

***Holy Family Catholic Church
Religious Education Family Handbook***



9800 Baymeadows Road

Jacksonville, Florida 32256

Holy Family Catholic Church

Pastor: Father David Keegan

Parochial Vicar: Father Mason Wiggins

Mass Schedule:

Monday-Friday: 7:00 a.m. & 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Saturday Vigil: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., & 5:00 p.m.

Holy Days of Obligation: 7:00 p.m. vigil; 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., & 7:00 p.m.

Reconciliation:

Saturday: 2:00-3:00 p.m., Wednesday: 6:00 p.m.-6:45 p.m.

Office Address

Holy Family Catholic Church

9800 Baymeadows Road

Jacksonville, Florida 32256

Phone: 641-5838 Parish Fax: (904) 641-9704

Website: holyfamilyjax.com

Director of Religious Education: Maria Petrotta

Phone: 641-5838 ext. 254

Email: (mpetrotta@holyfamilyjax.com)

Time & Location of Classes:

Sessions for students in Pre-Kindergarten & Kindergarten are held in the Pre-K4 and Kindergarten classrooms in the school on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m.

Sessions for students in grades 1-8 are held on Wednesday evenings from 6:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the school.

(Please be on time...it is only 1 hour & 15 minutes a week.)

The Religious Education calendar will be handed out in the classrooms and is available on the website.

Philosophy

Catechetical programs are intended to supplement the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Parental involvement in catechetical programs is essential.

Mission Statement

The mission of The Holy Family Religious Education Programs, in cooperation with our families and parish community, is to provide formation, information and experiences about the faith and knowledge of God through teaching, witness and service.

WE BELIEVE THAT:

- τ The home is the most influential force in the life of the child.
- τ Religious Education class is the helpmate of the home where Christian attitudes and values are formed.
- τ Catechists are faith-filled people dedicated to spreading the message of God's love.

OUR AIM IS TO:

- τ Enrich and supplement the home and provide a learning community for growth in the faith.
- τ Provide an atmosphere for growth according to the unique and individual needs and gifts of each child.
- τ Cooperate with God to help each child experience the personal love of Jesus.

The goals of our program are:

- τ to teach the message of Jesus
- τ to build up the community of Catholic believers
- τ to develop authentic lives of prayer and worship
- τ to foster a spirit of service to others within the Christian community and beyond.

Holy Family Religious Education Program

Registration Policy

Each family needs to complete a registration form.

Registration is held from June until Second Wednesday in September.

No registrations will be accepted after the last Wednesday in September.

The fees are:

One Child	\$45	
Each additional child	\$35	
Sacramental Fee	\$40	(First Reconciliation and First Eucharist)
Sacramental Fee	\$35	(Confirmation)

Registration Fee will be \$50 per child if registered after the second Wednesday in September.

Two consecutive years of catechesis are required for the reception of the Sacraments in the Diocese of St. Augustine.

A copy of the baptismal certificate is required for each child and must be submitted with the registration. These will be kept on file in the religious education office.

Weekly Mass

- Religious Education class attendance does not take the place of Mass.
- In order to properly connect religious education, sacramental preparation, and prayer to the Liturgy, students need to attend Mass each weekend.

Holy Family Religious Education

Program Policies

Attendance:

We want every child in the Religious Education program to have a successful, positive, age appropriate experience, and to receive a well-rounded religious education. Please assist us by placing a high priority on this part of your child's life.

Each child is allowed 4 excused absences and 4 excused tardies for the year. Absence is considered excused if the parent provides a signed note. If absences continue, a meeting with the parents, student and DRE is required to determine commitment. If a child continues to miss, a meeting with parents and the pastor will be required and it is possible the child will need to repeat the grade.

Arrival & Departure

All children must be escorted to and from their classrooms. This requires parents to park in designated parking areas and walk their children inside. Parents are also required to pick up their children from the classrooms. For the safety of all families and children drop-offs at the door should be avoided.

Permanent Records

Permanent records will be kept for all students regarding family, Sacrament(s) received and attendance information. The Director of Religious Education should be informed about any change in family status or other pertinent information. Health and learning issues should also be noted.

Homework

All assigned homework is to be completed and returned the following week.

Textbooks

If a child misplaces his/her textbook, an additional fee of \$20 will be charged for a new one.

Cancellation of Classes

When the Duval County public schools are closed due to inclement weather, Religious Education classes will not be held.

Behavioral Policies

Christian behavior is expected of all students inside and around school and parish property. Students are expected to be on their best behavior at all times, both in and outside the building. As young Christians, they should show respect to all catechists, volunteers, and other students. Respect for all property and materials is expected. Students are required to follow the rules of the classroom set by the catechist. Appropriate dress promotes good behavior.

Discipline

Failure to comply with the expected respectful classroom behavior will:

- warrant a student to leave the classroom and/or speak with the Director of Religious Education
- result in contact being made with a parent
- require student to return to class with a parent

If misconduct continues the Religious Education Director reserves the right to suggest an alternate program of study. The study must be satisfactorily completed if the student is to advance to the next grade level.

Electronic Equipment/Cell Phones

Electronic devices and cell phones should be left at home. Any student using a device during class will be asked to hand it over to the catechist.

Supervision

Students should not arrive more than 10 minutes before class begins. They are not allowed into the classroom until their catechist arrives. There is no supervision before this time.

Emergency Procedures

Fire Safety & Disaster Preparations ~ Catechists are aware of evacuation plans in case of fire emergency. Fire procedures are explained to the students on the first day of classes. In case of natural disaster (hurricanes, tornadoes) catechists will be warned of approaching danger and emergency procedures will be followed. In case of emergency parent/guardians, will be notified based on information provided on registration forms.

Medication

The Religious Education Staff and Catechists do not distribute medication of any kind to students. If your child is ill or has a fever please do not bring him/her to class. Children who appear ill after arriving to class will be brought to the Religious Education Office to wait for a parent.

Child Abuse

Any Catechist or staff member who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse is to contact the Director of Religious Education who will notify the Pastor and local authorities.

Threats and Violence Policy (Diocese of St. Augustine)

It is the desire and expectation of every DRE, catechist, parent, and student that all will be safe in our Religious Education Program. The Catholic teaching of respect for the dignity of each person because he/she is made in the image and likeness of God provides the basis for who we are. It is important that this teaching permeates the Religious Education community.

However, there are times when some fail to measure up to this standard and we need to act accordingly. All threats of violence that are verified will be taken seriously.

A threat is an expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm regardless of whether the threat is conditional or future. Threatening behavior consisting of words or deeds that are intended to intimidate anyone in the Religious Education community is strictly forbidden.

Students: If a student makes a threat, the DRE at his/her discretion may suspend/expel the student from Religious Education Program. If suspended, the student may be required to receive psychological assessment and counseling, and, if required, the student may return only if he/she presents a written recommendation to that effect from the psychologist/psychiatrist and the DRE is willing to have the student return to the program. A reinstatement conference should take place with the parent and student. Parents should be notified in writing that a second offense will result in further disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion from the program.

Curriculum

Goal

Our main goal is to provide each child sequential, developmental progression in knowledge of the truths and teachings of the Catholic Church. We move each child along in his/her faith journey by teaching about the joy of Christ's way and the challenges of following Him. Through the Holy Spirit, we hope to inspire, guide, and strengthen the lives of those whom we touch.

Text used:

"Christ in Us": Grades 1-6, by Sadlier

"Finding God: Our Response to God's gifts": Grades 7-8, by Loyola Press.

"God Loves Us": Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten 4, by Loyola Press.

Sacraments

First Reconciliation –

- The sacrament of First Reconciliation for children is celebrated yearly.
- Children must have been baptized and be in their second consecutive year of Religious Education
 - i. Completed their instruction and preparation in Parish School, Religious Education Program or Homeschool
 - ii. Participate in Parish Sacramental retreats

First Holy Communion –

- The sacrament of First Holy Communion for children is celebrated in the spring each year.
- Children must have been baptized and be in the second grade or above, and in their second consecutive year of Religious Education.
 - i. Completed their instruction and preparation in Parish School, Religious Education or Homeschool
 - ii. Participate in Parish Sacramental retreats

Confirmation -

- The sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated with the Bishop every spring.
- Students must have been baptized
- Must be in the 8th grade or above and also be in their second consecutive year of Religious Education/Youth Ministry.
 - i. Completed their instruction and preparation in Parish School, Religious Education or Homeschool
 - ii. Participate in Parish Sacramental retreats

Candidates for Confirmation must complete 3 separate acts of service before receiving Confirmation. One act of service needs to be for family, one for the community, and one for church. After completing an act, the student must write a short essay explaining their service.

Older children seeking the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion will meet with the pastor and/or DRE and their parents to determine a plan for preparation.

Adult Catholics aged 18 and older, who have been catechized and received First Communion, are confirmed at one of two Adult Confirmations celebrated each year.

You can view the requirements for sacraments celebrated in the Diocese of St. Augustine at:

https://35617073-e927-4be5-959f-5fa943c9a69e.filesusr.com/ugd/3c63fd_960469a7c0844037be91f3e4f0683f57.pdf

**Diocese of Florida Statewide
Policy on
Homeschooling in the Sacramental Years**

The preparation for a sacrament is a very special time in the life of the Church. In the Bull of Indiction of the Great Jubilee Year 2000, Pope John Paul II stated that “Revelation also teaches that the Christian is not alone on the path of conversion. In Christ and through Christ, his life is linked by a mysterious bond to the lives of all other Christians in the supernatural union of the Mystical Body. This establishes among the faithful a marvelous exchange of spiritual gifts, in virtue of which the holiness of one benefits others...” Thus the time of sacramental catechesis provides the entire parish community with the opportunity to deepen their spirituality in the sacramental life of the Church while at the same time lead others to receive a sacrament for the first time. As such, sacramental catechesis [the immediate preparation for a sacrament] is an activity distinct from religious education.

The interaction between the parish community and those preparing for a sacrament gives credibility to the belief that catechesis is the “responsibility of the entire Christian community” [GDC, #220] and therefore “is not an action which can be realized in the community on a private basis or by purely personal initiative.” [GDC, 219.b] For this reason the Code of Canon Law requires the diocesan bishop and pastor to ensure that appropriate catechesis is provided to all those preparing to receive a sacrament.

Canon 777 – Attentive to the norms established by the diocesan bishop, a pastor is to take care in a special way:

1. that suitable catechesis is imparted for the celebration of the sacraments;
2. that through catechetical instruction imparted for an appropriate period of time children are prepared properly for the first reception of the sacraments of penance and the Most Holy Eucharist and for the sacrament of confirmation;
3. that having received first communion, these children are enriched more fully and deeply through catechetical formation;

4. that catechetical instruction is given also to those who are physically or mentally impeded, insofar as their conditions permit;
5. that the faith of youth and adults is strengthened, enlightened, and developed through various means and endeavors.

There are situations in which some families choose to “home school” their children/youth. In this setting they choose to provide secular and religious education in the home. These policies and guidelines provide direction for sacramental catechesis for those who home school their children/youth.

Policies and Guidelines

1. The proper context for the celebration of the sacraments is the parish community. “Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations belonging to the Church, which is the ‘sacrament of unity’” [CSL, #26].
 - Children/youth who are home schooled are to celebrate the sacraments in the parish and at the time determined by the pastor for all those in the parish-based program.
2. Sacramental catechesis “is an essentially ecclesial act” [GDC, #78] and therefore “not an action which can be realized in the community on a private basis or by purely personal initiative” [GDC, #213.b]. Sacramental catechesis, therefore, takes place in a parish- based program.
 - Those who home school their children are required to contact the pastor, or the one designated by him to be in charge of the parish sacramental program for approval, prior to beginning any sacramental preparation program.
 - Those who choose to home school their children are to participate fully in the parish-based program for sacramental catechesis.
 - Parents/guardians who home school are to register their children for sacramental catechesis according to the regulations established by the parish; parents/guardians who home school,

together with their children, are to participate in all dimensions of the parish program for sacramental catechesis: catechetical, ritual, service, spiritual [retreats, etc.] and any other requirements for sacramental preparation as determined by the parish.

- Parents/guardians who home school, together with their children, will use the catechetical text and supplementary catechetical resources established by the parish program.

3. Liturgical celebrations have an integral role in sacramental catechesis since “catechesis is intrinsically bound to every liturgical and sacramental action” [GDC, 30]. Thus, the liturgy “is therefore the privileged place for catechizing the People of God” [CCC, #1074]. Through the prayers, symbols, gestures, music and actions of the liturgical prayer, the faithful receive formation intimately connected to the catechesis which follows.

- Parents/guardians and their children/youth are to participate fully in all of the liturgical prayers scheduled in the parish-based program for sacramental preparation.

- As parishioners, families who home school are expected to participate weekly in the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist in the parish.

4. All parish-based programs for sacramental catechesis include formation of adults in the parish, especially those whose children/youth are preparing to receive a sacrament. The catechesis of children/youth and the catechesis of adults “should not be separate watertight compartments” [GDC, #72]. This structure promotes unity of vision within the parish and fosters harmony among the people of God.

- Parents/guardians and sponsors [where applicable] of home schoolers will participate fully in all adult catechetical formation programs related to sacramental preparation of children/youth in the parish-based program.

- Parents/guardians and sponsors [where applicable] are expected to participate in all other activities as required in

the program, i.e., interviews, etc.

5. Children not baptized as infants and who have attained the use of reason and are of catechetical age are to be prepared for the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist according to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults [RCIA, #252].
 - Parents/guardians who home school children who are not baptized and are of catechetical age and have attained the use of reason, are to enroll their children in the parish catechumenate program.
 - These children/youth are to receive baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist in that order in one single ceremony preferably at the Easter Vigil together with the older catechumens [RCIA, National Statutes, 18].
6. The diocesan bishop has the responsibility “to issue norms concerning catechetics” [CL, #775.1] and to ensure that all who exercise this ministry are in communion with him.
 - The policies, guidelines and directives developed by the diocese for sacramental catechesis are applicable to all those who home school their children/youth.

These policies and guidelines are meant to promote the evangelizing potential of sacramental catechesis in the life of the Church. We pray that our Catholic people will be set ablaze with a desire to live their sacramental life fully and share it freely with others. May their eagerness to live the sacramental life bring transformation to the whole world.

Approved by the Bishops of
Florida March 6, 2000

2021-2022 Parent Acknowledgement Form

Parent Responsibilities

- Be aware of the Religious Education class schedule
- Insure regular and prompt attendance at all Religious Ed classes & activities
- Contact the office (641-5838 ext. 254) if your child is going to be absent.
- Watch the weekly Sunday bulletin for messages & changes.
- Share prayer at home and attend Mass each week with your child. (An essential part of your child's religious education is weekly attendance at Sunday Mass.)
- As primary educators of your child/children you should encourage opportunities to learn and practice their faith at home and within the parish community.
- Respond to all communication sent to you.
- Electronic devices and cell phones should be left at home. Any student using a device during class will be asked to hand it over to the catechist.

I especially acknowledge for the safety of all children and families, there is no DROP-OFF/PICK-UP at the front doors of the school at any time before or after Religious Education classes and children must be escorted to and from to their classrooms.

Please return this form to the Religious Education office.

This is to acknowledge that I/We have received the Holy Family Handbook for Religious Education. We understand the contents of it and agree to cooperate with the parish policies set forth in this handbook.

Signature of parents/guardians

Date

Please have each religious education student in your family sign below:

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Student

Date