

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART CHURCH

Guidelines for Catechists

Religious Education Program

School Office in the Rectory

120 Kings Highway / Tappan, New York 10983

(845) 365-2141 Fax: (845) 359-1410

Emails

redirector@olshtappan.com or

reschool@olshtappan.com or

readmin@olshtappan.com

Hours: 9 am to 2 pm Monday – Friday

Pastor: Reverend Francis Conka, C.O.

Religious Education Team:

Ms. Anna Vero, Director

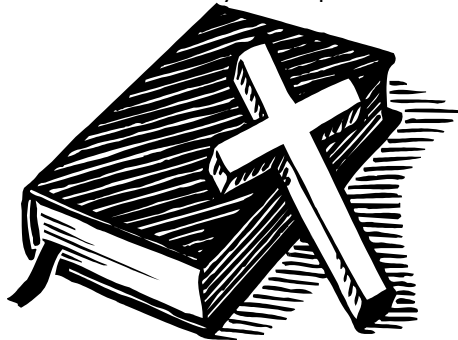
Mrs. Sarah Hunt, Mrs. Anne Swann, Assistant Directors

Parish Mass Schedule

Saturday 5 pm / Sunday 8 am, 10:30 am and 12 pm

Confessions

Saturday 4:30 pm



Dear Catechists

Thank you for your special commitment to God, to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church and to the children that are entrusted to our care. We look forward to an exciting and rewarding year ahead.

Every effort for your presence at each class is so very much appreciated. The children need a consistent presentation of the faith as only you, their catechist, can give them. If it is necessary for you to be absent, please let us know as soon as possible. If you are able to choose someone special whom you can entrust your children and who could fill in for you, please let us know.

It is most helpful and appreciated if every catechist would please:

- √ Arrive 10 minutes prior to the start of class.
- √ Check your mailboxes prior to class.
- √ Inform us if your email/phone has changed.
- √ Follow the calendar of OLSH Religious Education.
- √ Attend faculty meetings.

Please refer to these guidelines throughout the year.

It is wisdom, patience, faith, humility and respect that each catechist brings to the children that allows them to grow in ways that will develop their Christian spirituality into adulthood.

Once again, thank you for your precious work and may God bless you and your family.

Ms. Anna Vero, Director
Mrs. Sarah Hunt, Assistant Director
Mrs. Anne Swann, Assistant Director



REQUIREMENTS BY ARCHDIOCESE

Each Catechist, Catechist Assistant and staff person must:

1. complete an application for volunteers;
2. read & acknowledge the Sexual Misconduct Policy Statement;
3. complete paperwork for a background check
4. and receive "Safer Spaces" training

CLASSROOM POLICY

Children are never to be left alone in a classroom or with someone under the age of 18. Please send two students to the office if assistance is needed.

CATECHIST FORMATION CLASSES

The NY Archdiocese offers many formation classes for certification throughout Rockland County. Online classes are also available. For more info:

<http://www.nyfaithformation.org/catechist-formation>

CLASSROOM TIPS

1. Open each class with a prayer
2. Consider special seating arrangements to keep order and promote a spirit of welcoming.
3. Establish rules which are necessary for good behavior. Rules are to be understood, reasonable and enforceable.
4. Respond to a difficult question with "What do you think?" and invite others to participate.

5. As much as you can, simplify your lesson.
6. A weekly lesson plan may include: opening prayer, review from last week, focus on what you will teach this week, vocabulary words, reinforcements (drawing, acting out, craft, music, discussion, quiz), homework expectations, closing prayer.

ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS

Each classroom will have a simple first aid kit. Medication cannot be administered. If any such situations arise please contact the Director or the Pastor immediately. Children are to be sent to the office in case of accident or illness. Please have them accompanied to the office by a catechist assistant or another child.



FOOD IN THE CLASSROOM

Having parties and sharing food is a welcome addition to your class activities. However we must ensure that ALL children are safe. You will be told if you have any children with food allergies. If you do, you must strictly adhere to the following:

- No child is allowed to bring food into your classroom. If they do, ask them to eat it in the office.
- If you do have a party you must coordinate with the mom of the child with the allergy to ensure that there is safe food.

REPORT CARDS

Progress Reports will be given to parents twice during the school year; once in January and once in May..

HOMEWORK AND TESTING

Homework and testing will ensure the knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith and practices. Homework assignments are to be completed as part of the requirements for passing to the next grade. Also, please be open and aware that some children may need special accommodations for testing. Some students do better when tested verbally as opposed to written evaluations.



ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

As Catholics it is our responsibility to teach our children about God. For this reason children attend religious education classes. Consistent attendance ensures that children get the most from their religious education. It is important that God and the child's religious education take their rightful place among all the priorities in the child's life.

In order for children to receive an adequate level of religious education they should not be absent from

class and/or Monthly Teaching Mass more than **4 times during any school year**. Excessive absences will be dealt with on an individual basis and may require completion of additional assignments in order to progress to the next grade level.

Attendance will be recorded both for scheduled classes and for attendance at any Mass during the Monthly Teaching Mass Weekend.

ATTENDANCE SHEETS are legal documents and it is important that they are accurate. Please make sure they are legible. In ink, please mark "**A**" for absent and mark "•" for present and ensure there is a mark next to every child's name.

The Religious Education Office will record the attendance for all the Monthly Teaching Masses. We offer several **ADDITIONAL classes** per year. All children are welcome to attend, however we will request that those with excessive absences attend.



VISITORS

No unauthorized persons are allowed in the school while classes are in session. Parents and other visitors must go directly to the Religious Education Office.

FIELD TRIPS

If a field trip is planned, the Parish-Sponsored Trip Form must be completed by the parent of every student who will participate. Phone calls will not be accepted in lieu of written permission forms.

FIRE DRILLS and LOCK DOWN DRILLS

For everyone's safety fire drills and lock down drills are scheduled periodically. Ringing of the bell means evacuation. This is the same bell we use for dismissal, however if it is rung any time prior to the end of class, everyone must evacuate immediately. For evacuations, catechists are asked to follow the instructions in each class room and to bring along the attendance sheet so that attendance can be taken outside the building to ensure all students are accounted for. A loud horn is the signal for lock-down. During lockdown, the classroom door is to be locked and all children are to huddle in the room opposite the windows.

CLASSROOM MATERIALS

Gospel Weekly worksheets will be available for students at the start of each class along with an accompanying guide book. In addition numerous materials are available for your use in the school office. These include many other books, textbooks, videos, and craft supplies. Videos should be signed in and out.



DISMISSAL FROM BUILDING

No unauthorized persons are allowed in the school while classes are taking place. All outside doors will be locked after classes begin.

- Any child arriving late must ring the bell and a staff person will open the door and escort the child to class.

- Children will not be dismissed before the bell rings. If any child needs to be dismissed early, a written request must be given to the Director at the beginning of class. Then the parent who picks up the child must ring the bell, come to the office and sign the child out early.
- Children will be dismissed into the care of the parent. If a parent needs to entrust another individual with their child, the Director must be notified in writing beforehand. The Director should be informed in writing by the custodial parent of the rights of the non-custodial parent if this pertains to the child's participation in our school.



RESPONSIBILITIES

Religious education classes take place in an atmosphere of learning and Christian respect. All students are expected to be respectful to the catechist, fellow students and parish property. Normal discipline problems will be handled by the catechist in the classroom and if necessary by the Director/Assistant Director in the office. Repetition of such behavior will require a conference with the parents and possible removal from the program. All students are expected to:

- attend class on their scheduled day/time
- be on time and prepared for class
- miss no more than 4 classes and/or Monthly Teaching Masses
- dress appropriately & NOT use any electronics in class
- wait in the hall before class until the catechist arrives