students with Special Needs. We request that a parent stay with the child during the class time. Our Program lasts approximately 30 minutes.
- ★ The children will receive sacramental preparation at the appropriate time. There will be a meeting to discuss arrangements as needed.

## ATTENDANCE

Your child's regular attendance at Religious Education classes is very important. These classes should take top priority over all other programs and activities. Repeated absences will necessitate a conference between the Director/Coordinator and the parents; excessive absences may result in a child having to repeat a grade level. Depending on the situation, attendance at make-up classes or additional homework may be assigned in order to catch up or move on to the next grade level. Always contact the Religious Education Office when your child will be absent from class.

- ★ **Children are required to attend all scheduled sessions**, which are held every week, unless otherwise noted. Consult your calendar. Lateness **will not** be tolerated and could result in dismissal from the program or retention in their current grade.
  - Our sessions begin promptly at 3:45 PM and end at 5:15 PM. Please make every effort to arrive by 3:40 PM. Unless noted on the doors to the school, your child is to report to their designated line up spot in the school yard.
  - Should inclement weather or lateness occur, a monitor will be present at the doors to take your child to their classroom. Parents should not enter the building unless they notify the office.
    - **Any child that arrives after 4:00 P.M. will be marked late.** Please contact the R.E.P. Office so we can let the Catechist know your child will be late.
- ★ **Grades 1 through 5 are allowed 5 absences. Grades 6 & 7 are allowed 3 absences.**
  - **A note must accompany your child upon return to the classroom after each absence.** If a child has more than the allowed absences for his/her grade level, they will not be permitted to attend their class without a doctor's note. If a doctor's note is not received for each absence after the maximum allowed, your child **MUST** attend Sacramental classes the following year to make up the classes missed in addition to attending regular classes.

## CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

1. If St. Charles Religious Education classes are cancelled for any reason, we will notify you via e-mail, and we will contact all public schools and they in turn will notify their students.
2. If you have any questions as to whether the Religious Education Program is closed, you can call the office at 718-979-6800 and the answering machine will have the appropriate message on it concerning any closing of the program.
3. There will also be notices of closing on every entrance door of the school.
4. When the Religious Education Program is closed, we ask that you read the lesson for that day and do the homework assignment for that day as well. Every student has a homework assignment sheet attached to their Religious Education book. The teacher will review that lesson with the class upon return.

## **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL**

- ★ **THERE IS TO BE ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBLE PARKING OR BLOCKING DRIVEWAYS AT ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL TIMES.**
- ★ Student Arrival & Dismissal (Monday)
  - **Grades 5D, 6A, 6B, 6C, and 7th Grade** will line up and be dismissed in the school yard on Peter Avenue.
  - **Arrival time** 3:40 PM (for class to begin at 3:45 PM)
  - **Dismissal time** 5:15 PM
- ★ Student Arrival & Dismissal (Wednesday)
  - **Grades 1A, 1B, 3rd Grade, 4th Grade, 6E** will line up and be dismissed from the school yard between the school building and the Church.
  - **Grades 1C, 1D, 2nd Grade, 5th Grade, 6D** will line up and be dismissed from the school yard on Peter Avenue.
  - **Arrival time** 3:40 PM (for class to begin at 3:45 PM)
  - **Dismissal time** (1st Grade) 5:05 PM  
(2nd & 3rd Grade) 5:10 PM  
(4th - 6th Grade) 5:15 PM
  - \*We ask for your patience while waiting for your child.
  - No child in grades 1-5 will be dismissed to a parent/guardian that is not present in the school yard.
  - Once the days get shorter and it is darker at dismissal, we will be dismissing one class at a time or we will bring the class to their line up spot. We ask for your cooperation as this involves the safety of all the children. A note will be posted on the door.
  - Should siblings be dismissed from both exits, we will allow the younger sibling to be sent to the older sibling(s) since their dismissal time is a few minutes earlier. All requests must be e-mailed to the office.
  - Please notify the office via e-mail or note if there will be someone other than a parent/guardian who will be picking up your child.
- ★ Please do your best to be on time to pick up your child. We understand that traffic or other circumstances occur. Please call the R.E.P. Office if you know you will be late. There will be someone waiting with your child.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

- ★ No child will be allowed to leave class early unless a parent notifies the office and advises us of the reason. A written note must also be sent to the Director/Coordinator via e-mail or note. The parent must come into the office to sign your child out. No child will be allowed to leave the building before a class ends unless accompanied by a parent.
- ★ No parent is allowed to go to the classroom to remove a child.
- ★ **ANY CHILD BEING TAKEN OUT FOR SPORTS PURPOSES WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE UP THE MISSED TIME AND THE MISSED WORK.**
- ★ Anyone leaving for a doctor/dentist appointment **MUST** bring in a note from the doctor/dentist. Please make every effort to not schedule an appointment on class days. Your cooperation is appreciated.

## **CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE**

Every child who participates in the Religious Education Program is expected to cooperate in the maintenance of the building where classes are held as well as its grounds. Disruptions, disrespect, defacing or damaging property will not be tolerated. The behavior expected from each child is a combination of common courtesy and safety considerations.

### **Dress Code**

In the interest of safety and maintaining order, the following guidelines for dress and conduct are to be followed:

- ★ No pajama bottoms (or tops) may be worn to class.
- ★ No shoes/sneakers with cleats or rollers (hidden or otherwise) may be worn in the building at any time.
- ★ No “flip-flops” may be worn to class.
- ★ Hats or caps may not be worn in the building.
  
- ★ Please make every effort to have your child use the bathroom before coming to class. We have a short amount of time with the children and having the children leave the room may lead to work being finished at home.

**Unacceptable Behavior** includes the following:

- ★ Intimidating fellow students/Bullying/Fighting
- ★ Disrespect shown to those in authority while on the grounds of St. Charles
- ★ Language unbecoming of a Catholic
- ★ Refusal to prepare assignments or to participate in class
- ★ Possession of dangerous objects, Possession or use of tobacco or a controlled substance
- ★ Damage to property
  - Willfully damaging or destroying property will not be tolerated. Vandalism must be paid for by the parent of the child involved. Accidental damage should be immediately reported to the Director.
- ★ Leaving the building/premises during the class without permission
- ★ Habitual tardiness & absenteeism
- ★ Cheating
- ★ Running/Splashing/Throwing snowballs/ Climbing on snow piles in the school yards
- ★ Gum chewing
- ★ Eating/drinking while classes are in session (If there is a medical reason please notify the office in writing.)

### **Behavioral warning**

From time to time some children find it difficult to follow the rules that are made to ensure the greatest convenience for the greatest number.

- ★ Any child causing a disruption in class will be sent to the office and this will serve as a warning that the behavior is not to continue.
- ★ Should the behavior continue, it will result in a call or note to the child’s parent by the Director/Coordinator describing the situation.
- ★ As a last resort, the child will not be re-admitted to class unless accompanied by a parent. The parent will have to attend class with the child until his/her behavior improves.
- ★ In some cases, home study may be the only alternative to a difficult situation.

## **CELL PHONE/ELECTRONICS POLICY**

We understand the importance of cell phones in today's world. If your child has a cell phone, it is to be silenced or turned off prior to entering the building for class. Should you need to reach your child, please call the R.E.P. Office and we relay the message or have you speak to them.

- ★ Should the Catechist see or hear a phone, a warning will be given to put the phone in their bag. If this should occur again, the student will bring the phone to the R.E.P. Office and pick it up at dismissal. The third time this happens, a parent will have to pick up the phone from the R.E.P. Office.

## **SACRAMENTS**

Christian Initiation is celebrated in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. Through these visible actions a young person is incorporated into the Church and shares its mission in the world. Full initiation into the Church occurs in stages.

Sacramental catechesis has traditionally been of two kinds: preparation for the initial celebration of the sacraments and continued enrichment following their first reception. Requirements for the reception of First Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are determined by Canon Law according to the following:

- ★ Age of reason (to be able to distinguish right from wrong);
- ★ Proper knowledge of sacraments;
- ★ Emotional and spiritual preparation;
- ★ Approval by parent, catechist, Director and Pastor.

The policy of St. Charles Parish is that a young (baptized) person who plans to receive the sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion must have completed one full year of the catechetical program (not counting kindergarten) and be currently enrolled in his/her second year. (ADNY)

- ★ Mandatory parent meetings are held in October for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation.
  - Our First Reconciliation/Holy Communion meeting is for parents only. Please make every effort to attend.
  - Our Confirmation Investiture and Meeting are mandatory for a parent and the student.
  - We ask that you make every effort to attend these meetings. If you are unable to attend, please inform the R.E.P. Office as soon as possible to reschedule.
  - Please do not ask another parent to pick up the folder that is distributed at the meeting. You will receive one at our individual meeting.
- ★ All paper work distributed at the mandatory meetings are to be returned the the Religious Education Office on or before the stated deadlines. Please review all paperwork to make sure that everything is filled out completely and signed. Should you lose your folder, please inform the R.E.P. office immediately so that we can provide you with an additional copy.
- ★ Sacramental fees are to be paid in a timely manner.

## **FINAL REMINDERS**

1. The following are required supplies:
    - ★ two-pocket folder,
    - ★ textbook (if a textbook is lost there will be a \$20 charge for a new one)
    - ★ 2 pens or pencils
    - ★ Crayons (preferably the 24 count since it includes the color pink)
    - ★ Drawstring bag/ School bag for R.E.P. materials
    - ★ notebook (Grades 3-7 if requested by the Catechist)
    - ★ Bible (Grades 6 & 7) \*The R.E.P. provides all 6th graders with a Bible
- \*\*\*Each child is expected to come to class prepared to work.**

2. Parents are not permitted in the school building unless given permission.

The information provided in this handbook has been developed so as to aid you, your child, and the religious Education Program of St. Charles.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Revised: September 2016