

Religious Education Handbook

Saint Ann Catholic Church
6350 S. Mooresville Road
Indianapolis, Indiana 46221

CLASS TIME: 10:30-11:45 A.M.

Phone: (317) 821.2909
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Pastor:
Father Glenn O'Connor

Coordinator of Religious Education:
Kelly O'Brien
Email: kellobrien@comcast.net

Religious Education Fees:

Registered members of Saint Ann’s parish

<u>Non-Sacramental Prep</u> (Pre-K, K, 1, 3-8, HS)	
1 child	\$25
Subsequent child(ren) in same family	\$22
<u>Sacramental Prep</u> (2nd, HS Confirmation)	
First Reconciliation/First Eucharist	\$50
Confirmation	\$50
Additional children in Sac. Prep	\$25
Non-registered families	
\$50.00	per child for Non-Sacramental Prep
\$100.00	per child for Sacramental Prep

If, for any reason, payment of fees are financially burdensome for your family, please contact the coordinator of religious education. Your child(ren)’s faith formation is of first importance. Consequently, children will not be denied access to the program for financial reasons.

Questions and Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns about the content of this handbook or if you would like more information about the Saint Ann religious education program please contact Kelly O’Brien, Coordinator of Religious Education, at the parish office.

Thank you for enrolling your child(ren) in Saint Ann’s religious education program. Please let us know how we are doing and how you would like to be a part of this important ministry to the children of our parish.

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Dear Parents:

This is the beginning of our third year at our new location, and we are constantly growing! I have spent the last year trying to change our program from just reading out of books to being more interactive, and I think that I have found the solution. This year we are starting a new program. Each week your child will come home with a handout discussing what they learned in class. My hope is that this will help carry forth their religious education beyond their classroom doors (or removable walls). It is really exciting to find a program that they can use at home and church. And parents don't need a degree in theology just to be able to understand it. If you have any questions about the program or would like more information to use in your home, please, feel free to get in touch with me.

As you know, religious education is not only a once-a-week class held on Sunday mornings. Weekly classes are only the beginning. Lessons taught in class must be reinforced through proper Christian living. Parental example, family discussions, prayer, liturgical celebrations and participation in church-related activities all work together to make the gospel message relevant and alive in our hearts.

We at Saint Ann's are committed to our children's spiritual development. Our catechists contribute their time and talents each week to help you nurture your child(ren)'s ongoing growth in Christ. We ask for your prayers and support as well as your help in making religious education a rewarding experience.

This year we will begin religious education classes for

Mass Policy

A good religious education can only build upon the moral, spiritual, and religious formation that the children are receiving at home by you, the parent. As Catholics, celebrating mass and the Eucharist is central to our faith. One of the simplest ways to teach children about the importance of God in their lives is to bring them to mass with you. Please make every effort to attend a weekend mass with your children. It is inconsistent to have children attend weekly religious education classes and not participate in the mass.

Liturgical Service

Children will periodically be called to participate in special children's liturgies. As Catholics, participating in liturgical services is of vital importance and, as such, children should be highly encouraged by their parents to receive training as altar servers, lectors, ushers, greeters, and, in their teenage years, as Eucharistic ministers. Please be supportive in this matter.

Fees

All monies collected from religious education registration fees are put back into the parish fund. Money allocated for religious education from the parish fund are used for books, teaching manuals, classroom supplies, resource materials, videos, workbooks, paper and other necessary expenses. We do not make a profit off of religious education classes.

Sacramental Preparation

The second graders will be preparing for Reconciliation and Eucharist. A substantial part of the second grade curriculum is based on preparation for these two sacraments. Students will receive their first reconciliation in December and first Eucharist in April/May.

It is our policy that children must have at least one year of religious education prior to their start in sacramental preparation classes. This is done for many reasons. It is important that the children be familiar with what is expected in their learning environment at St. Ann's. It is also very important that they have some formation prior to their preparation for sacraments. We have only eight months to prepare the children for two sacraments.. It saves time and confusion if a child has already been involved in formal religious education classes. They should be familiar with mass, and beginner prayers, as well as know the different liturgical times of the year. Thank you for your cooperation in this very important matter.

Confirmation is a one year program that is open to all 9th-12th grade students. They will meet eight times during the school year to be scheduled by the catechist. If you are interested in this program please fill out the new student/ sacramental prep registration form.

If you have a child in religious education that has not been baptized or a child in religious education that is beyond the second grade and has not received their first reconciliation or first communion, please contact the coordinator of religious education as soon as possible to make appropriate provisions.

reasons, students will not be permitted to attend classes until they are properly registered. I thank you in advance for helping us serve both you and your child(ren) more effectively through your cooperation with this early registration request.

If you have a question or would like to comment about some aspect of the program during the year, please do not hesitate to talk to me about it. I can usually be reached at the parish office on Tuesday through Thursday mornings. Please leave a message if I am out and I will return your call as soon as possible. You can also email me at kellobrien@comcast.net. I check this email at work and at home.

I am excited about our program this year and consider it a blessing to be working with you, your child(ren), and your entire family.

Yours in Christ,

Kelly O'Brien
Coordinator of Religious Education

Religious Education Calendar

September

11th	Classes Begin
18th	Class
25th	Class

October

2nd	Class
9th	Class
16th	Class
23rd	Class
30th	Class

November

6th	Class
13th	Class
20th	Class
27th	Thanksgiving Break

December

4th	Class
11th	Class
18th	Class
25th	Christmas Break

January

1st	Christmas Break
8th	Class
15th	Class
22nd	Class
29th	Class

February

5th	Class
12th	Class
19th	Class
26th	Class

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a tornado warning, a fire, or other critical situation the catechists will evacuate the children from the building according to the fire and emergency evacuation plan confirmed by the Decatur Township Fire Marshall. During the course of the school year, the children will be given periodic test drills to help them master the evacuation procedure in lieu of an actual event.

Weather Related Closings

In case of bad weather, the director of religious education will notify WISH-TV Channel 8, WRTV Channel 6, and WTHR Channel 13. Please tune to any of these channels on mornings of questionable weather to see if religious education classes will be cancelled for that day. We will also send out an email alert, if we have your email address on the registration form.

Visitors

We realize that there are times when your child may wish to bring a relative or friend to one of our classes and that there are times when parents may wish to sit in on their child's class. Guests are always welcome! Please inform you child's catechist prior to the beginning of class if your child is bringing a guest, or if you will be sitting in on their class. As a parent, your role will be limited to that of an observer, although you are welcome to discuss your visit with the coordinator of religious education and/or catechist in an arranged appointment. We also welcome parent volunteers in our classrooms if you would like to become more involved. Please do not hesitate to be involved in your child's faith formation during class time and at home.

Family Information Changes

If your phone number, address, or other important information changes, please remember to notify the coordinator of religious education so that your records may be updated accordingly.

Emergency Medical Procedures

On the religious education registration form you will be asked to supply the name of an emergency contact person with their phone number. Likewise, you will be asked to sign the permission statement giving your permission for emergency medical personnel to treat your child in the event of a medical emergency.

The Religious Education office is supplied with a first aid kit for minor medical treatment (small cuts, scrapes, etc.). If a child is unable to complete a class session because of illness or minor injury, your child's catechist will call you (the parents) first, then the emergency contact person listed on the registration form.

In the event of a serious illness or injury, a catechist will call 911 to request emergency assistance. Parents will be contacted second. The emergency contact person listed on your registration form will be notified third and informed of what has happened. Next, the catechist will notify the coordinator of religious education who will, if necessary, contact Father Glenn. A copy of your child's contact information is kept in their classroom.

Religious Education Calendar Continued

March

4th	Class
11th	Class
18th	Class
25th	Class

April

1st	Spring Break
8th	Easter Sunday
15th	Class
22nd	Class
29th	Last Day of Class

Attendance Policy

This policy is intended to keep catechists informed of missing students. It is also intended to keep parents and children informed about subjects and materials missed in class.

- If you know in advance that your child will be absent from class the following week, please inform your child's catechist or the CRE.
- If there is an absence that may have been unexcused and we have reason to believe the parent is unaware, we may call you out of concern for your child's whereabouts.
- If your child will be absent a significant number of classes i.e. prolonged illness, visitations with other parent, or another reason, please inform the CRE to obtain classroom materials for home instruction for missed time.

Child Abuse Policy

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis requires that all persons who work with children in a parish undergo a criminal background check, read the Archdiocesan sexual abuse policy “Protecting God’s Children”, and sign a form stating they will abide by the policy requirements. They are also required to undergo training through the VIRTUS program and complete online updates throughout the year. If you would like more information on this program, please check out their website: www.virtus.org.

Discipline Policy

The best learning takes place in an orderly, respectful, and safe environment. Catechists are given directions to contact the coordinator of religious education when a child has become a discipline problem. If you are contacted by the CRE about a discipline problem involving your child, we ask for your cooperation. Catechists contribute their time to teach children about our faith and the importance of God in our lives. We ask that you emphasize to your children the importance of being cooperative with their catechist and participate respectfully in class.

All catechists have been asked to follow the procedures outlined here: If a discipline problem develops, the first thing the catechist will do is try to handle the problem one-on-one with your child. The CRE will be informed about the situation if it happens a second time, and may choose to write or call the parents to discuss the situation with them. If the problem occurs again,

you will be called and asked to take your child home for the day. As a final alternative, in order to insure an effective teaching and learning environment, unresolved discipline problems on the part of uncooperative students may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policy Preschool through Grade 2

At the recommendation of the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, we have instituted a drop-off and pick-up policy for all children in preschool through second grade. A parent or guardian (not an older brother or sister) is required to drop off and pick up their child(ren) at the classroom door each Sunday. There are many reasons for this policy, the most important being the safety of your child(ren).

If, because of extenuating circumstances (such as a restraining order), there is someone who is not permitted to pick up your child (regardless of grade), please notify the coordinator of religious education immediately. It would be prudent to inform your child(ren)’s catechist of the situation as well. We want to cooperate in keeping all children safe.

Unless notified otherwise by your child(ren)’s catechist, please do not pick up your child(ren) any earlier than 11:45 a.m.