

ELEMENTARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Goal: Assist parents of the parish in education and formation of their children in the Catholic Faith, through the structured presentation of approved course curriculum, to help make the faith a living and growing part of their lives.

Purpose: Assist the parents in their sacred responsibility to educate and form their children in the faith. Parents are their children's first and best teachers and are vital to their child's religious education. Our program is designed to compliment, not replace, the instruction provided by the parents.

Preschool / Kindergarten Program: The Pre-K Program is for children 4 years old and Kindergarten is for children 5 years old. Both programs are held during the 9:30 Mass (10:15 Mass after 1/1/16). Children must be registered to attend either program.

Elementary Program (Grades 1 – 5): Each grade level has a different topic of study for one year. We offer our program on two different days, Sunday (8:30 - 10:30 am) (9:00 – 10:15 am after 1/1/16) and Tuesday (4:30 - 5:45 pm). Sunday morning classes begin in the classroom and children walk over to 9:30 Mass (10:15 Mass after 1/1/16), sit together as a class, and participate in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Class ends when Mass is over and children will be released to their parents. The Tuesday afternoon program is the more traditional, weekly class situation.

Parent / Guardian Participation: All parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer to help **at least once** during the school year. We encourage parents/guardians to take an active role in their child's religious growth. Families are expected to be weekly participants in the worship community. The gift of faith to your child is God's gift to give, but the nurturing of that gift goes on in the day-to-day living of family life. To be a Catholic parent means to nurture the faith in the child and share it in the family. Children learn by example. Be a living example to your child. Religious education builds on the family religious experience. We encourage parents to set an example by participating in adult education.

Communication: Communication requires the participation of both teachers and parents. Please feel free to talk to your child's teacher. Parents are always welcome in the classroom. Please voice any questions, concerns or comments to the RE office or one of the board members listed on the previous page. Parents are invited to meet the teacher by coming to the classroom on the first day of classes.

Safety: The safety of our children is paramount to our program and we have taken all reasonable measures to produce a safe learning environment. Parents support our safe environment by picking up their children at their classrooms, reminding their children not to run up or down the stairs or in the hallways, exercising caution in the parking lot and on Church grounds. OLCG cannot guarantee adult supervision beyond ten minutes before or after class. Please be prompt as possible in picking up your child.

Expenses: We ask families with children in our program make a donation to cover the cost of books, materials, and other expenses. The requested donation is \$15.00 per student with a maximum of \$40.00 per family for parishioners. Non-parishioners are asked to donate a minimum of \$20.00 per student with a \$50.00 per family limit. These are donations, rather than fees, and are tax deductible. Inability to make a donation is never a barrier to a child's participation in our program. Teachers are asked not to donate money as their donation of time and energy is immeasurable.

Textbooks: We issue and use the RCL Benziger *Be My Disciples* series of textbooks to all students. Students are expected to attend class each week with textbooks and any home assignments. We ask parents to help us by making children responsible for and respectful of their books.

Discipline: It is impossible for teaching or learning to take place in a classroom unless respect and order are maintained. We need the cooperation of all students and parents to maintain order. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which reflects courtesy and respect for everyone. Normal problems will be handled by the classroom teacher; however, if a problem continues, students will be sent to the office and parents will be notified. A third or subsequent offense may result in home instruction by parents or parents attending RE classes with their child.

Attendance: We expect students to attend class regularly and be on time. Please call us before class if your child will be absent or late. Students should make up any missed work. We will call you if there is any concern about attendance.

Snack: Snacks are at the discretion of the teacher; if needed, you will be asked to provide them. Please contact the DRE if you are unable to supply a snack due to a personal situation. Snack should consist of a non-sugar item (fruit, crackers, pretzels, etc.) and juice. Please do not allow your child to bring candy, gum, etc. to class.

Cancellations: **Sunday Classes:** We will notify all teachers as soon as we determine weather conditions make it unsafe or unreasonable to conduct classes. In turn, your child's teacher will contact you. Our goal is to notify you by 8:00 am—30 minutes before the scheduled class start time. **Tuesday Classes:** Whenever the Union-Endicott School District closes school for the day (that is, declares a "snow day") or closes early and cancels after school activities for the day due to weather conditions, all our RE classes are also cancelled for that day. Please consult the local media outlets (TV, radio, etc.) for school and after school cancellation notices. Weekday cancellations are announced via radio as soon as possible; listen to WMXW 103.5 FM, WGRG 101.7 FM, and WAAL 99.1 FM.