



Parish Religious Education
Family Handbook

2017 -2018

St. Patrick Church
Kennett Square, PA

Dear Parents,

Praise be Jesus Christ! I hope this time of year finds you well and ready for an exciting year. Here at St. Patrick's we look forward with joy to another year of grace for all our families.

First, a word of sincere thanks for enrolling your child in our Parish Religious Education Program. Wow! What a gift and what an honor it is for us to assist you in raising and teaching your child in the ways of the faith. That is a **BIG** task, a task that encompasses many parts. And we are happy to do our part in helping them grow in the faith.

Second, I encourage you to be aware of your part as well. Having a child in the PREP program is a great opportunity for you not only to share your faith, but to grow in faith. Often teachers report that as they teach, they learn more than their students! Students teach teachers! I think the same can be said of parenthood. How often in the difficult task of parenting, do children teach parents about life! And so, now in sharing faith, you are being given an opportunity to learn it even more. An opportunity to grow in faith as you share your faith with others.

We read in Mark's Gospel that parents brought their children to see Jesus. I often wonder if it was the other way around! Might the children have been bringing their parents? Would the parents have gone to see Jesus if they were without their children? We see in this Scripture the interplay and beauty of family relationships.

That beauty is now ours this year to engage. So I urge you to engage this time. Engage your faith with wonder, intention and love. AS this year unfolds:

- 1) Pray in the home....before meals, bedtime.
- 2) Make Sunday Mass a weekly commitment.
- 3) Read scripture stories with our child.
- 4) Search our answers to their questions and yours!
- 5) Go to, come back to confession.
- 6) Pray the rosary.

Together, we have an opportunity to grow in faith and what a gift that can be for ourselves, for others and for our community.

Peace,

Fr. Christopher B. Rogers, pastor

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new year of PREP. The catechists and I look forward to working together with you as we foster the personal and spiritual growth of your children. It is our intent to provide you the opportunity to work closely with us.

As part of our catechetical classes, emphasis will be given to nurturing our Catholic faith values both moral and theological. We will explore ways your children can apply their faith to daily life experiences by serving those in need. In the upper classes, we will seek to develop biblical and doctrinal literacy so the students can have a deeper appreciation for the importance of the Scriptures and the teachings of the church. Our hope then is to guide all of our students in developing a personal faith and the skills for continuing their growth as Catholics.

To do as Jesus commanded requires close encounters with Him in the sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist. So we implore you to give your children the opportunity of Sunday Mass and the reception of this sacrament.

Remember as your child's first teacher it is important to have them see in our lives the ways Jesus is revered and desired. May the Lord be with us all in this awesome task!

Sincerely,

Marianne Kane
Director of Religious Education

PARISH LEADERSHIP

Pastor: Rev. Christopher B. Rogers

Permanent Deacon: Rev. Mr. James Madonna, Rev. Mr. James Elliott

Director of Religious Education: Mrs. Marianne Kane

MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. PATRICK PARISH

St. Patrick Church, in the process of strengthening its Catholic Community, seeks to make the gospel of Jesus Christ better known and loved through prayer, stewardship and good works

POLICIES

ADMISSION

All who are registered members of Saint Patrick Parish may be admitted to the parish program for Religious Education. Applicants who have not been baptized at Saint Patrick must provide a Baptismal Certificate at the time of registration.

REGISTRATION

Registration of new and returning students is held in the early Spring. Registration forms can be printed at www.stpatrickkennettsquare.org . Inquiry concerning registration of new students may be directed to the Religious Education Office. (610-444-2214) All entering students must be five by August 31 of that year to enter Kindergarten and six to enter first grade. Confirmation of registration for the upcoming school year takes place with a mailing in late summer.

FEES

Tuition is a necessary and required part of the religious education program to ensure the most current and best catechetical resources. Tuition is expected at the time of registration and should be given along with the registration form to the Religious Education Office. Checks should be made payable to “Saint Patrick Religious Education”.

In the event that your child is dismissed from the program due to excessive absences, lateness, problem behavior, or any other reason for dismissal, no refund of tuition or material fees will be made to the family.

DAYS AND TIMES OF CLASSES

Sunday 10:20 to 11:30 AM
Kindergarten, and Levels 1 through 6

Monday 4:50 to 6:00 PM
Levels 1 through 6

Home Based Catechesis time is arranged with the parents.

PUNCTUALITY

All participants should arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the program which is 10:20 AM on Sunday, 4:50 PM on Monday. For safety reasons, the school doors will be locked 15 minutes after the start time.

Interruptions due to lateness take precious instruction time from all students, therefore, students would benefit most when they are present in the classroom and ready for instruction by the designated time for start of class. Sessions begin promptly, therefore, any participant arriving after the designated starting time will be considered late. Lateness will be noted on Progress Reports. Chronic lateness will require a conference with a parent and might interfere with your child's promotion and reception of sacraments.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Sunday students enter the side doors of St. Patrick School and wait in the vestibule of the building where they will remain until their catechist arrives. Sunday dismissal of Kindergarten to level six requires the parents to meet their children at their classroom door. Parents should park their cars and come into the building. Cars are not permitted to be double parked on Meredith Street while waiting for their children. Disregard for this safety issue will not be tolerated.

Monday students will arrive at the back of the school on Chestnut Alley and enter the building at the back doors only. Dismissal will be through these same doors for all students. Students will leave the school building as their car approaches the dismissal doors. Parent “walk-ups” to the dismissal door are not permitted.

All Monday class parents are required to have the family name posted on the passenger side of the windshield. We ask the all families arrive at Chestnut Alley no earlier than five minutes before dismissal. It must be understood that this is a public street and also the means with which the residents can get their cars. Individuals will be asked to leave Chestnut Ally if they arrive earlier than the designated time.

At dismissal, the car line usually extends across Magnolia Street into the next block of Chestnut Alley. Be courteous and take your place in line. Please do not attempt to force your way in line at Magnolia Street if you see cars lined up in the second block of Chestnut Ally. Thank you.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal should be considered an *unusual* occurrence. A telephone/e-mail request or note by the parent must be made to the Director of Religious Education *before* class time.

Students should bring a written note of request to the classroom catechist. At the requested time the student, accompanied by the classroom aide, will meet the parent at the side school doors on Meredith Street. Catechists may require work to be made up because of early dismissal.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Emergency closings are reported on KYW (1060) radio, as well as on TV and the website: www.kyw1060.com . Our broadcast number is 2889.

The general policy for snow-related closings are:

Monday classes - If the Kennett Public School District cancels the school day or dismisses early because of road conditions, the Religious Education Program will be canceled for that day.

Sunday classes - Catechists will notify families of Sunday class cancellation by phone /e-mail.

Each catechist will develop a telephone chain for non-weather-related emergency messages. Parents are requested to provide their child's catechist with a daytime telephone number or cell number which can receive and transmit messages promptly.

TRANSFERS

When a family is preparing to move from the parish, the Religious Education Office should be notified. Student records of attendance and levels completed will be forwarded to the new Religious Education program upon the written request of the parent.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and Religious Education Office is extremely important if the objectives of the program are to be met. Avenues of communication used to inform parents of major happenings may take one of the following forms:

- *informational parent meetings
- *notice in the Church bulletin
- *notice home with student
- *mailing to the parent
- *e-mail to the parent

ATTENDANCE

The faith formation provided in our programs involves incremental learning. That is each year builds upon the learning of the previous year. Therefore, it is essential that students remain enrolled in the program consistently from year-to-year. Any student who voluntarily leaves the program for a period of one year will be required to make-up the missed year upon re-enrollment into the program. (e.g. a student who leaves the program for a period of one year after completing level 3 and re-enrolls in the program when they are in grade 5 will be placed into the 4th level.) Any student who voluntarily leaves the program for two or more consecutive years must fulfill the following two requirements:

1. The student will be placed into a grade level that is one below their current day school grade level.
2. For example, a student who leaves the program after completing level 3 and re-enrolls when he is in the 6th grade
 - * The parents are required to provide home based catechesis for level 4
 - * Upon completion of level 4, the child is accepted into level 5 to continue his/her faith formation.

All students must complete make-up work for classes missed. If more than three classes are missed in a semester, weekend make-up class may be required.

Sporadic class attendance (four or more absences per year) can be reason for the student not being admitted to the next level of instruction.

Irregular attendance (more than three absences) during a Sacrament preparation year can result in the postponement of the reception of the sacrament, as the Church charges us with the serious responsibility of seeing that children are adequately instructed before the initial reception of the sacraments.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

It is the responsibility of both biological parents to provide the Parish with the latest, most up to date Custodial Order or Custody Agreement. St. Patrick Parish will request these documents in the beginning of the year. If either the Custody Order or Custody Agreement changes during the course of the year, it remains the responsibility of both biological parents to provide that document to the Parish immediately.

Our program abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, our program will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the records and other program related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official and latest copy of the court order.

If a court prohibits our releasing a child into the custody of a non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official copy of the court order or custody section of the divorce decree.

FIRST RECEPTION OF SACRAMENTS

In conjunction with the recommendation of the Office for Religious Education of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, two years of catechesis are required for the initial reception of the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist.

In Saint Patrick Parish these Sacraments are usually received in the second semester of Level Two.

Candidates for these sacraments are expected to be participating weekly in Sunday Mass with their families and have an appreciation and understanding of the Sacraments, appropriate for their age. They are also required to have satisfactory attendance at classes and to participate in the Parish Presentation Ceremony, the retreats, and the rehearsals.

Candidates for Confirmation are usually Sixth Level students who have completed three full years of catechesis subsequent to their reception of First Eucharist.

Candidates are expected to be participating weekly with their families at Sunday Mass. They are required to have consistent attendance at classes, participate in the Parish Presentation Ceremony, the Confirmation Retreat, rehearsals and other activities preparatory to the Sacraments. In addition, candidates for Confirmation are expected to volunteer their services for parish, school, community and family needs, as awareness of their call to take a more active part in the Works of Mercy.

Candidates for Confirmation must choose a sponsor who will help him/her throughout life to fulfill his/her baptismal commitment. The godparent who initially assumed this responsibility in Baptism is the ideal choice. The sponsor must be at least sixteen years of age, have received the sacrament of Confirmation, and be an actively practicing Catholic. A Letter of Eligibility from the pastor of the sponsor's parish is required. In conformity with the 1983 revised Code of Canon Law PARENTS MAY NOT BE SPONSORS.

If, for emergency reasons, a Proxy Sponsor must be chosen, the same requirements hold for this person. Written notification of the proxy must be submitted to the Religious Education Office.

HOME BASED CATECHESIS

Parents whose children are home-schooled for academic subjects and who choose to prepare their children for the reception of the Sacraments through a home instruction program must contact the Director of Religious Education two years before the projected reception year, obtain a curriculum and keep regular appointment dates to determine the child's progress in preparation. It remains the responsibility of the pastor to determine that adequate preparation has been received by the student.

Parents whose children attend the local public schools are expected to enroll their children in the parish program for the Sacrament preparation years.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Because Our Lord's life is an example of total self-discipline, the Religious Education Program strives to teach discipline as well as doctrines of our faith. In order to accomplish this we ask that the student adhere to the following:

General Information

- * respectful attitude and speech to teachers and fellow students.
- * cooperation in classroom and program projects.
- * students may only enter the classroom when the catechist/aide are present.
- * personal habits of :
 - punctuality* (arrival ON TIME)
 - preparedness* (textbook, homework and study)
 - appropriate dress* (eg. Girls, no tank tops, bare midriffs, cutoffs, short shorts, or flip flops. Boys, no hats in school)
 - attentiveness* (eg. No gum chewing/snacking)
 - responsibility*: care for property of other students who use the same classroom: care for school property.
- * understand that repeated and/ or severe disciplinary infractions cause your temporary or permanent dismissal.

DISCIPLINE

Disregard for classroom and program regulations will not be tolerated. The Parish Religious Education Program offered by St. Patrick Parish has no tolerance for behaviors that are contrary to Catholic faith and morals, including but not limited to ongoing acts of obstinacy, improper language, fighting, physical, emotional or psychological intimidation, vandalism, demeaning behavior such as name-calling, obscene language or gestures, and harassment. Such behaviors violate the central teaching of our faith and will not be tolerated in any form.

These categories do not cover every possible situation. The parish determines what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior, both in and out of the classroom, in the school community generally, and outside the school community where such improper behavior affects the school community.

Conduct by children or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the Parish is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to, immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate.

Serious breaches of discipline include, but are not limited to:

- * ignoring the correction of catechists and staff
- * using inappropriate language
- * repeated interruptions in class
- * blatant disregard for classroom and program rules
- * indifference to reminders
- * disrespect to teachers and peers
- * using threatening or abusive behavior or language
- * speaking or writing about - or having in your possession - anything that could be used as or interpreted to be a weapon
- * use of cell phones, iphones during class

(It is the policy of this program that if a student uses a cell phone in class, the device will be sent to the school office where it can be picked up after class).

- * bully which involves actions or words against another for the purpose of inflicting physical or emotional harm or discomfort or damage to a person's reputation that is intimidating or threatening and affects the learning and school environments.

(If the bully is threatening harm, a student should tell a catechist, adult volunteer and/or the Director of Religious Education immediately.)

In the event a participant engages in any of the above listed behaviors or any other inappropriate conduct, and has failed to respond to a catechist's attempt to stop or correct the behavior, the following action may be taken and at the discretion of the Pastor or Director of Religious Education.

1. First Incident: the student will be removed from the sessions and the parent or guardian will be immediately notified by phone by the program director. The program director will schedule a conference with the parents/guardians, student, and catechist to discuss the matter.

2. Second Incident: the student will be removed from the sessions and be suspended from the program for a period of one session. The parents/guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child. Prior to returning to the program the program director will schedule a conference with the parents, students, and catechists to further discuss the matter.

3. Third Incident: the student will be removed from the session and dismissed from the program. The parents or guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child.

However, St. Patrick Parish reserves the right to supersede the forgoing course of action depending on the circumstances of any given situation.

PRAYER MEMORIZATION

“Prayer is the life of the new heart. It ought to animate us at every moment. We must remember God more often than we draw breath...The Tradition of the Church proposes to the faithful certain rhythms of praying intended to nourish continual prayer. Some daily, such as morning and evening prayer, grace before and after meals, the Liturgy of the Hours, Sundays, centered on the Eucharist, are kept holy primarily by prayer. The cycle of the liturgical year and its great feast are also basic rhythms of the Christian’s life of prayer.” (CCC 269, 2698)

Please teach your children to memorize the following prayers:

Level K Sign of the Cross, Morning Offering, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father...

Level 1 Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to Father, Grace Before and After Meals, Prayer to the Guardian Angel, a simple Morning Offering

Level 2 Same as Level 1 plus the Act of Contrition, Rosary

Level 3 Same as Level 2 plus Stations of the Cross, Apostles Creed, Hail Holy Queen

Level 4 - 6 Same as Level 3 plus Magnificat, Angelus, Prayers at Mass, Acts of Faith, Hope and Love, Come Holy Spirit, Memorare

REPORT CARDS AND ASSESSMENT

Students will be tested on the materials studied in class. Weekly assignments may be given as review or preparation for upcoming classes. Evaluations of students' classroom performance are based on test grades, homework assignments and classroom participation. Reports on student progress will be distributed two times a year in January and May. The reports will be sent home with the student/ mailed. Parents acknowledge receipt of the mid-year report card by signing and returning it to the classroom catechist. Both mid-year and final reports may be retained by the family at the end of the school year by request.

LOST AND FOUND

Items found in the classroom and identified as possibly belonging to religious education students are usually given to the Religious Education Office. They will be kept there through the next class week and then placed in the general "lost and found", which is found on the second floor of the school. Students who need to inquire about lost items should call the Religious Education Office (610-444-2214)

CATECHETICAL AIDE

We welcome and encourage any parent who would like to act as a volunteer aide in our classrooms. Their basic role would be to take attendance, help the catechist with activities, and see to the needs of the children. Any parent who has interest should contact the Religious Education Office.

WORKS OF MERCY

Students and their families are urged to assist their less fortunate neighbors through active participation of these monthly drives:

September: Peanut Butter and Jelly to stock the food bank of the Kennett Food Cupboard

October: Missions

November: Holiday Food Drive for Kennett Food Cupboard

December: Parish Advent Tree to provide clothing for the poor in our area

January: Missions

February: Missions

March: Missions

April: The Kennett Food Cupboard

SUPPLIES

Each child will receive a textbook and a communication envelope. Fourth grade students will also receive a *The Catholic Youth Bible* which will be used for levels 4, 5 and 6. There is a charge for a lost text (\$25.00) or Bible (\$25.00). *Pencils and notebooks are the responsibility of the student.*

FEES

Registration fee covers the expense for the textbook and materials used in class. Expenses for sacramental materials are requested separately.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

God, our Father, revealed Himself to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Since the day Our Blessed Mother Mary heard and accepted the Good news of Jesus, the Church, His Body, has followed His command: “ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”(Mt.28:19) With this understanding, Mary and Joseph taught Jesus.

“*The role of parents in education* is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute.” (GE) The most important responsibility of the parents is the education and spiritual faith formation of the child and with God’s help, all these things can be achieved.

With this understanding, the Religious Education Program at Saint Patrick parish will aid parents in meeting the responsibility given to them by God Himself by teaching the basic truths and traditions of the Catholic Church, developing a sense of prayer and worship and encouraging a sense of responsibility to themselves, their families and community.

Since example is more powerful than words, parents are urged to:

- * provide regular prayer opportunities in the home.
- * attend Sunday Mass as a family.
- * encourage frequent reception of Holy Eucharist and Penance.
- * model Catholic ethics and Gospel charity within and outside the family.
- * help the child prioritize to keep elective activities from minimizing commitment to regular attendance at religion class
- * attend Sacramental Program Workshops.
- * support the religious education of your child throughout all the school years (K - 12)

- * reinforce the catechist's work by
 - seeing that your child is ON TIME for class
 - supervising study and written assignments
 - participating in family liturgies
 - providing the catechist with health and medical information as pertinent; absence notes
 - promptly returning signed report cards
 - supporting the code for acceptable student behavior and dress.
 - observing the dismissal routine
 - notifying the program director regarding:
 - special learning needs of your child
 - absences, emergency lateness
 - change of address, telephone or other family information.

Parents may schedule personal interviews with the catechist or with the Director of Religious Education by calling the Religious Education Office.

ST. PATRICK CHURCH
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE
205 LAFAYETTE STREET
KENNETT SQUARE, PA 19348

610-444-2214

610-444-2129 fax

stpatdre14@gmail.com

Director of Religious Education (Mrs.) Marianne Kane

20 Ways to Foster Faith in the Home

1. Give blessings to one another
2. Celebrate name days and baptismal anniversaries
3. Pray spontaneously at special times: fist driver's licensee, first allowance, first date, tenth birthday, first day of school, or new job....
4. Pray grace before and after meals.
5. Celebrate the Eucharist as a family. Discuss the readings.
6. Set us a prayer corner in your home with religious images, a Bible, candles, and floral arrangements.
7. Pray the rosary together, at least a decade a day, and a whole one each day on May and October.
8. Attend a parish mission, retreat or prayer service together.
9. Play Christian songs in the car and sing along with them.
10. Talk about prayer: the way you like to pray best, your favorite prayer and when you pray.
11. Pray for situations in the news or your neighborhood and for friends and relatives.
12. Use religious images in the house to stay mindful of God and your faith: a crucifix on the bedroom walls, pictures, statues of Jesus, Mary and the saints.
13. Choose a patron saint for your family.
14. Have a blessed candle and display it on you dining room table for special occasions.
15. Be creative in forming a habit of praying at certain times such as while driving to school or cleaning the house.
16. Memorize Scripture passages or short prayers together.
17. Begin building prayer traditions such as reading the nativity sort together on Christmas Eve.
18. Pray a novena as a preparation for a special feast or event as First Communion, a wedding, Father's Day
19. Write a family prayer or a family creed.
20. Decide what to do as a family during Advent and Lent to observe the season, such as setting up an Advent Wreath.

