



ST. JOSEPH UNIVERSITY PARISH HANDBOOK FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

Scope and Sequence

The Religious Education Program follows the curriculum guidelines of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Pflaum pamphlets are used for grades Preschool – 5th grade. Four major themes are found throughout the program: *Profession of Faith, Sacraments/Liturgy, Christian Life, Christian Prayer.*

The Jr.High program uses *The Catholic Connections Handbook* for Middle Schoolers. Over the course of 3 years students will cover the topics of: *God, Jesus Christ, The Church, Sacraments, Prayer, Eucharist, and Christian Morality.*

Role of Parents

Parents are the primary religious educators for their children, seeking the help of relatives, friends and catechists to assist them in this role. They are responsible for transmitting religious values to their children, helping them develop a positive self-image and guiding them to become the best Christian person they can be. Parents are also encouraged to model our Catholic values by regular Mass attendance and service to the parish. The registration forms include ideas where parents are able to help.

Role of Students

The student's role is to learn about our Christian faith and grow in it. They are to accept themselves as the wonderful persons God made them to be with individual talents and abilities, as well as limitations. They hopefully will use these talents and abilities to help those around them. They are invited to accept God's grace and realize that religious education is a lifelong experience.

PHILOSOPHY/ MISSION STATEMENT

Archdiocese of Indianapolis Mission Statement

We the Church in Central and Southern Indiana, called to faith and salvation in Jesus Christ in the Roman Catholic tradition, strive to live the Gospel by:

- Worshiping God in word and sacrament
- Learning, teaching and sharing our faith
- Serving human needs

We commit ourselves to generosity and to the responsible use of our spiritual and material resources.

Office of Catholic Education Mission Statement

We, the faith-filled people of the Secretariat for Total Catholic Education, provide service that enables learning communities of faith to effectively teach and share Catholic beliefs, traditions, and values.

St. Joseph University Parish Mission Statement

St. Joseph University Parish is a Catholic community proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ by living it through worship, prayer, faith formation and service.

ADMISSION POLICIES

Nondiscrimination

St. Josephs does not discriminate on the basis of physical or mental capacity, race, color, finances, or national/ethnic origin in admitting students to the program. (Policy 9611a)

Special Needs

Students with special needs will be accepted on a trial basis. An adult, familiar with their needs, may be asked to assist. (Policy 9611b)

Start of Registration

Registration begins in the spring before the new school year. (Policy 9611c)

Registration Restrictions

Catholic families wishing to register their children in our parish religious education programs must be officially registered in the parish (policy 8311)

Non-parish families should attend classes at the parishes where they are registered. Exceptions may be made with the consent of the Pastor where the family is registered. (Policy 9611d)

Placement into Grade

Enrollment and placement into the Religious Education program will coincide with public school placement. Children must be four years of age by Sept 1st of the year of application for the preschool program and five year of age for the kindergarten program. It is best for children retained in a public school grade to stay with that grade in religious education. Students in Transition Grade in Vigo County Schools should register for Kindergarten. (Policy 9611e)

Policy Statement on AIDS

The Archdiocesan Policy Statement on AIDS has been approved for all persons at St. Joseph University Parish (8808):

Persons employed by or served by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis who have a positive HIV infection including AIDS or ARC shall not be discriminated against because of their illness. Such persons shall be received with the same care and compassion as any other person with a catastrophic condition. Adjustments in the working conditions or in the delivery of services, if required, shall be based on sound medical information and shall be established for the welfare of all, including the infected person. (18 August 1988)

Married/Pregnant Students Policy

The Archdiocesan policy on Married/Pregnant students (5447) has been approved for all students under the direction of the Board of Education for St. Joseph University Parish (9404):

In keeping with Church teachings regarding the sanctity of life, whenever a[n unwed] student becomes pregnant, schools and religious education programs of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis shall make every attempt to support the mother, father, and the unborn child, while not condoning the procreative actions. The student shall be allowed to continue their Catholic education provided that they and their parents receive appropriate pre-natal counseling and respond in a way that is consistent with the values and teachings of the Catholic Church regarding the sanctity of life and procreation. The pastor, administrator, or both, shall assist parents and students in obtaining counseling from appropriate agencies. (5447)

FEES

Fees for religious education before August 15th shall be:

\$25.00for the first child
\$15.00.....for each additional child

After August 15th:

\$35.00.....for the first child
\$20.00.....for each additional child

Sacramental Fees

\$12.50.....First Reconciliation
\$12.50.....First Communion
\$20.00.....Order of Christian Initiation for Children (OCIC)

These fees do not cover all the cost of religious education. Therefore, families are asked to observe stewardship.

The Frances Murphy Fund

Parents who cannot afford the fees for religious education may seek financial assistance. A special fund exists, named in honor of Frances Murphy, a long time catechist in our program and dedicated teacher in the Montessori school, to assist those unable to pay. This fund is also available for parents who wish their child to attend Catholic Schools. Applications should be received by June before the school year of attendance. (Policy 9611f)

PROGRAM POLICIES

Clarification of Regular Attendance

Any student who has attended at least two-thirds of the total number of classes is considered to have "attended a religious education program on a regular basis." An interview process with each family will take place if regular attendance has not been maintained. Exceptions will be made only after an interview with a member of the pastoral team (Policy 8306, amended by 9611g).

Confidentiality

Catechists will not discuss a student's progress or lack of progress except with the Director of Religious Education and the parent(s) involved. When a student's behavior is being recorded for discipline reasons the recording shall be specific, objective and factual. (Policy 9611h)

Disclosure of Records

This program voluntarily complies with the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Non-Custodial parents will be given access to unofficial copies of student records and catechists will be available to discuss the student's progress unless a court order providing otherwise is filed with the administrator. At this parish the only record kept is attendance, which is kept on file for 20 years. (9611i)

SACRAMENTAL POLICIES

Children Who Attend Local Catholic Schools

Children who attend a local Catholic school will not be expected to attend Religious Education classes here, but may if they so desire. Catholic School students may celebrate sacraments both here and in their school, but are encouraged to participate in only one. Parents are excused from attending Sacramental preparation programs in both programs as long as attendance is fulfilled in one of the programs (9611k).

Enrollment of Candidates to Sacramental Program

Students who are eligible for sacramental preparation shall become candidates for that sacrament when they have fulfilled the following requirements:

That parents agree: to attend parent meetings; to assume responsibility for the good attendance of their child; to complete the home activities with their child.

Upon completion of the program, the candidate will be eligible to celebrate the sacrament based on the following recommendations:

1. The pastor's approval with input from the Director of Religious Education (DRE) and catechists but more importantly:
2. Parents recommendation
3. Student's expression of desire to celebrate the sacrament.
(Policy 8109, amended by 96111)

Must Have Completed The Year Previous

Unless a child has been in the religious education program the previous year he/she will not be accepted as a candidate in a sacramental preparation program. (Policy 8009).

Time of Sacraments

In compliance with the Archdiocese Liturgical Policies, students are prepared for first reconciliation and first communion in the 2nd grade. Unbaptized children of catechetical age (7 years of age) are Baptized, Confirmed and receive First Eucharist in one ceremony on Holy Saturday and are part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for Children. They are prepared for 1st Reconciliation later. Baptized and catechized children are put in their correct school grade and meet with the DRE or another member of the RCIA team in preparation for the sacraments needed. Other flexible solutions to these cases are offered. In all cases parents have a say in when in readiness to receive a sacrament. (Policy 9611m)

COMMUNICATION

Approval of DRE Needed

The DRE shall approve any communications to be sent home to parents from outside agencies (see Archdiocese Policy 1140)(Policy 9611n)

Cancellation of Classes

In the case of questionable weather parents should exercise caution. If classes are to be cancelled notes will be posted on the doors and announcements made at the masses as applicable. (Policy 9611o)

When Problems Arise

In a disagreement with a catechist it is expected that parents will meet with the catechist first. After that appeal would be made to the Director of Religious Education and then the Pastor. The Board of Education is appealed to only about a disagreement about policy between the DRE and the parent involved. (Policy 9611p)

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Guideline on Respecting Persons

The good name, reputation and personal safety of each child, youth, adult volunteer and staff member is vitally important. In order to protect children/youth, employees, volunteers and the parish/archdiocese itself, each young person is expected to treat the good name and reputation of other children, youth, volunteers and employees and the parish/archdiocese with dignity and respect and not engage in any activity or conduct, either on campus or off campus, that is in opposition to this guideline and/or inconsistent with Catholic Christian principles, as determined by the parish in its discretion. Any derogatory, slanderous, hostile, or threatening remarks or actions directed toward any of the above by a young person will be seen as a violation of this guideline and will be viewed as an extremely serious matter, whether it is done physically.

Abuse Policy

The Archdiocesan Policy Statement on Child Abuse has been approved for all persons at St. Joseph University Parish. Because we reverence the Christ that is in each one of us, St. Joseph's is a place where abuse of catechists or students is not allowed. Students are never touched in a manner that could be construed as punitive. (Policy 9611q) (see Archdiocese Policy #5124; 5254; 5354; 5454; 5554)

Dress

Appropriate dress helps promote a positive effect on the learning environment. It is assumed in a Catholic Christian environment that no one will have offensive or anti-Christian clothing. Students will not wear clothing or apparel that could be dangerous. (Policy 9611r)

Emergency Procedures

Two to four fire drills are held during the year. The DRE will document how long it took to clear the building of all people inside, the date, and time.

Students immediately leave the room directed by their catechist who will:

- a). have the attendance sheet with them
- b). close the door
- c). close the windows

If the fire breaks out in the classroom, A CATECHIST MAY ATTEMPT FOR NO MORE THAN FIFTEEN SECONDS TO PUT OUT THE FIRE HERSELF/HIMSELF BEFORE EVACUATING. At the outbreak of the fire another nearby catechist or aide should lead the children out and pull the fire alarm.

Students are to head to the south lawn of the Church. If smoke makes it impossible to exit then students should remain in the room with THE DOOR CLOSED. When 911 is called the operator should be made aware that there are children on the top floor.

If a tornado is spotted the children will be instructed to seek shelter in basement hallways that do not have windows. Students and catechists will sit with their heads between knees for protection. (9611x)

Expectations of Students If Catechist Is Not in the Room

Catechists are expected to tell the children what to do when the catechist has to leave the room. (Policy 9611s)

Freedom From Sexual Harassment

Students will not be allowed to engage in any activities that might be considered sexual harassment: sexual proposition, off-color jokes; inappropriate physical contact; innuendoes; sexual offers, looks and gestures. (Policy 9611t)

Grounds for Expulsion

The same grounds for expulsion or suspension as set forth for the Vigo County Schools shall hold true for the parish religious education program. This complete list is available in the religious education office. Among these include harming oneself or others by fighting, drugs, stealing, speech, carrying any object as a weapon, etc. Any student expelled from the program may still do their religious education classes at home.

Fairness will be applied in any case of suspension or expulsions. Catechists will make clear their rules and the consequences. Older classes will work together in framing classroom rules and rewards for following the rules. All catechists will have behavioral expectations posted. Due process includes that an accused person is given notice and a hearing before an impartial committee. (Policy 9611u)

Halls and Stairways

Walking quietly in the halls is common courtesy to students and catechists in their classrooms. (Policy 9611v)

In Case of Accidents

Injured students should not be moved. Unless it is life threatening, calling for an ambulance is reserved to the Director of Religious Education. Each classroom has a first aid kit for slight injuries. Universal precautions are to be exercised. Parents and the Director of Religious Education are always to be contacted after any first aid is administered. Parents must turn in permission slips with their registration to give permission to provide treatment in case the program can not locate them in emergencies. (Policy 9611w)

Medications

No student, while attending classes, will be allowed to take medications, prescription or non-prescription without written permission of the parent or guardian. (Policy 9611x)

Safety Guards

Any student crossing 5th street will cross at the light with the crossing guards. (Policy 9611y)

Search and Seizure

If catechists or catechist aides have reason to suspect so, parent(s) will be called to conduct search and seizure of harmful objects (Policy 9611z)

Students Are Always Supervised

Students are supervised from the time they arrive until picked up. (Policy 9611aa)

Waiver of Responsibility

Catechists, the Director of Religious Education, The parish, and the Archdiocese are not legally responsible for injuries of children on the parish grounds or at places under the religious education program's auspices. (Policy 9611bb)

OFF SITE ACTIVITIES

Rules of Religious Education Program Still In Effect

For any activities involving going off-campus, students will be held to the same standards of conduct as outlined above. (Policy 9611cc)

Student Transportation

Students are not transported in private cars without parental consent. Drivers of students in our program must be 21, have a valid license, and must make sure that every child in the car is seat belted--no exceptions. Students may not be driven home without parental consent. (Policy 9611dd)

USE OF PARISH GROUNDS AND FACILITIES

All parishioners enjoy use of the facilities; however charges may be made to pay for janitorial services. Use of the facilities must be scheduled with parish offices. (Policy 9611ee)

RIGHT TO AMEND

The Board reserves the right to amend this handbook with policies superseding those here listed. (Policy 9611ff)