

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA PARISH, NORWOOD

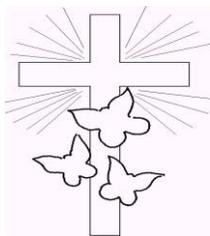
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK

GRADES Pre-K-5
2017 - 2018



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Dear Families,

Welcome, or in many cases, welcome back! A new year of religious education is getting underway and we are delighted to have you and your family as part of our program! We have a terrific year of learning, prayer, service, and FUN ahead of us and I look forward to getting to know our students and families. In addition to regular class meetings from the end of September until early April, grade level masses are offered at different times during the year and we'll also take part in a few different social outreach programs, particularly at Thanksgiving and during Advent and Lent as a way of helping our students put their faith into action. As always we look forward to our second graders making their First Communion in May; an exciting time for families and for the parish community as well! Second grade families are asked to make special note of the dates for the parent and student meetings which correspond with First Penance and First Communion. Attendance at one of those sessions for both Penance and Communion is expected. Further specifics about the date and time assigned to your child (by class) for First Penance and First Communion will be distributed in the next few weeks.

We are so fortunate to have an amazing group of dedicated, enthusiastic, and faith filled catechists. They are truly the heart and soul of our program and without them, nothing we do would be possible. I am tremendously grateful to all of them for the gift of their time and talents. All of these wonderful folks are volunteers, doing this out of love for working with and sharing our faith with our young people.

Families are invited and encouraged to attend the 9 a.m. family liturgy on Sunday mornings. This Mass is geared towards families with young children and the readings are proclaimed by our excellent youth lectors. We also have an excellent children's choir that sings several times a month. Each of these ministries; lectors, altar servers, and the children's choir are always interested in welcoming new members. If your child (grade 3 and up in most cases) is interested in possibly joining and serving our parish community in this way, please let me know. We are continually in need of volunteers for the program to assist with special events and various administrative tasks or to simply be on our list of substitute catechists in the event one of our regular teachers is unable to attend a class. If you might be willing to volunteer on an as needed basis, please let me know.

Please use this booklet as a reference for specific details about drop off and pick up procedures as well as information about inclement weather cancellations, program goals, and other pertinent program policies. If at any time you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at ymindirector@gmail.com or by phone at 781-762-6080 x13. I am in the office Sunday-Thursday and happy to do what I can to make this a positive and enriching experience for your child and family!

I look forward to an exciting and enriching year of faith formation with all of you!

Best,
Leah

Program Goals and Policies

The Pre-K/K class is held **ONLY** on Sunday mornings from 10:15-11 a.m.

Classes for grades 1-5 are held on two different days and times:
Sundays- 10:15 a.m.-11:15 a.m. **Tuesdays- 4-5 p.m.**

Our catechists work hard to prepare exciting and dynamic lessons for our young people! Please help ensure they have as much time as possible by having your student arrive a few minutes early to class so that we may begin promptly at 10:15 a.m. (Sunday) or 4:00 p.m. (Tuesday).

GOALS

- To provide students with an enriching, stimulating, engaging, and fun program which helps them to better understand God, Jesus, and the Catholic faith.
- To provide students with opportunities for prayer and spiritual development through such things as the liturgy, in class prayer, and personal prayer.
- To offer students the chance to participate in service learning activities that help demonstrate our connectedness as a parish community, as citizens of the town in which we live, and as members of the larger world around us.
- To provide sacramental preparation that helps students understand the importance of full and active participation in the life of the Church and parish community.
- To offer students the opportunity to learn about, develop, and nurture a relationship with Jesus.

CURRICULUM

Grades 1, 3, 4, and 5 will use the series, *"Finding God"*, by Loyola Press Publishers. Grade 2 uses books on *Reconciliation* and *Eucharist* from Loyola Press in order to help prepare them for the reception of these sacraments.

Grades 1, 3, and 4-5 will each have a grade level mass. Please keep an eye out for further details and information about these important events!

Grade 3 Class Mass- Sunday, October 29th at 9 a.m.

Students will pick a saint, learn 2-3 simple facts about their chosen saint and then dress as their chosen saint for the class mass on 10/29. They will take part in a procession as part of the mass.

Grade 1 Class Mass-Sunday, December 11th at 9 a.m

Students will join the procession

Grades 4 and 5 Class Mass-Sunday, January 21st @ 9 a.m.

Students will take part in the liturgy as lectors and gift bearers.

Other program elements will include service learning projects (particularly at Thanksgiving and during Advent and Lent)

POLICIES

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures-Students in grades 1-5 should report directly to their classrooms at the start of each session (10:15 a.m. on Sundays, 4 p.m. on Tuesdays) We **HIGHLY** encourage families to arrive a few minutes early so that classes can begin on time. Parents **MUST** walk their child to their classroom. If the teacher is not present, please return to the Siena Room and wait for additional instructions. The Siena Room doors will remain open until 10:30 a.m. (Sunday) and 4:15 p.m. (Tuesday). After that time, families will need to knock at the Siena Room door for entrance to the building. You may need to wait briefly to be permitted entrance.

Pick-up occurs from two spots; the Siena Room doors on the back side of the school parking lot (grades 3-5) and from the doorway that leads out to the start of the side parking lot (grades Pre-K-2). Teachers will wait with their classes and dismiss their students. Parents **MUST** meet their child at the door for pick up so please plan to park and get your child. This is particularly important for Tuesday classes when it gets dark before we dismiss. If you are late, students will be waiting in the Siena Room.

- Students are expected to attend ALL regularly scheduled classes and will only be dismissed early with a note from the parent. If your child is going to be absent, please call the Religious Education office (781-762-6080, ext.13) or email the DRE at ymindirector@gmail.com. Please note that regular class attendance and participation is an integral part of the program, particularly for students preparing to receive First Penance and First Communion.
- We invite and encourage all families to join us at our 9 a.m. Family Liturgy! This Mass is geared towards our young people and their families with readings proclaimed by youth and young adult leaders. Additionally, our Children's choir often sings at this Mass. Attending this Mass as a family is just one of the ways we can reinforce the concepts, ideas, and topics your child learns about in religious education.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a polite, kind, and respectful manner. Our teachers are volunteers who give their time and talents to help form and nurture our student's relationship with Jesus and the Catholic faith. Additionally, we are guests of St. Catherine of Siena School. We are allowed to use classroom spaces with the understanding that these spaces will be left in excellent condition at the conclusion of our classes. At no time should students be touching anything on a teacher's desk, on classroom walls or shelves, or items on/in a student desk. All trash and materials used for Religious Education **MUST** be cleaned up and disposed of or stored properly at the direction of the religious education classroom teacher.
- In the event of severe weather, which requires the cancellation of classes, please check the Religious Ed. phone line at 781-686-7887 or channels 4, 5, and 7. If time permits an email will be sent home. For Tuesday classes, we follow the Norwood Public School schedule. If there is no school in Norwood or if there is an early dismissal due to weather, there will be no classes. **Please do not call the rectory.**

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First Penance and First Communion Information

Please note:

All children entering Grade Two must have completed Grade One in a Religious Education program. Children entering the program for the first time and not baptized at St. Catherine's, must request a copy of their Baptismal certificate from the church where they were baptized.

First Penance Workshop (for one parent and their child)

Please choose ONE.

Sunday, November 12th 1-2 p.m.-SCS café

OR

Tuesday, November 14th 6:30-7:30 p.m.-SCS café

This meeting is mandatory

First Penance (Times will be assigned by class)

Saturday, December 2nd at 10 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Saturday, December 9th (SNOW DATE)

1st Communion Workshop (for one parent and their child)

Please choose ONE:

Sunday, March 11th, 1-2 p.m.-SCS café

OR

Tuesday, March 13th, 6:30-7:30 p.m.-SCS café

This meeting is mandatory

1st Communion (Dates will be assigned by class)

Sunday, April 29th at 11 a.m.

Rehearsal: Wednesday, April 25th 5-6 p.m.

Saturday, May 5th at 4 p.m.

Rehearsal: Tuesday, May 1st from 6-7 p.m.

Sunday, May 6th at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Rehearsal: Wednesday, May 2nd, 5-6 p.m. (for 9 a.m. Mass)

Wednesday, May 2nd, 6:30-7:30 p.m. (for 11 a.m. Mass)

First Communion "Dress Code"

Boys: A white suit and white shoes OR khaki colored dress pants, a dress shirt and tie, blue blazer and dress shoes. Many young men do wear white but we are seeing more and more in blazers every year.

Girls: White dress, white shoes, white tights (if legs will show), white veil (optional but most wear).

Please DO NOT have your child wear gloves, carry a rosary or a purse.

We do have some 1st Communion clothing that has been donated available for families to borrow.