



# *Sacred Heart Catholic Church*

## *Religious Education*

### **2021-2022 Information**

#### **Part I: Expectations / Definitions:**

1. Parents, as the **primary catechists**, should be providing daily instruction for their children, especially in prayer and morality but in all aspects of passing on the faith. Parent(s) will be considered the **family catechist(s)**. Family catechists provide formation within the home (the domestic church). If there are questions on how to proceed with this, please ask for recommendations from the Religious Education leadership team in the parish.
2. At a minimum, family catechesis should include prayer, Scripture, and Sunday Mass, as well as morality training (knowing right from wrong, knowing about sin, and going to Confession). In addition, we will have periodic sessions this year where we will ask the parents to accompany their child(ren) to class for family gatherings.
3. Students in Grades K-12 will also participate in weekly sessions, based on their age level.
4. The Religious Education (CCD, CYM, and SHOCK) leadership team will provide support as the secondary catechists. Those on the RE leadership team include the pastor, the DRE, parish catechists, the CYM adult leadership team, and the SHOCK adult leadership team.

**Parish catechists** are those volunteers who live the faith and agree to pray, prepare, and study so as to be effective witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The **CYM adult leadership team** and the **SHOCK adult leadership team** are volunteers who have agreed to accompany our teens, as witnesses who live the faith, grow in faith, and pass on the faith following from the baptismal call to be disciples of Christ.

#### **Part II: Passing on the Faith**

##### **A. Regular Grade Level Instruction for Grades 1-5:**

1. We will have “traditional” classroom-based instruction this Fall for the regular grade level catechesis.
2. Families should bring their child(ren) to the parish, bring their children to arrive on time for class, pick up their child in a timely manner after class, and remind their children of the behavior expectations.
3. Attendance / Session times / Progress deadlines:
  - a. Attendance is mandatory and will be monitored by signatures on the sign in/sign out sheets for each grade level.



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- b. No more than two (2) unexcused absences are allowed per semester, especially in the Pre-Communion and First Communion years.
- c. Classes will be on Wednesdays from 5:15 - 6:15 P.M. in the Sacred Heart School.
- d. Parents, guardians, or those designated by parents must sign in and sign out all children in Grades K-5 in the front hallway of Sacred Heart School.
- e. Regular family sessions will be offered and it is expected that families will join their child(ren) on those occasions to participate in the activities for that session.

**B. Youth Ministry:**

- 1. We have two levels of Youth Ministry – Grades 6-8 CYM and Grades 9-12 SHOCK.
  - a. CYM will meet regularly in-person at the parish. We hope to have other offsite events this year.
  - b. SHOCK will meet regularly in-person at the parish. We hope to have offsite events this year.
- 2. CYM and SHOCK will be in-person unless there are specific situations where a student is unable to be present. These will be on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with the DRE.
- 3. Attendance / Session times / Progress deadlines:
  - a. Attendance is mandatory and will be monitored by signatures on the sign in/sign out sheets for each grade level.
  - b. Those in the first and second year of their preparation for Confirmation must be regular participants in SHOCK, with a maximum of two (2) unexcused absences per semester.
  - c. CYM will gather on Wednesday evenings from 5:15-7:15 P.M. at the parish. SHOCK will gather on Sunday evenings from 5-7 P.M. at the parish. In general, CYM and SHOCK will gather every week.
  - d. Parents, guardians, or those designated by parents may drop off youth in Grades 6-8, but it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their child enters the building for CYM. The students must not be hanging around outside the buildings or in the parking lot, as there is no supervision outside. The students may sign themselves in, but must be signed out by an adult.
  - e. High school students may sign themselves in. They will be signed out by the adult leaders on departure. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that their child enters the building for SHOCK. The students must not be hanging around outside the buildings or in the parking lot, as there is no supervision outside.
  - f. Regular family sessions will be offered and it is expected that families will join their child(ren) on those occasions to participate in the activities for that session.
- 4. CYM and SHOCK are open to registered youth. They are welcome to bring a friend, as long as the friend is ready to fully participate and comply with the behavior guidelines.
- 5. Those interested in serving on the youth leadership team for SHOCK (After SHOCK), we hope to have youth leadership opportunities available this year.

**C. Sacrament Instruction:**

- 1. We will also have instruction for Sacrament preparation as follows:
  - a. First Reconciliation and First Communion – those in their second year of formal preparation for the sacrament.
  - b. Confirmation – those in their second year of formal preparation for the sacrament.
  - c. RCIA and RCIA Adapted for Children.



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- d. Adult First Communion.
  - e. Adult Confirmation.
  - f. Baptism.
  - g. Matrimony.
2. Instruction may be in-person in the church or in the Parish Center OR digital via Zoom or other platform.
3. **First Reconciliation:**
- a. Students must have completed the prerequisite “Pre-Communion” formation year.
  - b. Students must attend CCD weekly with a maximum of two (2) unexcused absences per semester.
  - c. Additional sacrament-specific classes will be for students and parents only. The books used are bilingual. It is expected that parents will review the lessons with their child at home.
  - d. Parents are expected to attend Mass regularly with their child so that their child develops an understanding of the Mass. Support is available from the pastor or the DRE to help the parents teach their children about the Mass.
  - e. There will be 4-6 First Reconciliation sessions from September through December. There will be only 1 unexcused absence allowed. (Make up work will be assigned for excused and unexcused absences.)
  - f. Class times are usually Sunday mornings from 10:15-11:15 A.M.
  - g. Students must demonstrate proficiency with their prayers, knowledge of sin, ability to examine one’s own conscience, and knowledge of the steps for confession.
  - h. First Reconciliation is usually planned for some time in January.
  - i. The DRE will provide ongoing communication and feedback to the parents and we expect the parents to communicate with the DRE as well.
4. **First Communion:**
- a. Students must have completed the prerequisite of celebrating First Reconciliation.
  - b. Students must attend CCD weekly with a maximum of two (2) unexcused absences per semester.
  - c. Additional sacrament-specific classes will be for students and parents only. The books used are bilingual. It is expected that parents will review the lessons with their child at home.
  - d. Parents are expected to attend Mass regularly with their child so that their child develops an understanding of the Mass. Support is available from the pastor or the DRE to help the parents teach their children about the Mass.
  - e. There will be 4-6 First Communion sessions from February through May. There will be only 1 unexcused absence allowed. (Make up work will be assigned for any absence.)
  - f. Class times are usually Sunday mornings from 10:15-11:15 A.M.
  - g. Students must demonstrate ability to celebrate Reconciliation, basic understanding of the Mass, basic understanding of Real Presence in the Eucharist, and knowledge of the steps to receive communion.
  - h. First Communion is usually planned for May.
  - i. The DRE will provide ongoing communication and feedback to the parents and we expect the parents to communicate with the DRE as well.

## 5. Confirmation:

- a. Students must have completed the prerequisite “Pre-Confirmation” formation year and any Summer Review sessions.
- b. Students must attend SHOCK youth group regularly with a maximum of two (2) unexcused absences per semester.
- c. Students must complete the fall retreat and spring service days.
- d. Students must attend the Confirmation-specific preparation.
- e. Classes will be for students. Parents and/or sponsors may be asked to join the candidates. Instruction will be via an online program with in-person/Zoom gatherings for discussion.
- f. Students are expected to attend Mass regularly.
- g. There will be 6-8 sessions beginning in January. No absences. (Make up work will be assigned for absences.)
- h. Class times are usually Sunday mornings from 10:15-11:15 A.M.
- i. Confirmation will be planned for some time in the spring, on a date selected by Bishop Vasquez’ office.
- j. The DRE will provide ongoing communication and feedback to the parents and we expect the parents to communicate with the DRE as well.

## 6. RCIA Adapted for Children.

- a. Students must have completed the previous grade level formation year.
- b. Students must attend grade level formation regularly with a maximum of two (2) unexcused absences per semester.
- c. Students must attend the RCIA Adapted for Children preparation with their parents, in addition to the regular grade level formation sessions. No absences. (Make up work will be assigned for absences.)
- d. Students are expected to attend Mass regularly.
- e. Class times vary each year, but consist of 4 hours per month.
- f. At the completion of RCIA Adapted for Children, the student will celebrate all three (3) Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) at either the Easter Vigil or a Mass of Initiation.
- g. Approximately two (2) weeks after the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation, the student will celebrate First Reconciliation.
- h. Also after the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation, it is expected that the student will continue in their appropriate grade level formation and that the student will take an active role in parish life, including regular Sunday Mass participation and possibly even serving in the Sunday liturgy.

## 7. RCIA

- a. Prospective students must be at least 18 years of age and unbaptized or baptized in another faith tradition.
- b. Prospective students must meet with the DRE or the pastor to determine if there are any impediments to celebration of sacraments.
- c. Students must attend RCIA classes regularly with a maximum of two (2) unexcused absences per semester. (Make up work will be assigned for absences.)
- d. Students are expected to attend Mass regularly.



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- e. Students are expected to participate in the Rite of Acceptance, Rite of Sending, Rite of Election, Scrutinies, and Sacrament celebrations. These Rites and celebrations will mostly occur during regular weekend Masses here at the parish. The exception is the Rite of Election which happens in another parish in the Diocese and information will be provided as soon as it is available from the Diocese.
- f. The goal is to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation at Easter Vigil, but students are “ready when they are ready.” Therefore, we plan for the Sacrament celebrations to be on Easter Vigil, but they can be postponed if necessary.
- g. Approximately two (2) weeks after the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation, the student will celebrate First Reconciliation (for the unbaptized). Those baptized in another faith tradition will make a Profession of Faith and celebrate their First Reconciliation prior to celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation.
- h. It is expected that the student will continue in the RCIA sessions for 6-8 weeks after celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation and that the student will take an active role in parish life, including regular Sunday Mass participation and possibly even serving in the Sunday liturgy.
- i. Class times are usually Sunday afternoons from 1:30 - 3:00 P.M.

### **8. Adult First Communion.**

- a. Prospective students must be at least 18 years old and baptized Catholic.
- b. Prospective students must meet with either the pastor of the DRE to determine if there are any impediments to the celebration of the Eucharist.
- c. Students must attend the First Communion preparation as necessary to gain an adequate understanding of the Eucharist as provided in the protocols from the Diocese. No absences. (Make up work will be assigned for absences.)
- d. Students are expected to attend Mass regularly.
- e. Students must make a good confession before receiving the Eucharist so as to be in a state of grace. Should they need instruction on the Sacrament of Reconciliation, that is to be provided as well.
- f. At the completion of preparation, the student will celebrate First Communion at a Mass designated by the pastor.
- g. Also after the completion of all Sacraments of Initiation, it is expected that the student will continue with adult formation opportunities and that the student will take an active role in parish life, including regular Sunday Mass participation and possibly even serving in the Sunday liturgy.

### **9. Adult Confirmation.**

- a. Prospective students must be at least 18 years old and baptized Catholic.
- b. Prospective students must meet with either the pastor of the DRE to determine if there are any impediments to the celebration of the Confirmation.
- c. Students must attend the Confirmation preparation of at least 12 hours of instruction to gain an adequate understanding of the Confirmation and discipleship as provided in the protocols from the Diocese. No absences. (Make up work will be assigned for absences.)
- d. Students are expected to attend Mass regularly.
- e. Students must make a good confession and regularly receive the Eucharist. Should they need instruction on the Sacrament of Reconciliation or the Sacrament of Holy Communion, that is to be provided as well.



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- f. At the completion of preparation, the student normally will celebrate Confirmation at a Mass presided over by the bishop or his designee. This can be the annual Confirmation Mass in the parish, one of the Diocesan Adult Confirmation Masses or other liturgy per Diocesan guidelines.
- g. Also after the completion of all Sacraments of Initiation, it is expected that the student will continue with adult formation opportunities and that the student will take an active role in parish life, including regular Sunday Mass participation and possibly even serving in the Sunday liturgy.

**10. Baptism.** *(to be added soon)*

**11. Matrimony.** *(to be added soon)*

### **Part III: Other Information**

#### **A. Suggestions for family catechists:**

1. Set aside at least one time each week where the family can focus together on prayer and study of the faith. This means no phones, no TV, no distractions. Also, if possible, the time should be consistent so that the children have a routine.
2. Focus on prayer, Scripture, and the weekly lesson(s) in the materials provided by the parish during this time.
3. At home study of the faith is in addition to the Sunday Mass and weekly classes at the parish.
4. Why should families study the faith together?
  - a. Parents are fulfilling their promises made in the Sacraments of Matrimony and Baptism to pass on the faith to their children.
  - b. Parents will grow in faith with their children.
  - c. Parents can supplement the group catechesis at the parish to reinforce that our faith is based not only on the individual's relationship with God, but also his/her relationship within the community which is the Body of Christ.
5. Remember that our goal is to be on mission for the Church, i.e. to grow in knowledge and love of the Catholic faith, so that we might evangelize our local community in living this faith in our daily lives. Therefore, we prepare and practice through the actions of Study, Pray, and Witness.



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