

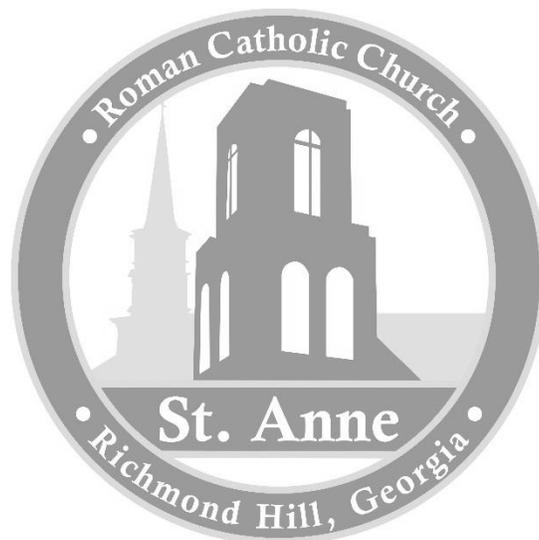


Love the children first.
then, teach them.

- Mother Theodore Guerin -

Catechists and Assistants Handbook

St. Anne Catholic Church Religious Education 2021-2022





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BACK TO SCHOOL IMPORTANT DATES:

- Weekends in August – CCD Registration after all Masses
 - If you can staff the registration table after Mass one weekend, please sign up at www.stannerh.org/catechists.
- August 14, 2021 – Southeast Catechist Conference:
 - Live talks and presentations will be made available on a variety of topics. Find more information, register, and access videos at go.virtualcatholicconference.com/SCC2021.
 - No in-person event will be held at St. Anne's. More information to come on accessing the conference virtually from home.
- August 21, 2021 – St. Anne Catechist Retreat
 - 9:00am – 2:00pm. Will include Mass, Confession, and Lunch
 - Childcare available but space is limited.
 - Meet in chapel beginning at 8:45am. Mass begins at 9:00am.
- Sunday, September 5, 2021 – Open House
 - Parents and students are invited to drop in during their CCD time to find their classroom, meet their teacher, and get more information about our CCD year.
 - Ideally, all catechists should attend. Otherwise, at least one catechist must be present in each class.
 - Provided: light refreshments, text books, calendars, family gift.
 - Optional: You may choose to write a welcome letter to parents to introduce yourself, share a bit about your plans for the year, and let parents know how to contact you. Email it to ccd@stannerh.org if you need copies made.
- Sunday, September 12, 2021 – First CCD Class
 - Please arrive early and wear your catechist t-shirt.
- Sunday, September 19, 2021 – Catechetical Sunday
 - Catechists will be recognized at the 10:30am Mass. Please plan to attend.



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THANK YOU!

Dear Catechists,

On behalf of the community of Saint Anne's, I offer my sincerest gratitude to our Catechists and assistants. I appreciate your willingness to serve the children of our parish. I recognize that your time is not only valuable, but that you are volunteers.

I have created this handbook for you in hopes that it will answer any questions you may have about our program. It should also help to maintain continuity between our classes and ensure that our children are benefitting from a uniform curriculum.

Our Church teaches us that parents are the primary teachers of the children. The additional support provided by you is meant to enhance and expand their knowledge and love of our faith.

Sincerely in Christ,

Renee Singleton

Coordinator of Religious Education, St. Anne Catholic Church

CURRICULUM

Lessons are scheduled, planned, and will be provided to Catechists at the annual Catechist Retreat. Please aim to maintain this schedule as closely as possible so to maintain continuity with both class times. These lessons provide all of the references to scripture, the catechism and faith tradition that you will need. Requests for any additional materials that you need to carry out the lesson plan should be submitted the Thursday before class. This includes requests for copies.

Please be sure that any additional resources you use (printouts, worksheets, reference books, etc.) are approved for catechetical use by the United States Council of Catholic Bishops and the Diocese of Savannah. If you are unsure whether or not they are approved, please let me know and I will find out for you.



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DROP OFF AND PICK UP

A parent is to walk children to their classrooms and sign them in each week. Please remind parents at drop off that they must come back in to sign their child out.

Some parents may express concern at having to sign their child in and out, especially older students. Remind them that this method is the safest option, and it allows weekly contact between the catechist and the parents.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Per the guidelines of the diocese, we are required to keep track of student attendance. Attendance records will be kept in your notebook which you should pick up from the CCD office in Holy Family Hall before each class and return at the end. Please be sure that you mark attendance each week.

SUBSTITUTES

As soon as you know that you will not be in class, please let me know of date you will be gone. There is a form on the table with the teacher sign-in sheets. If you know in advance, please coordinate with your assistant to teach the class if possible. If you have an unexpected absence because of sickness, work, etc. we will attempt to find a substitute. Please contact me as soon as possible. Sometimes we may have to combine classes for that day.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If classes are cancelled due to inclement weather, I will send out an email to catechists. I may need your help reaching out to the students in your class to make sure every family is contacted. Updates will also be provided on CCD web page (www.stannerh.org/CCD) and on the parish Facebook page.



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CHILD ABUSE

State law requires all staff and volunteers to report suspected child abuse, and we will follow diocesan policy on such matters. Every volunteer is required to take the VIRTUS: Protecting God's Children training and submit a background check.

MEDICATIONS

Catechists are never to give medicine or apply medication. If a child gets hurt please notify the CRE immediately.

PRIVACY

Out of respect for the students, catechists, and staff in our program, neither students, nor parents, nor catechists are to publicly post any videos, pictures or audio recordings of students, catechists, or staff at CCD events unless the parish office has express written permission on file. This includes, but is not limited to, online photo-sharing and posting videos to YouTube, Facebook, Twitter or other social media.

GENERAL CLASSROOM INFORMATION

If you want to take the children or teens out of the building, please let me know in advance. Two adults are required at all times. Teens assisting in elementary classes do not count as an adult.

PARTY GUIDELINES

Please be aware of any food restrictions your students may have prior to these parties. **CCD class parties are to always be nut-free. That means that snacks must be without nuts and not made in a facility that also processes nuts.** You are not expected to provide these for your class unless you specifically want to bring something. I can provide snacks if needed.

Parties should fall during the correct Liturgical Season (Christmas parties are held during the Christmas season- not during Advent.)



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CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Catechist to maintain order in your classroom. You have a right to expect appropriate behavior from the students. The first day of class is the time to express your expectations to your students. The following guidelines are given to assist you with discipline in your classroom.

If the behavior of one child is interfering with the learning of the class, the catechist should, as privately and discreetly as possible, remind the child of the classroom expectations. If the problem persists, please let me know. Sometimes, a child may just need a break and will be ready to rejoin class shortly. Other times, they may need more attention.

Catechists should be careful to create a space where children feel valued and welcome. CCD is a way for them to grow in faith, so seek opportunities where you can be the face of Mercy to a child who may not have experienced that before. That does not mean that children should have free reign of the class, but be mindful that CCD is not meant to be as “rigid” as school.

Establish classroom expectations with your class on the first day. Allow them to be a part of the process so that you are creating an agreement with them, rather than dictating rules.

“THINGS TO DO EACH WEEK”

- Prepare for class (at least one hour of preparation before class time)
- On Thursday, be sure to send your requests for specific materials
- Arrive at least 15 minutes early for class. Stop in the front room to sign-in and pick up your attendance notebook. Check your notebook for flyers to be sent home or new memos.
- Be in the classroom to greet the children and parents each week.
- Take attendance.
- Keep track of the time and dismiss on time
- Return notebooks and attendance sheets to front room.
- After each class, put all supplies away, wipe down chalkboards/white boards, and put tables and chairs in order.
- Clean up any trash.



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CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION

The protection of children and vulnerable adults is a top priority for St. Anne Catholic Church and the Diocese of Savannah. Listed here are the minimum requirements that must be met by any adult (age 18 or over) who works / volunteers in a Diocese of Savannah Church, School or Social Service Agency AND comes into contact with any youth (under age 18) during the course of their ministry.

- Attendance at the VIRTUS “Protecting God’s Children for Adults” Training and registration of the above training on the website www.virtusonline.org.
- A National Criminal Background check, a check of the Sex Offender’s Registry, and (preferred) a verification of the Social Security Number at least once every five years
- Read the Diocesan “Code of Conduct” and agree to its terms by signing the back page and turning it into your church or school
- Completing the “Safe Environment Refresher Training” on the VIRTUS website if it has been five years or more since attending the live class.

If you have not attended a “Protecting God’s Children” live class, please register for one at www.virtus.org and click FIRST TIME REGISTRANT on the left side.

Teen Volunteers: Must sign a “Code of Conduct for Minor Volunteers”

Every year, we are required to teach the VIRTUS program “Empowering God’s Children” to our CCD students. The course material is broken up into age groups and the material is appropriate to the age. Each year the material is expanded upon so children are exposed to new information. This year’s lesson plan is *Physical Boundaries: Safe and Unsafe Touching Rules*.

This lesson will be presented in all CCD classes on **Sunday, October 24**. More details, including specific lesson plans, will be provided.



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A Catechist's Prayer

*Father of all families,
You have called me to serve the family in truth and love as a
catechist.*

*May I be faithful to this call,
rooted in your Word,
and open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit.*

*May I use these gifts,
especially the gifts of faith, hope, and love,
to serve the family as a witness to you,
who are love and life and the source and destiny of all families.*

*Let your Spirit enlighten my mind and strengthen my heart
so that I can be a path of Christ's love to families,
especially those in need,
the homebound and aged,
the disabled and disheartened.*

*Through the intercession of Mary and Joseph,
I pray for the Church,
the Bride of Christ,
whose mission to build a civilization of love passes through the
family.
Amen.*