

Religious Education Program

St. John Vianney Religious Education

Parents and parish community: a partnership of faith and grace.

The day of your child's baptism, the deacon or priest spoke on behalf of the Church the important reminder of the responsibility and privilege entrusted to you by God. Our parish family rejoiced with you then on that day in your child's life. We rejoice with you now as you continue to form your child in the way of faith, hope and love.

The parish community wishes to support you in your role as primary educators in the way of faith, virtue and grace. As a parent you are the ones "who create a family atmosphere animated by love and respect for God and neighbor in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is fostered."

(Second Vatican Council, Gravissimum Educationis,)

The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families it is the privileged place for catechesis of children and parents.

As partners in the process of faith formation together we seek to awaken the faith and sense of belonging to the Catholic Church in children so that they will be moved to share their time, talent and treasure in the life of the Church now and throughout their lives. The aim of catechesis and faith formation is a personal relationship with God characterized by a sacramental life, a lifelong pattern of prayer, Christian service, and growth in understanding the Catholic faith. Committed to this active partnership between clergy, parish staff, catechists and families, we entrust our efforts with confidence to God.

PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM:

Children in kindergarten participate in a home program one on one with their parents. Grades 1 to 5 children meet in groups of five to eight for an average of one hour a week. Grade 6 meets every other week for an hour and a half. Classes are held in the church hall on Sunday mornings. Grade 7 and 8 come together on Tuesday evenings in the church hall in alternating semesters. Youth who are attending parochial schools join our program for the preparation of the sacrament of Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation.

Kindergarten:

Discovering God's love helps children find God in the love of family and friends in preparation for belonging to the church community. Youngsters examine their own special talents and abilities, the wonders of God's creation and the changing seasons as readiness for participating in the liturgical year.

Grade 1:

The Sadlier "We Believe" program helps our children appreciate God's love for us through creation, the holy Trinity, baptism, the mass, and church community with emphasis on the seasons of the church year. The children will review the Sign of the Cross, the Lord's prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Grade 2:

"We Believe" reveals God's love for us through the 10 Commandments and the forgiveness of sin. The program also helps children grow and model development by characterizing the church as a community of ongoing conversion to that God loves them and seeks them out. During January through March our second graders prepare to receive the Sacrament of Penance. In the end of the year, the children will begin learning about the Eucharist. The prayers will continue to be learned along with the Act of Contrition.

Grade 3:

"We Believe" helps each child to achieve understanding appreciation of our Catholic heritage including lessons on prayer, community, covenant and sacraments. These lessons are integrated into the preparation and the reception of the sacrament of Eucharist which is a full year program.

Grade 4:

The program at this level explains how we are called to live as Catholic Christians and accept Jesus call to discipleship through observing the 10 Commandments, understanding the beatitudes, and partaking of the Sacrament of Penance.

Grade 5:

The fifth grade text teaches the children how Jesus has blessed our lives through the sacraments of initiation, healing and service. The children learn

how these sacraments inform and inspire our daily lives. Also emphasized of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Grade 6:

Children will examine God, revelation and faith through "Catholic Connections". They will address the basic question of who is God and how do we come to know him. This will be revealed through the study of sacred Scriptures and tradition.

Grade 7 and 8:

This program explores the role of Christ as center of our world and our lives through the use of the "Catholic Connections" for middle schoolers from St. Mary's Press. The children come to know the many different aspects of Christ so as to enter into a deeper personal relationship with him. They are then called to discuss what it means to be in right relationship with him. They examine their own experiences and consider many of the moral dilemmas young people face in light of our Catholic faith through using the "Theology of the Body" program from Ascension Press.

Grade 9 and 10:

"DECISION POINT" by Matthew Kelly is a two year Confirmation program grounded in contemporary initiation theology, rooted in the life of been evangelizing community of believers and focused on initiating young people in the ongoing faith development within the church.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

FIRST PENANCE:

Catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is to be conducted separately from catechesis for first Eucharist since each sacrament deserves it's own concentrated preparation. Catechesis for penance is to precede First Eucharist and must be kept distinct by a clear and unhurried separation. Preparation occurs for 2nd graders and parents in January through March.

FIRST EUCHARIST:

We present our program for preparation of Eucharist in the third grade. Purposeful children of our parents join us on a once a month basis. We utilize the Pflaum Publishers "First Eucharist, Together in Jesus". There is parents participation, home sessions with the children, and liturgical celebrations once a month with various other special activities for the children. This is a full

year's program culminating in the reception of the sacraments by group or individual family celebrations in May.

CONFIRMATION:

Confirmation preparation is a separate catechetical preparation for an individual seeking full membership in the Catholic community. Opportunities are provided for the candidates to explore their own faith through retreats, liturgies, and the study and participation in various forms of prayer. The program extends over a two-year period. Service projects constitute a vital part of the program. Parental involvement and support is vital in building a realistic parish community for youth to prepare to enter after being initiated to the sacrament of confirmation. Satisfactory attendance at all religious education classes grades one through eight is a prerequisite for participation.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Registration is open to the families who are currently registered here St. John Vianney Parish. Program registration is required in order for the child to attend religious education classes. Fees should accompany the registration unless other arrangements have been made with the Pastor or the Religious Education Office.

Medical/allergy information:

Please be certain to list on the registration form all medical/allergy information about child. It is important to inform the Director of any medical changes that occur during the year.

Special Accommodations:

Please make the catechetical leader aware of any special academic, behavioral or environmental accommodations your child may require.

Communication:

It is important that we have the most up-to-date contact information. If during the year your contact information to change such as home or cell phone, or the designated person to call should we not be able to reach you in an

emergency, please notify the religious education staff immediately. Pertinent information concerning child custody must be shared with the Director.

PARISH FAMILY AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

The expectations noted below are offered as a guide to our parish family: parents, students and teachers, as the means by which the goals set forth in this handbook.

Mass participation:

As a child's primary catechist it is important you are faithful and worship with your children at a weekend Mass. Class does not take the place of attendance at Mass.

"Remember to keep holy the Lord's day" (Exodus 20:8). Attendance at weekly mass is a divine commandment and a precept of the Church. We go to Mass to worship God with our parish family, in communion with Catholics throughout the world, and to receive His infinite grace, strength and wisdom in the Eucharist.

Parent meeting attendance:

St John Vianney strives to fulfill its mission of partnership with you in the religious formation of your child. Parent meetings are necessary to facilitate ongoing and authentic communication. They are scheduled sparingly out of respect for your valuable and often limited time. Your participation is a vital and integral part of information.

Discipline:

Students are expected to be courteous and display respectful Christian attitude toward catechists and feelings. Additionally, students are expected to respect Church property. Parents are responsible for damages incurred.

If a behavior problem persists, other accommodations will need to be made, Students are expected to be present and on time for all instruction, special celebration and related activities prepared for them. If an absence is necessitated for a serious or unusual reason, either the teacher or the Coordinator must have a prior notice from the parents of the guardians. Note: necessary absence is not one occasioned by participation in another regular

activity. Normally, no more than two absences are allowed. An absence problem will be considered in class placement for the next year.

Safe environment training:

As mandated by the United States conference of Bishops and in cooperation with the Office of Education in compliance with the Diocese of Providence all St. John Vianney parish employees and volunteers receive Safe Environment Training to ensure that all young people in our parish come to know God and His Church in a safe and appropriate setting. The Diocese of Providence also requires mandatory background criminal investigations for those who work with children and young people. Only those who successfully pass a background check are permitted to serve volunteers. The Office of Education and Compliance impartially investigate each and every complaint received.

For further information, please contact Kevin O'Brien, director, office of compliance, 80 St. Mary's Drive, Cranston, RI 02920, 401-941-0760.

Circle of Grace:

In 2010 the Diocese of Providence mandated the "Circle of Grace" curriculum to be presented to all children enrolled in religious education programs throughout the Diocese. The "Circle of Grace" curriculum teaches children and youth about relevant issues such as, all human persons are sacred and deserving of respect and dignity and the importance of establishing healthy and safe personal boundaries. It introduces important vocabulary so your child can effectively and confidently express their concerns or violations of their personal safety.

For further information, please contact Ms. Paula J. Loud at the diocesan outreach and prevention office, 80 St. Mary's drive Cranston, Rhode Island, RI 02920, 401-941-0760, ploud@dioceseofprovidence.org.

Code of ethical conduct:

Our parish adopts implements and enforces the diocesan code of ethical conduct for the protection of children.

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