

Dear Parents,

Religious Education this year looks very different than in past years due to the COVID-19 health crisis.

This year you, the parents, will need to take a more active role in your child's faith formation as we begin the year remotely using the My Catholic Faith Delivered platform.

Students will still follow a curriculum guide (on the back of this page) which assigns one or two chapters to a given class date. Normally, that chapter(s) would be covered by the catechist on that Sunday. While your child is being taught at home, they can complete the weekly assignment anytime that best fits your schedule during the week it is assigned. They should NOT work ahead as tempting as it is.

The diocese requires us to provide 30 hours of instruction during the course of the year. In order to account for **ATTENDANCE** as we begin classes, students must log in to the program during the week assigned and spend at least 30 minutes reading the chapter and doing the assessments. Some students may take longer to complete the work. Some may not need 30 minutes. Review is a good thing, so if you finish in 15 minutes plan to go back and review the material. NOTE: The week of September 13th will not be counted against any student in terms of attendance or completing assignments as the RE office did not have the books or curriculum guide available until September 18th.

Students must take the Pre-Assessment, read the chapter, and take the Post-Assessment. The Post-Assessment can be retaken if a passing score is not achieved (70%). There are games included to help them review the important concepts and vocabulary. These are recommended but optional. Students can read the chapter out of the textbook instead of online if they prefer. The program also will read the chapter aloud to younger students if they struggle with reading.

Activity book pages are assigned to reinforce the material and help the student learn terms and concepts. Please take a picture of their completed activity book pages or scan them to reoffice@swoycc.org. Completion of these pages will be included in the progress report.

MASS ATTENDANCE: Parents are encouraged to take their children to Mass - either in person or via live-streamed Masses on the computer or TV Masses on EWTN or at the Basilica in D.C. Mass attendance cards have been suspended for the time being and attendance will not be tracked by the office. The bishop of Arlington, the Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, has dispensed the obligation to attend Mass during the pandemic. At such time as the dispensation is lifted, we will revisit the Mass Attendance requirement. We strongly encourage parents of students preparing for First Communion to be aware of the importance of taking your child to Mass - live or virtual - as they prepare for this most holy sacrament.

Prayer Memorization: A list of grade appropriate prayers to be memorized by the student over the course of the year is included in the folder. These start out with basic prayers in First Grade. Each successive year adds one or two new prayers. They should not have to "re-learn" the prayers each year if they have an active prayer life and pray daily. Technically, they should only have to learn the NEW TO GRADE prayers. Please work with your child on their habits of prayer and memorization of traditional Catholic prayers. This component will not be graded during the first semester. However, if we do come back to in-person classes later in the year, prayers will be assessed and progress recorded.

Students have been assigned to catechists for when we resume in-person classes. The catechists will be monitoring student progress on My Catholic Faith Delivered. They may also send periodic emails to the class group or individual families.

Please contact the office if you have any questions or would like supplemental materials to use with your child's lesson. We are here for you - whatever you need. [reoffice@swoycc.org 540-659-5705]

Thank you! Have a great year! God bless each and every one of you!