

St. Clement Pope & Martyr Religious Education Program

We plant the seeds and God, in His love, graces our life with the gift of faith. It is important that we keep in mind that the Church, in celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism, instructs the parents that “You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so, you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of faith. It will be your duty to bring her/him up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor” [from the Rite of Baptism. It is presumed you and your children will attend weekend Mass. For Catholics, Mass is not an option. 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 weekly classes, retreats, service opportunities, special liturgies and opportunities for prayer and the reception of the sacraments. We will also encourage participation in traditional seasonal activities such as Family Advent Day, Stations of the Cross, Holy Week Liturgies, and youth activities. Our curriculum will include Scripture-based material and, therefore, we expect that the children participate in the celebration of Sunday Mass each week. Communication is most important in this team effort; therefore, we encourage an open dialogue among parents, professional and volunteer staff and students. If you have any questions or there is something that you wish to discuss, please let us know.

ADMISSION POLICY

Our Religious Education Program welcomes all registered members of St. Clement Pope & Martyr Parish. The program runs from Grade 1 through Grade 10 and provides a solid foundation for spiritual growth in the Catholic faith. In addition, we offer continuing fellowship for our young people through our Youth Ministry.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

At St. Clement, sacramental preparation takes place over a two-year cycle. Therefore, the reception of First Eucharist and Reconciliation (generally received in 2nd grade) would require that the child have attended Religious Education classes for 1st and 2nd grades. Parents of Students in Grades 1 & 2 are required to attend scheduled parent meetings. Likewise, the reception of Confirmation (generally received in 8th grade) would require that the student have attended Religious Education classes for 7th and 8th grades. Since religious formation is a progression of faith, all course work between grades 3 and 6 must also be completed prior to registering for the First Year of Confirmation Preparation (7th grade). Also, it should be noted that Home Study is not an option for our sacramental preparation years.

NEW, TRANSFERRING AND CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

Any student new to the program must submit a copy of their Baptismal Certificate at registration time (unless baptized here). For transferring students, we also require copies of First Eucharist and Reconciliation Certificates (if applicable) along with an official record of grade levels completed from the previous parish.

SPECIAL NEEDS

We at St. Clement Parish are dedicated to address the needs of each of our students and their families. Special-needs students will be mainstreamed when possible. However, please understand that since we are a private, volunteer-based program, there are no medical personnel on site. This being the case, we cannot assume responsibility to administer medication or medical treatment to any student. Should

a medical emergency arise, our first line of response is to call 911 and then reach out to the parent or designated guardian. Arrangements will be made to the best of our ability for any child who cannot be placed in a classroom situation.

ATTENDANCE

In order to maintain the continuity of classes, good attendance is expected on all levels of the Religious Education classes. Attendance records are maintained on a weekly basis. When your child IS absent for any reason- work that will be covered in class MUST be completed at home. Grades 1 through 8 have a calendar for the chapter to be covered each week. When we need to close due to weather parents should assist the child in completing that chapter at home.

No more than 5 absences grades 1-6, 3 absences grades 7-9 are permitted- without a note from a doctor indicating that your child could not be in attendance due to illness.

TARDINESS

Any student who arrives more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of class time is considered late, and will receive a half day absence.

Parents must accompany their child to the locked door, wait for the door to be opened, and then sign their child in with the office coordinator.

EMERGENCY CLASS CANCELLATION

In the event of inclement weather, cancellations of Religious Education classes will be announced on our

Parish's website at www.stclement-rtwp.org and on our Parish Facebook page

If the Rockaway School District announces an early dismissal, Monday classes will be cancelled.

Discipline

1. Use of the internet, computer, and video materials must fall strictly within the guidelines of the parish or Religious Education program & Diocesan Policy.
2. There will be zero tolerance for disrespect, violent or abusive behavior of any type. Bullying in particular will not be tolerated.
3. There will be zero tolerance of harassment of any kind, including, but not limited to, verbal harassment, gender bias, threats, sexual harassment, or foul language.
4. There will be zero tolerance for substance abuse of any kind, including, but not limited to, drugs, inhalants, alcohol, and tobacco.

Sunday Mass Attendance

Families in the Religious Education Program are asked to make a sincere effort to attend weekly Mass. This is the BEST way to grow in your faith, and it helps you and your children to fully experience the beauty of our faith that is offered through the Liturgy and through reception of the Eucharist. Please attend with your family.

Schedule of Masses: Saturday evening at 5:00pm. Sunday AM 8:30am 10:30am

The Safe dismissal of your children is of great concern to us. Parents are responsible for advising who picks up the child(ren) on a regular basis, and for notifying us in writing if there is any party that is specifically NOT ALLOWED to pick up your child(ren). If someone other than the regular pick-up person will be picking up your child on any given day, you must send a written note to your child's teacher on that day. If an emergency arises at the last minute, and you were unable to send a note, the person that you contact to pick up your child will need to report to the Religious Education Office and Sign Out your child. Please call the office in advance to let us know to anticipate this arrangement.

SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES

Diocesan guidelines for each of the sacraments are available in the Religious Education office. Baptismal certificates must be on file in our office prior to the reception of any sacrament and should be included with any new registrations. A parent meeting prior to the beginning of the preparation of any sacrament is required to show their commitment and to answer any questions concerning the theology or celebration of the sacrament. It is assumed that the children will also be attending Mass on a regular basis especially during this time of sacramental preparation.

First Reconciliation and First Communion:

1. Weekly classes take place in a classroom setting.
2. Children must have attended Religious Education classes for two consecutive years.
3. A copy of the baptismal certificate must be provided unless baptized at St. Clement Pope & Martyr Parish.
4. Materials are covered in the classroom and reinforced at home to ensure that all students are adequately prepared.
5. Students must attend Jesus Day, a Saturday retreat in the spring and attend scheduled rehearsals for First Communion Day.

Any Questions or concerns about the Religious Education Program for Grades K-8 may be directed to Susan Drew. You may call 973-366-7547 or you may e-mail:

dreparish@stclement-rtwp.org

Confirmation

1. Class and Meeting Attendance:

As mandated by the Diocese of Paterson, our Confirmation Program takes place over a two-year cycle. Instruction takes place over two semesters. No more than 3 absences (excused or unexcused) are permitted. More than this may result in a postponement of the Sacrament. Please contact the Religious Education Office when you are absent (973) 366-7547.

Please note that if the behavior of a first or second year Confirmation student is not respectful, the student will be asked to leave the session and it will result in an automatic absence.

2. Mass Attendance: For first and second year Confirmation students, Mass is not an option. Attendance at Mass is tracked through the students' by signing the Mass Binder.

3. Retreats:

Two retreats are required for the reception of Confirmation at St. Clement Parish. Please see the calendar for the grade specific dates.

4. Service

As a follower of Jesus. Stewardship, which is what we are called to, is a very important part of who we are as Christians. It is this reason that our criteria for readiness to receive the sacrament of Confirmation include a service component. If, in Confirmation, we are asking our young people to commit to being followers of Jesus, then they also need to commit to service. Our purpose and our responsibility is to make sure that our candidates realize that the sacrament of Confirmation incorporates them more firmly in Christ, strengthens their bond with the church, helps them to bear witness to the Christian faith in words and deeds and associates them more closely with Jesus' mission of service. We want them to realize that this is the beginning of a lifetime lived in the generosity of a gracious God - not a graduation or completion in any way.

Confirmation, with the gifts the Holy Spirit brings, will ask students to become more active participants in today's living church through love and service. It is yet another step of affirming their commitment to their faith and the continuation of a life committed to Christian service.

5. Parent Meetings:

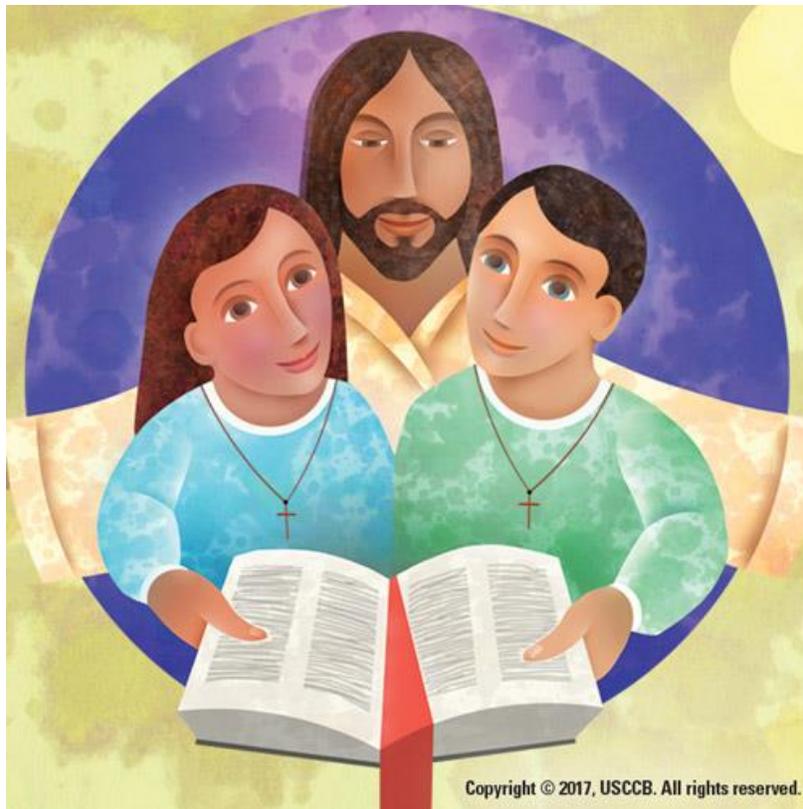
At least one parent is required to attend the parent meeting (with their candidate) at the start of the program year in September. In addition, at least one parent is required to attend any scheduled Faith Sharing Sessions that may be scheduled during the year.

As the primary teachers of the faith to your children, we ask the high school parents to participate in their child's faith journey by being available to them should questions arise about what they have learned. As a committed Catholic Christian yourself, we hope your assistance with the preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation will provide opportunities for faith exploration and service between you and your young adult. It is a given that you will take your child to Mass each week.

RIGHT TO AMEND

If for any reason we feel these guidelines need to be amended, we will do so in writing promptly to all parents/guardians. Fr. Rick, our Pastor, is available for any questions.

St. Clement Pope & Martyr Parish Religious Education Program Handbook



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