

St. John the Evangelist Religious Education Parent Guidelines

Philosophy of Religious Education

The Religious Education Program of St. John's Parish is intended to deepen the faith and understanding of our children, and not just for sacramental preparation. The program is designed to have continuity from first through eighth grade. All grade levels of religious education are important, each assisting the child to grow in a deeper knowledge of God and of their faith, and an increased awareness of their responsibilities as a disciple of Jesus Christ and as a member of the Catholic Christian community. Skipping of years in between sacraments does not allow for adequate faith formation. It is difficult, if not impossible, for a child and teacher to make up for inadequate preparation. **We strongly encourage that children attend religious education every year.** If a child has skipped faith formation between sacraments, the child may be placed in a catch-up class before beginning sacramental preparation.

General Expectations

It is expected that each family be actively involved in their children's faith formation classes and in St. John's parish in order to model a living, conscious and active Christian faith and to reinforce the values and attitudes for living that faith. The family and their children also must act in accordance with these values and attitudes.

Mass Attendance

You are expected to attend Mass with your children every Sunday. Mass is an integral part of your child's faith formation and Mass attendance goes hand in hand with the CCD Program. One cannot do the work of the other. Celebrating Mass is the highest form of worship Catholics have; therefore, missing Mass is very serious. Sending your children to Religious Education and then not attending Mass sends a mixed message to your children, as they are learning the importance of Mass attendance here at CCD and may be confused as to why their parents are not bringing them to Mass. Remember to keep the Lord's Day holy.

Dress Code

All students are expected to dress respectfully and modestly. If a student comes to class improperly dressed, he/she will be sent home.

Girls are **not** permitted to wear short shorts, short skirts (no shorter than 4 inches above the knee), low cut tops or bottoms, bare midriff shirts, pajama-style clothing, or hats. Belly buttons should not be exposed.

Boys are **not** permitted to wear t-shirts with offensive language, pants that show undergarments, pajama-style clothing, or hats while in church or classrooms.

Discipline Policy

We expect students to display Christian behavior at all times. This includes respectful and courteous classroom behavior, not talking out of turn, paying attention and participating, respecting others, respecting the parish materials, and complying with the teacher's instructions. **Any student who disturbs a class, fails to cooperate with the Catechist, or violates the Religious Education Policies shall be subject to the following procedures:**

First time	Teacher will redirect the student
Second time	Teacher will speak to the student regarding the unacceptable behavior
Third time	Student will be taken to the office to complete his/her work and his/her parent will be notified.

In the event that a student is continuously disruptive and no evidence is seen of the student attempting to correct his/her behavior, the student will be dismissed from the CCD Program.

Student Arrival in Classrooms

Students may not enter a classroom before the Catechist arrives. The doors to the classroom will remain closed until the Catechist has arrived and is ready for class. Please assure that your child arrives on time. The entrance doors will be unlocked five (5) minutes prior to the start of the class.

Early Dismissals Not Permitted

Students are not permitted to leave class early except in emergency situations. Sports practice, dance class, etc. are not considered emergencies. **Parents must notify the office before class begins if their child needs to be picked up early and the reason for the emergency.** Parents must come to the office to pick up their child.

Pick-up and Drop-off

Students in grades 1 through 4 must be picked up by their parent, grandparent or legal guardian in their classrooms. Students in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 may meet their parent or guardian in front of the Parish Hall.

Texting Policy

For obvious reasons, texting during class is not permitted. If a catechist observes a student texting in class, his/her phone will be taken and returned at the end of the class.

Attendance Policies

Your child should attend each and every class. Every class is important in the student's catechetical formation and attendance will be tracked. Unfortunately, even with perfect attendance, they will receive less than 30 hours of religious instruction! We sympathize regarding the choices that must be made. However, sporting activities and dance classes in no way outrank religious education as priority items. Please don't confuse your child by placing these activities before the message of Jesus.

When a student in sacramental preparation exceeds three absences within a given year, the student will be required to pass a Final Exam to assess whether the student is adequately prepared to progress to the next year's course of study and/or receive the Sacrament. If the student is not able to pass the Final Exam, he or she will have to repeat the grade.

The five classes immediately prior to the reception of a sacrament should not be missed for any reason. If a student must be absent from any class at this time because of illness or death in the family, he/she must make arrangements with the catechist to arrange to make up any missed work.

Tardiness

Classes begin promptly and students are expected to be in their seat and ready for class at that time. Please plan to arrive a few minutes early. Classroom time is very limited and the catechists need to begin the lessons on time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class and are rude. The student that arrives late misses opening prayers and the introduction of the topic being discussed during class time. If a child is continuously tardy, he or she will be assigned to a later class, whereby there is no reason not to get the student to class on time.

Make-up Work

If illness or a family emergency prevents a child from attending class, parents are responsible for contacting the teacher for instructions regarding any work that needs to be made up. A student who misses a class must complete and turn in all missed class work and assignments within two weeks of his return to class.

Guests

Students are not permitted to bring friends or relatives to class.

Food / Refreshment Policy

Food and drinks are not permitted in class. Please do not ask the teachers if you can bring in cupcakes or cookies to celebrate your child's birthday. We're happy to celebrate with a song; however, our class time is much too short to include birthday celebrations with food. Please give your child a snack or meal before bringing them to CCD.

Emergency Closings

If the public schools are closed due to a hurricane or tropical storm, CCD will also be cancelled. In the event that schools are in session during the day, but afterschool programs are cancelled due to an impending storm, CCD will also be cancelled.

Custody Issues

If parents are divorced or separated, the Religious Education Office presumes that both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right. If there are other custody arrangements, a copy of such agreement must be on file in the Parish Religious Education Office.