



Religious Education Handbook

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Mission Statement:

We, the family of St. Paul the Apostle Roman Catholic Church, the Body of Jesus Christ, are piously called to assertively provide opportunities for each person to use their time, talents, and treasure for the greater glory of God, and to live and grow in our faith in the presence of Jesus Christ.

We thereby bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to our community through joyful proclamation of God's Word, prayerful worship, reverent celebration of the sacraments, and catechesis for everyone about the Universal Church and its place in the world and our local community.

Philosophy of Education:

The ministry of Religious Education flows from the mandate of Jesus to go into the whole world and teach the Good News. In participation with parents, the primary teachers of children's faith, the Religious Education Program of Saint Paul's Parish is dedicated to teaching children to know, love, and serve our merciful and loving God.

Goal:

As promised in a child's baptismal vows, parents are the primary educators for a child's faith. In coordination with the parents, the goal of the Religious Education Program is to help instill a solid foundation in the children's Catholic Faith, build a personal relationship with the Holy Trinity – God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and fill their hearts with the love of God and neighbor so that they can spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to others through service and example. The Religious Education Program is also dedicated to cultivating a true belonging to our Parish community within the children and guiding them to become active participants in the life and mission of the Church.

Youth Protection Program:

St. Paul the Apostle Religious Education Programs are in full compliance with the Diocesan Youth Protection Program which includes obtaining appropriate clearance checks and taking the diocesan online training. The Diocesan Safe Environment

Program is taught in Grades 1, 5, and 9. Parent letters and lesson plans can be found on the Diocesan website. <http://www.hbgdiocese.org/safeyouth/safe-environment-program>

Mass Attendance:

Religious Education Class is not a substitute for Mass. Regular Mass attendance is vital to our Catholic Faith formation. Each week when we gather for the liturgy, we honor God and His sacrifice. When we participate in the Eucharist, we receive the Bread of Life. This special gift from God reunites us with Him and gives us the grace we need each week to go out into the world and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Please remember to include Mass in your weekend plans.

Class Attendance:

The Diocese of Harrisburg requires that all students enrolled in a parish catechetical program have a minimum of thirty (30) hours of class instructional time during the course of the program year. Therefore, attendance at all classes is important and is expected. However, illness, family emergencies, etc. are part of life, so when it is necessary for a student to be absent, please contact Anna Mattern at 867-1525 or through email: amattern@stpaulsinannville.org. **Any missed work must be made up and shown to Mrs. Mattern.**

******After 4 absences without contacting Mrs. Mattern and without providing proof of make – up work, the child will be asked to repeat the grade. If the child is in a sacramental preparation year, the sacrament will be delayed.**

******Excessive absence (more than 10 excused and/or unexcused) will require a meeting with Mrs. Mattern and Father Coyle.**

Arrival Time:

Upon arrival, students should go directly to their classroom and be ready to begin when the bell is rung for class. Excessive tardiness could constitute an absence.

Drop off:

Students should be dropped off at the Religious Education door (Circle Entrance).

Parking in the circle at any time is prohibited. If a child needs assistance into the building, the parking lot in front of the church or Long Street must be used.

Pick up:

It is recommended that parents come into the building to pick up their children. However, if you choose not to pick up your child, the parish cannot be responsible for children not escorted by an adult family member. **Parking in the circle at any time is prohibited.** The parking lot in front of the church or Long Street must be used.

Parent Responsibilities:

Parents are the primary religious educators of their children. Faith formation should be a priority at home. This can be done by taking time to discuss what was taught in class, having conversations about the Catholic Faith, and making time for prayer each day. It is also done through regular attendance to Mass on weekends and Holy Days of Obligation. Parents are to ensure that their children attend class regularly and on time. Parents are urged to explain to their children that the time they spend in religion classes is just as important to their development as the time they spend in their other classes at school. Parents also have the responsibility to deepen their own Religious Education. One way to do so is to participate in the parish Adult Education Programs or in the Parent group offered during Religious Education.

Student Responsibilities:

Students are expected to be respectful of their Catechist and other students in their class. They are also expected to be respectful of the church building and the furniture and equipment within it. Students are required to be prepared for class each week by

bringing their textbook, folder, and Bible. They are also expected to be active participants in class in order to gain the most out of the material being presented.

Cell phones and Electronics:

Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted to be used in class. Upon entering class, students will be asked to place any electronic devices in a bag labeled with their name. If a child has failed to follow procedure and is found using one of these devices in class, it will be taken from the student and the parent will have to come to the office.

Snacks:

Snacks may be offered from time to time. Any child with food allergies should notify Anna Mattern to ensure that safe snacks are served. If a student has a medical condition and must have food during class time, please notify the teacher.

Emergency Care of Students:

All students must have a Medical Release Form completed and signed as a part of their registration to keep on file in the Religious Education office. If a student would become seriously injured or ill during class, the Medical Release form authorizes Catechists and Mrs. Mattern to provide emergency care. Every attempt will be made to contact parents if there is an accident or illness. If a minor accident or injury occurs, basic first aid treatment will be administered.

Student Disciplinary Procedures:

Students who persist in disturbing the learning environment will be dealt with accordingly. As a general rule, the following actions will be taken to enforce discipline upon those students who insist on disrupting classes:

- At the first occurrence of a situation in which a student is disruptive to the point that he/she must be removed from the classroom, the child will be sent to the office to talk to Mrs. Mattern.

- At the second occurrence of the situation described above, the parents of the child will be contacted by Mrs. Mattern.
- At the third occurrence, the student will be dismissed from class and the parents of the student will be called to pick up the child. The student and parents must meet with Mrs. Mattern before being readmitted to class.

Cancellations:

When there is severely inclement weather, classes will be cancelled.

Announcements will be made in the following ways:

1. On the Remind app. Please sign up in order to receive any announcements.
2. An email will also be sent out notifying you of the cancellation.
3. Check the parish web site www.saintpaulsinannville.org

Class Times Offered:

Sunday Classes:

Grades 1-5 are held from 9:00 a.m. – 10:20 a.m. weekly.

Grades 6-8 are held from 5:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. every other week.

Parent groups are offered during Religious Education class times

Family Model will meet one Sunday per month from 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Registration Fees:

Fees: Children in a sacramental preparation year will have an increase in price to help pay for retreats.

In-person Grade Level Classes (\$45 per child)

Family Model with Monthly Group Meetings (\$60 per family)

Homeschool Online Program (\$30 per child)

Course of Study:

In person grade level classes:

Grades 1, 3, 4, and 5 follow the *Christ our Life* series from Loyola Press. The program uses a holistic approach to learning. Each grade level builds upon previous ones, following a pattern of continuous growth in depth and scope. Scripture and doctrine are integrated so that the students can more easily relate Catholic beliefs, sacred Tradition, and most importantly, their faith to their lives.

Grade 2 will be utilizing the Blessed program from Dynamic Catholic for preparation for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

Grade 6 will be utilizing the Spirit of Truth series for their study of the Old Testament.

Grades 7 & 8 use Confirmation preparation materials, alternating between the Chosen Program and the Decision Point Program. Both programs focus on preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation through DVD presentations, class discussion, and other activities.

Family Program:

Families have the option of participating in the Family of Faith program from Sophia Institute. This program provides lessons for the whole family. Those who participate in this program will meet in the church once a month for group learning sessions and activities.

Homeschool Program:

Those who wish to homeschool their child(ren) can do so through participation in the Faith and Life series by Ignatius Press. This is an online program for children to complete at their own pace with parent supervision. This course material must be completed by the end of the Religious Education year.

Catholic Doctrine to be Mastered:

The Diocesan Curriculum for Religious Education is followed. A description of it, can be found on the Diocesan Website. Directions to reach it follow:

www.hbgdiocese.org

- Education
- Religious Education – then scroll down
- Curricula

Sacramental Preparation

Baptismal Preparation:

Sessions are held to prepare parents and sponsors for the baptism of their child.

Registration is required. Call Fr. Coyle at 717-867-1525.

First Reconciliation and First Communion:

Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion begins in first grade and continues in second grade. The following are required in order to receive the sacrament:

- Regular and satisfactory participation in the religion classes in first and second grade at St. Paul the Apostle Parish, St. Joan of Arc, or through a homeschool program.
- Regular attendance at Mass.
- Attendance at the Reconciliation and First Communion Retreats.
- If a child did not receive the sacrament of Baptism at St. Paul's he/she will need to have a newly sealed Baptismal Certificate from the Parish in which he/she was baptized.



Confirmation:

The Diocese of Harrisburg requires a two year preparation which begins with Seventh Grade. It is assumed that the child has been attending classes from Kindergarten through 6th grade. The 7th and 8th grade requirements are:

- Regular and satisfactory participation in the religion classes at either St. Paul the Apostle Parish, St. Joan of Arc, or through a homeschool program.
- Regular attendance at Mass and the Sacraments.
- Attendance at special Confirmation Sessions and Rites.
- Attendance at the Confirmation Retreat
- Completion of the Service requirements and Saint report
- Interview



Adult Education

With enough interest – parent groups will be available during Religious Education class time.

Presentations, mini courses and Bible Study groups are offered during the year. Check the weekly bulletin for the topics, dates and information.

Interested in becoming Catholic? Join RCIA

For adults who wish to learn about the Catholic Church. Classes are held on Tuesday evenings with Father Coyle and Anna Mattern from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Classes will begin in September. For information, call Anna Mattern at 717-867-1525.

If at any time you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Anna Mattern.

Phone: 717-867-1525

Email: amattern@stpaulsinannville.org