

***PARENT AND STUDENT
HANDBOOK***

Grades 1-6

***POLICIES
and
PROCEDURES***



***OUR LADY
OF THE MAGNIFICAT***

***RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
PROGRAM***

September 2021

Parents always have been and will remain the primary religious educators for their children. In our Religious Education program we will assist parents in the task of laying a solid foundation, encourage spiritual growth, help the students develop a lasting relationship with God and assist in developing students into disciples of Jesus.

To the best of our ability, we will provide a safe environment and establish a Christian atmosphere where we will try to treat each other the way Jesus would want. We will provide a program involving educational, faith-filled classes, outreach to the needy and opportunities for prayer and the reception of the sacraments. We encourage your family to participate in weekend Mass and holy day masses as well as our parish life. Please go over these policies with your child/ren.

Catechists, the title the Church uses for its Religious Education teachers, are the backbone and heart of our program. The Catechists freely *volunteer* their talents, time and service fulfilling the obligations they assume generously and sincerely. Please treat them with respect. Please pray for them and support them in their efforts with our students.

Communication is most important in this team effort, and therefore we will encourage an open dialogue among parents, professionals and volunteer staff and students. We will be available for questions, problem solving and encouragement; and it is our hope that this will be reciprocal. Contact us at 973.838.0567 or the Director of Religious Education dre@olmchurch.org. Communications for the entire group will be done via email, as we are “green”. Please ensure we have the correct email address.

1. Sunday Liturgy

The Catholic Church has always taught that weekend Mass is not only a privilege but also an *obligation* for Catholics. The reason for this is the Liturgy (Mass) is the center and source of holiness for Catholics. Mass is what identifies us as Catholics. The Mass nourishes us spiritually with the Eucharist and the Word of God. What you teach your child about God will last

throughout their lives. Attendance at weekly Liturgy is essential to our faith as Catholic Christians and Religious Education classes is *not* a substitute for Mass. You would not have your child just show up for a sporting game without being properly prepared. We ask that you have that same mindset where you and your child participate in mass regularly and attend Rel. Ed. classes as well.

2. Catholic Prayers

Students will learn the meaning of prayer during class time, but they really learn to pray at home. Parents are asked to help their children memorize the basic prayers; and pray with their children daily. It is best to model the behavior you would like your child to attain. Pray often and in front of and with your child.

3. Attendance

The expectation for children attending Religious Education classes is that they attend **all** classes. Attendance records will be kept on a weekly basis. We understand that on an occasion your child will miss a class. Contact the office to get the make-up work. Hand in make-up work to the catechist during next class time. Please help your child with the lesson that he/she missed. **Participation in a sport is *not* a valid excuse.** Parents' appreciation of the importance of regular and punctual attendance contributes greatly toward the child's attitude toward their faith journey.

4. Arrival and Departure

Students should be dropped off at the front entrance of the school at least five minutes before classes begin. The students will remain in the lobby of the school until all of the catechists have arrived and are in their classrooms. It is expected that students will be picked up promptly at dismissal time. A parent/adult or older sibling needs to enter the building at pick up time, in order for your child to be released. If you have a sleeping baby in the car, please pull up to the door and let staff member know and your child will be released.

5. Early Pick-up

Early pick-up is discouraged as this is disruptive to the class. However if it is necessary, a note must be sent to the catechist requesting the early dismissal. This note must be signed by the parent, shall include the time of leaving, and the name of the person who will pick up the student. ***The person picking up the student reports to the Religious Education Office.*** *They do not go to the classroom.* Once the person arrives, the student will be retrieved from the classroom. Children are not permitted to meet you in the parking lot. **Students are not permitted to leave the building for early dismissal unless accompanied by an adult.** We regret any inconvenience that this procedure may cause. It is for the safety of all concerned. If you have a medical issue or a sleeping baby in the car, call the office once you arrive and we will escort your child out.

6. Behavior

It is hoped that the atmosphere at Our Lady of the Magnificat would be a Christian one. **Respect** for the catechist, for each other and for one's self is paramount in a religious setting and in life. It is our intent to foster that respect.

Conduct unbecoming a Christian student and/or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. If a disciplinary problem arises in the classroom, the student will be given two warnings. If the student continues to be disruptive, the student will be sent to the Religious Education office. The Director will work with the student to review their conduct and take responsibility for their actions. Most likely, if an apology is appropriate, the Director will work with the student to write one to the teacher and/or the class. If necessary, the Director, the catechist and student will meet to discuss the problem and agree to a solution for the student to return to class. This will be the third strike, so to speak, and parents will be notified.

When returning to the classroom, the student will start with a clean slate. If the student continues to be disruptive, the student will be removed from class. The parent will be called to pick up the student from the Religious Education office. The Director and the parent will discuss at length the issue and solutions. A decision will be made regarding the continued participation of the student in the classroom.

6A. The use of cell phones, Ipods and hand-held devices is not permitted in the classrooms. All electronic devices will be collected at the beginning of class, placed in a basket in the front of the classroom and returned at the end of class.

7. Inclement Weather Emergency

A decision will be made by 8:30 A.M. for the cancellation of classes on Sunday morning. If the Kinnelon schools are closed or have early dismissal because of snow or poor weather conditions on Mondays, the Religious Education classes are automatically cancelled.

Cancellations will be posted on our website, olmchurch.org and on our Facebook pages.

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read these policies. Together let us continue to improve our program and make it the best for our students. Your suggestions and involvement are always welcome. Please don't hesitate to call the Religious Education Office at (973) 838-0567 or email at reled@olmchurch.org or dre@olmchurch.org .