Sacred Heart Religious Education

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*Please see web site for current office hours.
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About Our Program

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide each child with rich faith formation experiences in an environment that reflects the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and God’s love for each person, and to support our families in their desire to raise their children in the Catholic faith.

Religious Education Staff and Contact Information

Staff:
Pastor – Father John Czahur
Coordinator – Mrs. Barbara Kane
Administrative Assistant – Mrs. Lisa Helm

Address:
Sacred Heart Church
260 High Street
Mount Holly, NJ 08060
Attn: Religious Education Office
Phone – 609-267-6319

Fax - *We do not have a direct fax number, but if you need to fax, you can send to the main parish fax line at 609-267-9293 – please include a cover letter marked “Attention: RE Office” or the staff member you are sending to.
General Email – lhelm@sacredheartre.org – Please use this email for all general questions and questions regarding registration.
(To contact Mrs. Kane directly via email – barbkane@sacredheartre.org )
Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/SacredHeartReligiousEducationProgram

General Overview

Our parish offers Religious Education to all children of the parish from 1st through 8th grades.

To register a child for our program, you must be a parishioner and you must provide a copy of the baptismal certificate at registration if your child was baptized outside of Sacred Heart. We have rolling registration throughout the early spring and summer.

Tuition is $100 per child for the 2021-2022 Religious Education year for grades 1st and 3rd through 7th, $110 for 2nd grade, and $120 for 8th grade. The additional fees for 2nd and 8th grades are to partially offset expenses related to sacramental preparation/celebration (retreats, Confirmation gown rentals, etc.).

Volunteers are essential to our program. Our catechists (teachers), their aides, our hall monitors, office help etc. are all parents, grandparents, family members and parishioners who dedicate their time and talent to our children to ensure they are learning about and growing in the faith. Support is provided to our catechists through classes and
Diocesan workshops and other events. Volunteers must have a background check/fingerprinting done through the Diocese of Trenton and attend a VIRTUS workshop, which addresses the topic of child protection.

Volunteers receive reduced rates in their child/ren’s tuition. Please see Appendix A in this manual for more information about volunteering and reduced tuition.

**Programs and Schedule of Classes (Fall and Summer)**

Our parish currently offers three different types of programs, a Fall (weekly for virtual/biweekly for in person) Program, a Summer (intensive) Program, and a Family (home study) Program.

*Fall Program (hybrid – both in person and virtual classes)*

- Runs from October through May (2021-2022)
- Classes meet on Tuesdays
- Scheduling is as follows:
  - 1st, 2nd, 7th, and 8th grades: in person every other Tuesday, 5:30-6:45
  - 3rd through 6th grades: virtual every Tuesday for 15 minutes:
    - 5:50-6:05pm – 3rd and 6th grades
    - 6:10-6:25pm – 4th and 5th grades

*Important to note: Volunteers receive first consideration with regard to schedule requests.*

*Summer Program (July 19-July 30, 8:30-11am)*

- Runs for two weeks in the summer, typically the last week of July and the first week of August, or the last two weeks of July, from 8 am – 11 am daily. **Please note that the scheduling of the summer sessions depends on several factors, many of which are not in our control.** The exact dates for next year will be communicated to families at the beginning of the summer session.
- Meets once a month on scheduled Mondays from November through April for 2021-2022.
- Encompasses 1st through 8th grades.

*Important to note: The summer program is a nontraditional Religious Education model. Due to the condensed nature of the scheduling, the following requirements must be met:

*All children in the summer program must be on grade level, i.e. they cannot have missed any previous years of Religious Education.*

*The family must be committed to daily attendance during the summer and monthly attendance during the school year.*

*These criteria are simply required for placement and continuation in the program without exception in order to ensure the integrity of the program. Any family unable to meet the above criteria must move to the Fall Program so we may offer placement to families on the waiting list who are able to do so.*
**Family Program – home study**

Typically, home study is reserved *only* for special needs (i.e. learning, medical, developmental), however due to the pandemic, we have added the Family Program, which is a guided home study. Under normal circumstances we cannot offer elective home study for scheduling conflicts with extracurricular activities. However, in certain cases and on a limited basis, we can offer one year of home study during non-sacramental years to families whose children have had good attendance and not missed any previous years of Religious Education. All requests for home study must be made to the Coordinator of RE and are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**December Classes**

For December, we send home Advent Family Lessons to be done at home in lieu of traditional classes for children in both the Fall, Summer and Family Programs. The lesson reflection pages are due back the first classes in January for all students. **Lessons not handed in at the first January class will be equivalent to two absences for Fall Program, and one monthly absence for the Summer Program.**

**Sacraments**

**First Reconciliation** celebrates God’s loving forgiveness. The experience of forgiveness is at the heart of the Gospel message. Jesus came to show us the Father who is loving and forgiving. This is the God whom we wish our children to meet in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. **First Reconciliation is celebrated during the month of January or February on Monday evenings. Exact dates are communicated to families during the fall.**

**First Communion** is an opportunity to introduce the children of our parish into a fuller participation in God’s family of which they are members through Baptism. The faith community of Sacred Heart welcomes these children to the Table of the Lord, as they receive for the first time the Body and Blood of Jesus. First Communion celebrations take place during the Easter Season, i.e., during Saturdays following Easter. These dates are communicated to parents well in advance for planning purposes; typically, we are able to let you know your child’s assigned date and time at our First Reconciliation/First Communion parent meeting in the fall.

Families also have the option of having their child receive First Communion at a regular Sunday Mass. Families who would like to choose this option should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible. Any special issues related to First Communion should be communicated to the Coordinator as soon as possible. These may include but are not limited to a family member in ministry who wishes to serve during the Mass (priest, deacon, or lay minister), seating accommodations for guests with special needs, etc.

Usually, our parish children are in the second grade when they celebrate these sacraments for the first time. Family meetings are scheduled to help families fully prepare their children to celebrate these sacraments. *If your child is 3rd grade or older and has not received First Reconciliation/First Communion yet, you must contact the Coordinator so that a plan for sacramental preparation appropriate for your child can be created.*

**Food Allergies:** Low-gluten hosts are available. With regard to such issues as peanut allergies, there is always the possibility of cross contamination, especially with regard to the cup. Families should discuss any such issues with the Coordinator in advance.
Confirmation is the celebration of God’s Spirit, during which our candidates affirm their Baptismal promises. This sacrament is usually celebrated during the spring of 8th grade (this date is scheduled for us by the diocesan office). Confirmation ceremonies are typically on a Thursday with ceremonies at 4 pm and 6 pm; these dates and times are assigned to us by the Diocese and are communicated as soon as possible to families. A Parent/Candidate meeting is scheduled early in the year to begin the immediate preparation.

*All sacraments are preceded by two years of faith formation (i.e. Religious Education classes) in preparation for the reception of any particular sacrament. Children prepare for First Reconciliation and First Communion during 1st and 2nd grades, and make both sacraments in the second half of the 2nd grade year. Children prepare for Confirmation during 7th and 8th grades, and are Confirmed at the end of 8th grade. Any issues regarding sacraments should be brought to the Coordinator’s attention at registration.

Registration and Re-Registration Procedures

New students

Parents of children in 1st grade and/or parents of children in other grades who are new to the program should call or email the office regarding registration.

*Please inform us if you need to register a child before you fill out and submit the registration form (see ‘Forms’ below for more information).

Re-Registration

Re-registration information is communicated toward the end of the RE year. Please note that all tuition issues must be resolved prior to re-registration.

For 2021-2022, Re-Registration consists of the following:

- Fall and Summer Programs - Re-Registration form for each child, either electronic (online) or hard copy. Summer Program families were sent the registration link, and Fall Program families can access the online registration link or download a copy of the form at https://parishofsacredheart.org/fall-program. Forms are also available in the front vestibule of the church below the Religious Education bulletin board. Summer Program families must also sign and return a re-commitment form.

Catechists and Volunteers

The Religious Education program here, as in the vast majority of parishes, is supported by many generous volunteers. Our catechists (classroom teachers), their aides, as well as our hall monitors and office help are all volunteers.

As per the United States Bishop’s charter Protecting God’s Children, all volunteers participate in criminal background checks and VIRTUS training.
**Tuition and Fees**

Tuition is currently $100 per child for children in grades 1st and 3rd through 7th. Tuition is $110 per child for 2nd grade and $120 per child for 8th grade. The higher tuition for sacramental years helps to partially offset expenses related to sacramental preparation/celebration (i.e. retreats, Confirmation gown rentals, etc.). We ask that tuition payments are made by the first day of class.

Replacement of a lost textbook is $20, and replacement of a lost Bible is $12 (6th graders receive bibles which they use throughout the rest of their Religious Education).

Tuition supports our purchase of textbooks and Bibles for the children, supplies for the classrooms and for parent meetings as well as sacrament-related purchases, supplies for sacramental year retreats, general maintenance of the facilities we use, and more. As such, payment of tuition is necessary in order for our program to run smoothly and to provide the children and catechists with what they need in the classroom.

If you are unable to remit payment by the first day of class for any reason, please contact the office. **No child will be denied registration due to inability to pay.** Please let us know if this is an issue for your family so that we can work together on a solution.

*Any tuition issues (i.e., tuition is not paid and the parent has not contacted the office or responded to reminders) must be resolved before re-registration.*

**Textbooks and Other Resources**

We currently use the “Alive in Christ” series of texts published by Our Sunday Visitor and the RCL Benzinger “Family Life” series as part of the Diocesan safe environment program. “Alive in Christ,” “Family Life,” and “Chosen” bear the Imprimatur (this means that the material has been judged to be free of doctrinal or moral error with regard to Church teaching). The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) reviews textbooks for suitability in catechetical/parochial school settings and has found the “Alive in Christ” and “Family Life” series to be in conformity with its standards.

Each child receives a Bible in 6th grade and is expected to bring the Bible to classes through 8th grade.

Any other materials used in the classroom must be approved in advance by the Coordinator.

**Curriculum**

Our program adheres to the guidelines set by the Diocese of Trenton Department of Catechesis and Evangelization. Our textbooks cover all aspects of this curriculum, and each catechist is given a plan with regard to ensuring that all necessary chapters are taught.

**Statement Regarding Child Abuse**

New Jersey state law requires that any staff member having reason to suspect that a child is the subject of child abuse must immediately report the suspicion to DYFS. This law applies to all catechetical staff personnel.
Policies and Procedures

**Arrival and Dismissal**

**Fall Program (In Person):**

Please note that this policy is in effect for the safety of each child in our program, as well as the well-being of everyone who shares our campus during class time. If there is a circumstance which does not allow you to follow these procedures, please contact our office and we will be happy to work with you for a solution to the issue.

At this time, Covid protocols require that parents remain outside the building, so arrival and dismissal will be a bit different this year than from previous years. Please read below for details.

**Arrival:** All children in grades 1st and 2nd must be walked by an adult to the catechist waiting between the gym and the school for their first two classes (October 5th and 19th)**, and then in November, we will switch to the car line drop off. The 7th and 8th children will be dropped off via the car line starting on October 12, their first day of class.

For the car line:
- Parents will stay in their car and pull up along the front entrance of the gym to drop off their child
- Do not park in spaces – pull alongside the curb so as to let your child out of the car from the right side of the car
- Once your child is safely on the sidewalk, pull away slowly and carefully
- **DO NOT** leave your child unless there is a staff member outside to greet the students.

*The extended day program of Sacred Heart School operates until 6 pm during the school year; please be aware that children may be playing in the coned off section of the parking lot during our arrival. For the safety of all of our parish and school children and everyone sharing our campus during this time, we ask that you drive safely and slowly when bringing your child to class.*

**Dismissal:** Due to Covid, students may not be picked up at the classroom door by an adult as done in previous years. Children will be dismissed starting at 6:45pm as parents pull up to the car line. If parents need/would like to designate any other adults to pick up their children, written notification must be sent to the Office in advance.

This policy reflects similar standard policies in other local programs and is a necessary safety component of a large program where many children and adults are present and coming to and from our building. Your cooperation with this policy is appreciated and expected.

**Inclement Weather** – Please note that, in situations where the temperature or precipitation presents a problem with regard to waiting outside before classes start, we advise that you wait in the car with your child/children until the catechists and staff are ready.

**If another adult aside from a parent is picking up a child, the Religious Education Office must be notified in advance, and a written note must be provided and shared with the office as well as the catechist.**
**Attendance**

*The following applies to our Fall Program, as absences are not permitted in the Summer Program.*

Absences:

Children cannot have more than three unexcused absences during the year. If a child has excessive absences, the parent will be contacted. Please note that we will review attendance records at the end of April, and in cases of excessive absence at that point we will discuss with a parent whether or not the child is prepared to move to the next grade level.

In the case of an absence, parents/guardians should do the following:

- Contact Mrs. Helm in the Office of Religious Education at 609-267-6319 or helm@sacredheartre.org. We will make sure to note the absence and share the information with the catechist.
- Preparation for the next class/make-up work – Our teaching schedule will be linked here: [https://parishofsacredheart.org/fall-and-family-programs-2020-2021](https://parishofsacredheart.org/fall-and-family-programs-2020-2021) and is also posted in the Religious Ed. Office Google Classroom under “Classwork”. The teaching schedule will indicate which chapters were covered by date. Review the missed chapter with your child and after reviewing the chapter, have your child complete the chapter review in the text and hand it in the following class. This must be completed by the next class. Parents should also ask the catechist if there is anything additional to make up. *Completing make-up work does not constitute an excused absence; it is however a necessary means of ensuring each child is prepared for the next class.*

Any absence must be reported to the office as soon as possible. At the next class, the child may receive a sheet from the catechist with information/instructions regarding any missed work etc.

If there are extenuating circumstances which are making regular attendance difficult, please contact the Coordinator.

**Early Dismissal**

Early dismissals absolutely must be reported in advance for safety and security purposes. Please contact the office as much in advance as possible if your child needs an early dismissal. Parents must sign their child out at the door when there is an early dismissal and must be prepared to present identification.

Early dismissals should only be requested when absolutely necessary, as they interrupt the classroom environment. Only two early dismissals are permitted throughout the year, and except for emergency situations, must be documented with regard to the reason for the request.
**General Safety & Security**

*Driving/Parking Lot*

- The speed limit on Bartram Avenue (perpendicular to High Street) and Clifton Avenue (perpendicular to Bartram Avenue) is 25 miles per hour. Please make sure you are driving carefully and within the speed limit.
- The parking lot of our parish is very busy throughout the day and evening. Prudent driving is essential to the safety of our children and to the safety of our parishioners who are on the parish grounds as well. Please be sure to drive slowly and carefully at arrival and dismissal.

*School Building*

- For safety reasons, the doors of the building will be locked during each session. If you need to enter, please use the door between the school and the gym where we have a hall monitor stationed.
- Please note that we cannot allow people inside the building to use the restrooms prior to or during class times.

**A note about our policies and procedures:**
All policies and procedures, especially those regarding arrival/dismissal and the school building, were thoughtfully put into place to ensure the safety and well-being of our children. Cooperation with these policies and procedures is absolutely mandatory.

**Cancellation of Classes**

Occasionally we must cancel classes due to unforeseen circumstances such as inclement weather, etc. In this case, you will receive an email, and we will post it on the main page of the parish web site as well as under the ‘Religious Education’ tab, and on our Facebook page.

**Behavior**

All students are expected to share in the faith learning experience of the parish program. If a child’s behavior disrupts the learning process for him/herself or others, or makes the running of the classroom unduly difficult for the catechist/aide, the steps below will be followed to ensure that group participation may continue:

1) At first incident the child will be reminded of expected behavior and the consequences of misbehavior.
2) After the second incident, the child will be sent to the Director.
3) If inappropriate behavior continues, the child’s parent/guardian will be contacted. The child will be allowed the opportunity to rejoin his/her group if an understanding can be reached as to how all involved may best continue to learn and grow in their faith.
4) If the child’s behavior continues to disrupt the learning environment, an individualized program will be arranged or the child will be dismissed from the program.

*We understand that some behavioral issues are related to a child’s special needs. Our knowing in advance what works best for your child enables our staff and catechists to facilitate an optimal classroom environment and experience for him/her and the other children in the classroom. As such, we invite our parents of children with special needs to advise us on their child/children’s unique way of learning, perceiving, interacting etc. so that we may be able to accomplish this together.*
**Serious Behavioral Issues**

In a case where there is an incident or behavioral issue which creates serious concern, the following steps will be taken:

- The parent is called immediately and asked to come to the school.
- The Coordinator meets with the parent to explain the issue.
- The issue is addressed by the parents at home/within the family.
- The parent and the Coordinator have a follow-up discussion to discuss the child returning to the classroom.
- The decision of whether or not it is possible for a child to return to the classroom is made at the discretion of the Coordinator in consideration of the nature of the issue and its resolution, the overall classroom environment, and the ability of the program within available resources to accommodate any resulting issues or concerns. Home study may be offered as an alternative, in which case the Coordinator will work with the family to design a program which will meet the child’s needs.

All decisions are made with the well-being of the child and his/her classmates in mind, and with the compassion and love we are called to in our faith.

**Health Concerns and Special Needs**

At registration, health and special needs concerns as well as any family concerns, such as custody issues, should be brought to the attention of the Coordinator. If a child receives a diagnosis after registration, please inform the Coordinator as soon as possible. We do have volunteers in our program who have experience working with children with special needs and, when we are aware, we are able to find the optimal class placement for each child. Due to the fact that many children have food allergies, we do not allow food in the classroom under regular circumstances. The only exceptions are in the Summer Program when children may bring in a small snack/drink due to the length of the class.

**Safety and Health Protocols during Covid**

For Fall Program In Person Classes:

- Masks: all students, volunteers, and staff must wear a mask.
- Hands must be sanitized any time coming into the classroom
  - Sanitizer is provided in every class
  - If a child needs a specific sanitizer due to allergies, please make sure they bring it with them to each class
- Social distancing of 3 feet is recommended and all desks are laid out accordingly, and movement within classrooms is to be minimized
- Only 1 student to the bathroom at any time
  - Please have your child use the bathroom before attending class to minimize the need for movement in and out of class
- No sharing supplies, books, or worksheets
  - All students will have their own pencil box or pouch labeled with their name and will be kept in our office for students to use when they attend classes
• Classrooms will be wiped down and disinfected before and after each class
• An isolation room has been designated for any children who get sick while in class
  ♦ Parents must be able to pick up their child at any moment should a student present any Covid compatible symptoms (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell)
• Students will be dismissed from their classroom to parents waiting outside or in the car line
• We will follow CDC guidelines on quarantine times due to infection or exposure.

Health and Safety Contingency Plans

1. If a student or teacher tests positive for Covid-19, he/she must quarantine at home for the CDC recommended length of time.

2. Family Member/Household member of Student or Faculty Member tests positive for Covid-19: Student or Faculty Member will quarantine at home for the CDC recommended length of time.

3. If a student is showing symptoms, he/she will be quarantined in the isolation room until a parent arrives to pick them up. The following will be considered as symptoms:

• A temperature of 100.4 and higher and/or vomiting will be an automatic send home.
• Coughing, sneezing, diarrhea and stomach issues can also be symptoms of Covid-19 but will not require students to get sent home unless symptoms are extreme and causing a disruption.
• If students have a fever and another symptom, the student will need to get Covid-19 test
• If a student is sent home with fever, they must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

For everyone’s safety, please:

• If your child is not feeling well, please keep them home. Students who are sick with a fever (temperature above 100.4), vomiting, or diarrhea should NOT attend in person classes.
• Do not send your child to class with any temperature altering medications such as Tylenol.
• Be honest and disclose to the Religious Education Office any exposure to Covid-19 or positive test within the family. This information will be kept confidential.
• Families will only be informed if there is a confirmed case of a student or staff member, and we will respect the privacy of all families.
Expectations

Parents

Parents are the primary religious educators of their children (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1653). The home is where a child first experiences the Catholic faith, and you are their first catechist. It is extremely important for children to experience the love of God in their homes. The Religious Education (RE) Program aims to work in partnership with parents to assist them in living their vocation as educators of their children.

Mass Attendance with Your Child/ren. The parent is the child’s first teacher and role model in the faith. The Religious Education program represents the Church’s partnership with parents to raise children in the Catholic faith. It is essential that families attend Mass each week and on holy days of obligation so that the children not only receive the most important part of their faith formation experience, but also because Mass attendance gives the child a context and understanding for what they learn in the classroom. Our weekend Mass and Confession schedule at Sacred Heart is as follows:

Saturday: 4:30 pm (Confessions after the Saturday 8:30am Mass)
Sunday: 7:30 am, 9:30 am, 11:30 am

Please remember that it is never too late to come back to church if you haven’t been in a long time – you are welcomed with open arms at Sacred Heart!

Adhering to our calendar – parents are expected to stay on top of the Religious Education calendar. This is especially important for the summer program, which meets only once a month during the school year. Please mark all pertinent dates on your calendar at the beginning of the year.

- Virtual classes – parents should make sure that:
  - children read the chapter PRIOR to class
  - children complete the chapter reviews for each chapter

Communication of health and/or special needs and circumstances to the RE Office. Being aware of your child’s health or special needs allows us to ensure that the classroom experience is optimal for all. If your child receives a diagnosis after the year has begun (i.e., after you have already filled out Religious Education paperwork), please be sure to call us and let us know so we can make sure your child is getting whatever he/she needs in the classroom.

Attendance. We expect that parents registering their child/children for classes have made Religious Education a priority and will ensure their child’s regular attendance at classes, as well as making sure any missed lessons are covered at home.

Payment of tuition in a timely manner or contacting the office if payment of tuition is a difficulty at that time. Please note that if this is the case, we encourage you to get in touch. There is always a solution to tuition issues and it is important to us that every parishioner who wants RE for his or her child is able to have it.

Compliance with policies and procedures of the program, as delineated in this manual and in any communication from the RE office. All of our policies and procedures are created with the following in mind: the well-being and safety of the children, the provision of a quality, sound Religious Education experience for each child, the policies and procedures set forth by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization of the Diocese of Trenton and the parish, and consideration for those who share our parish facilities and consideration for our neighbors in the surrounding area. Following these standards is mandatory for enrollment and participation in this program. We are blessed to have a large program at Sacred Heart; a program of this size can only run smoothly if every parent/guardian is committed to our policies and procedures.
**Children**

Behave in a Christian manner at all times, showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students.

Actively participate at Sunday Mass (according to age/development).

Attend classes on time (and have cameras on for virtual classes) and complete any assignments on time.

Actively participate, to the best of his/her ability, in group activities and discussions.

Adhere to our dress code (for in person and virtual classes):
- Clothing with words or graphics contrary to our Christian message are unacceptable
- Clothing exposing the midriff
- Children are to wear shoes, sneakers or sandals (no flip-flops or Heelys)
- **Students dressed inappropriately will be sent home or removed from the virtual class.**

Adhere to our behavior guidelines (page 10).

Prepared for classes with the textbook (and Bible for 6th grade and up – Bibles are distributed in 6th grade and we expect children to bring them to class through 8th grade).

Follow procedures for arrival and dismissal.

Adhere to our technology guidelines, i.e., no using cell phones, handheld devices of any kind etc. (If a child is found using an electronic device, the catechist will hold it until the end of class and return it to the parent at dismissal.)

Adhere to our policy regarding the absolute prohibition of the use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.

Adhere to our policy regarding the prohibition of any kind of weapon on the premises.

**Catechists**

Provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that children will be able to grow in their faith.

Prepare and teach the designated lessons.

Model our Catholic faith.

Communicate regularly with and involve parents in the faith development of their child/children.

**Staff**

Communicate to families all aspects of the program.

Facilitate a faith-filled, learning and community environment for families.

Assist families with any and all aspects of children’s faith formation.

Ensure that children are prepared for sacraments.

Monitor program in order to make any necessary changes/improvements.

Be available to families when requested or needed.

Support volunteers in their efforts to learn and enhance the gifts and talents they bring to our program.

Ensure that the pastor’s vision is reflected in all aspects of the program.
Appendix A

Volunteering for Sacred Heart Religious Education

There are many different ways you can volunteer in your child’s Religious Education Program. Below are descriptions of the various opportunities to serve in the program:

**Catechist:** A catechist is the main teacher in the classroom. Our catechists come from many different backgrounds, but they all have one wonderful and essential trait in common: the desire to hand on the faith to our children. Each catechist is given a catechist’s manual as a guide through the textbook, a teaching schedule, and is supported by the Director. Catechists also have opportunities to grow in faith as Catholics and as catechists through classes and workshops offered through the diocese and online and are expected to pursue catechist certification. (Information regarding the certification process is communicated via the Religious Education office.) A catechist teaches a one hour and 15 minute class each week in the classroom, which equates to approximately 33 hours between September and May 1, and also spends time outside the classroom preparing for class with regard to creating lesson plans, etc. Catechists must be Catholics in good standing, i.e., the same requirements as for a Confirmation sponsor or godparent.**

**Catechist Aide:** Catechist aides assist the catechist in all aspects of the classroom. Our hope is that each aide can also support the catechist as a substitute when necessary, offering the children continuity. Catechist aides are also welcome to pursue catechist classes as described above.**

**Hall Monitors:** Hall monitors are very important in our program, due to the number of children in our classrooms during each session. Each hall monitor is given an assigned station to ensure that an adult is present in all areas of the building, especially near the doors leading in and out of the building.

**Substitute Volunteers:** Substitute volunteers are placed on our substitute roster and are called in the event that a catechist, catechist aide or hall monitor is unavailable for their assigned session. Substitutes are most needed for catechists and are provided with lesson plans and any materials needed for the classroom.

**We also honor our volunteers with a special dinner in the Parish House at the end of the Religious Education year, and a gathering on Catechetical Sunday in September.**
For all volunteer positions

We ask that all volunteers arrive at least 15 minutes early, if possible, to their assigned session. For your convenience, your volunteer schedule will reflect your child's class schedule. (If you have children in multiple sessions, please let us know which you would prefer to volunteer for.) All volunteers receive tuition discounts based on the varying levels of commitment and responsibilities of their positions. Please see the next page for tuition discount information.

All volunteers in a parish who work with children must attend a VIRTUS workshop and be fingerprinted to be in compliance with diocesan standards. We are happy to answer any questions you might have regarding the positions detailed above. Please call us at 609-267-6319 for more information.

Volunteer Tuition Discounts

Catechist  All children attend tuition free.

Catechist Aide  $25 per child to cover textbook fee.

Hall Monitor  $50 per child.

Substitute Roster  $10 voucher for each child for the following RE year.
Volunteers who agree to be placed on the substitute roster must volunteer at least 5 times during the year in order to receive this benefit. Volunteers may be asked to substitute for any of the above positions.

*A very important note regarding tuition discounts*

To receive the above discounts, volunteers must commit to being here each week throughout the year. We understand, of course, that illness or unforeseen circumstances can necessitate occasional absences. However, the regular presence of all of our volunteers is absolutely necessary for the smooth running of our program, and for the safety and well-being of our children. Please be sure to take this, and the general responsibilities of the position, into careful consideration before volunteering. We are happy to answer any questions you have about any of these positions. Thank you!