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**Table of Contents**

Philosophy .....	1
Mission Statement .....	1
Student/Parent Responsibility .....	2
<i>Admission Procedures</i> .....	2
<i>Financial Procedures</i> .....	3
<i>Sacramental Guidelines</i> .....	3
<i>Curriculum</i> .....	4
<i>Attendance</i> .....	5
<i>Homework</i> .....	6
<i>Discipline</i> .....	6
<i>Communication</i> .....	6
<i>Records</i> .....	6
<i>Safety and Emergency Procedures</i> ....	6
<i>Accidents</i> .....	7
<i>Child Protection</i> .....	7
<i>Field Trip Procedures</i> .....	7
Guidelines for Home-Based Religious Education .....	7

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Religious Education is recognized as a lifelong process of formation, beginning with Baptism, nurtured in the family, sustained through catechesis and continually fostered throughout adulthood.

We must discover the presence and purpose of God in today's events in the light of faith so we can know the missionary needs of the day.

Five goals of Religious Education are as follows:

1. Catechesis must present itself as a form of evangelization leading to missionary work
2. It must be addressed to people of all ages
3. It must be based on ancient traditions and form people in faith, personality and all.
4. It must announce the mystery of Christianity centered in the Trinity and leading to a life of faith
5. It must consider the preparation and formation of catechists a primary aim.

*(General Directory for Catechesis: 32,33)*

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Parish Center is a religious education center serving students and adults of the parishes of St. Augustine and St. Joseph. Students from other parishes are also served if they attend Minster Local Schools. All religious education programs will promote the human and spiritual needs of each person regardless of age or vocation.

## **STUDENT/PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

- There will be no discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin, or physical/mental disabilities.
- Parents must complete the Registration/Consent to Release forms for children in grades one through eight. This form will release students from the Minster Local School District into the "Released Time" religious education program held at the Parish Center. Classes will be held on designated days and times throughout the school day determined by the administration of the Minster Local School. Parents of high school students must complete the Registration forms to enroll their child in the religious education program held on Sunday mornings at the Parish Center.
- The Sacramental Records Form must be completed upon admission to the religious education program and are kept on file at the Parish Center to be updated whenever necessary.
  - o Upon initial entry into the program, students who received a sacrament at another parish outside of St. Augustine or St. Joseph must provide a copy of the certificate of the sacrament. Records of students who received their sacraments at St. Augustine or St. Joseph are kept at St. Augustine.
- Following the recommendation of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the Archdiocesan Liability Medical Release Form must be re-signed every year for students attending the St. Augustine/St. Joseph religious education program.
- Parents and students must sign the Discipline Policy form to be admitted to the religious education program.
  - o Please check policies listed under discipline in this handbook as far as dismissal of a student is concerned.

### **ADMISSION PROCEDURES (cont'd)**

- Non-custodial Parent Rights
  - o The Religious Education Director needs to be informed by the custodial parent of the rights of the non-custodial parent.

### **FINANCIAL PROCEDURES**

- Tuition/fees are set by the St. Augustine Temporal Affairs Committee at the onset of each school year.
- No child shall be denied a religious education due to lack of funds.

### **SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES**

The following are commitments asked of parents and students:

- 1) Realize the importance of learning about your faith which means students are required to attend CCD classes, grade school children attend release time classes held through the week and students considering Confirmation are required to attend classes that are held on Sunday mornings from September through December.

✝ For guidelines on home-based religious education in reference to sacraments, please refer to page 7 of the handbook.

- 2) Realize the importance of parents and students attending all parent meetings associated with the sacrament.
- 3) Special consideration should be given to all students considering Confirmation:

✝ You need to realize the importance of being at every class on Sunday mornings from September through December. Please take this into consideration if you are planning vacations for the fall, if you play or are planning on playing on an extracurricular team (fall baseball, fall basketball, any cheerleading competition, Minster Bowling Team, etc...).

*Special Note:* Students who do not comply with the attendance policy or who have not previously been enrolled in religious education must meet with the Pastor and the Religious Education Director before acceptance into the Confirmation program.

### **SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES (cont'd)**

- ✝ You are asked to reflect on and choose a Confirmation name, this could be your given Baptismal name or an additional name (which must be a Saint's name). You are then asked to do a research paper on this Saint.
- ✝ You are required to attend the Confirmation retreat.
- ✝ Service Projects - You are required to complete 4 hours of community service, which can be done during the summer prior to Confirmation but should be completed two weeks before the Confirmation date. Before you begin your service project, please call the Parish Center to pick up a service project form and have your project approved by the Religious Education Director.
- ✝ You are required to complete an interview with a member of the St. Augustine/St. Joseph religious staff – either a priest or a deacon.

Failure to comply with these recommendations may cause a delay in the reception of the sacrament. We, as a parish staff, cannot deny anyone a sacrament, but we have the right to defer a student from receiving a sacrament to a later date based on a lack of commitment.

### **CURRICULUM**

- The textbooks and materials used in the classrooms are approved by the Archdiocese and can be found listed in the Preferred Religion Textbook/Program List submitted by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Office of Religious Education.

*(Religious Education Policies Archdiocese of Cincinnati 2101.02)*

## **ATTENDANCE**

- Classes in parish religious education programs (early childhood, elementary, high school) are to meet a minimum of 30 clock hours per year. (*Religious Education Policies Archdiocese of Cincinnati 2103.01*)
- Release time for grades one through eight includes Mass once per week and two catechetical instruction classes. Attendance at Mass and both classes are required. Logistics prevent any variation to this policy.
  - o For the catechetical sessions, middle school students (grades four through eight) are transported to and from the Minster Middle School and the Parish Center via parish owned buses.
  - o On Mass days, it is the responsibility of all parents to provide transportation of their child/children in grades one through eight to church. Middle school students are then transported to the Minster Middle School by parish owned buses after Mass.
    - Parents of grade school students are asked to call the Parish Center when their child is sick on Mass days.

The program runs from the beginning to the end of the adopted calendar of the Minster Local Schools.
- Students in grades nine through twelve meet in two 12 week sessions on Sunday mornings at the Parish Center for one and one-quarter hour, one session in the fall and one session in the winter.
  - o Freshman, Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors must attend 75% of the classes to receive a complete for the course (they may not miss more than 3 classes per session). Students enrolled in Confirmation must adhere to the attendance policy found in the Sacramental guidelines

## **ATTENDANCE (cont'd)**

- Any student who misses two consecutive classes without proper notification to the catechist or Parish Center will be sent a letter addressed to their parents advising them of the absences.

## **HOMEWORK**

- Recognizing the need that all lessons cannot be completed in class, homework may be assigned at times. Homework will be kept to an absolute minimum.

## **DISCIPLINE**

- Necessary actions and reasonable precautions will be taken to safeguard students, equipment, materials and facilities.
- The students will be expected to show respect towards each other, the teachers, monitors and staff as stated in the Discipline Policy that must be signed by student and parents upon registration.
- Students are reprimanded per the Discipline Policy signed at registration.
- The Religious Education Director retains the right to make exceptions to the disciplinary procedures.
- Search and seizure policies regarding weapons, drugs, stolen property, etc. are per **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS: See chapter 2 of A Primer on Law for DRE's and Youth Ministers.**

## **COMMUNICATION**

- Parents will be kept informed by the St. Augustine and St. Joseph Sunday bulletin, letters and phone calls.
- Parents/Guardians are welcome to contact the Parish Center, 419/628-3434, [augreled@staugie.com](mailto:augreled@staugie.com) at any time.

## **RECORDS**

- Student evaluations will be given for the grade school students during the Christmas break and at the end of the school year. High school student evaluations will be sent at the end of each respective session.

## **SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

- Students & staff must be aware of the fire and safety codes in the building.

### **SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (cont'd)**

- Fire/safety codes will be discussed at the beginning of each school year and drills performed throughout the school year.
- All students must uphold these standards.

### **ACCIDENTS**

- All students who attend classes must have a St. Augustine/St. Joseph Consent to Medical Release form on file. In the case of an accident of a student in the Parish Center, the Religious Education Director, Pastor and parents will be informed as soon as possible.

### **CHILD PROTECTION**

- The Parish Center follows the Decree on Child Protection, 2003 Archdiocese of Cincinnati. All persons who have regular, significant relationships with children must comply with the policies, procedures and recommendations of the Archdiocese within this policy. These guidelines include all personnel to have:
  - o Fingerprinting by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati
  - o Attend a Decree on Child Protection Session

### **FIELD TRIP PROCEDURES**

- A written release form based on Archdiocesan guidelines must be given for each trip off Archdiocesan property. Field trips during school time must be within the allotted class time. Following Archdiocesan policy, drivers for field trips must be at least 21 years of age and have valid drivers' license. Permission for all field trips are given by the Religious Education Director.

### **GUIDELINES FOR HOME-BASED RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- When parents decide to provide the formal religious education of their children at home, they are encouraged to meet with the Pastor so that he and/or his delegate can assist them in developing a catechetical plan and in choosing catechetical materials suitable for home-based religious education. (Canons 776, 793)

### **GUIDELINES FOR HOME-BASED RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (cont'd)**

- *Growing Together: Ministry to Children, the Graded Learning module of Study for Early Childhood and Elementary Catechetical Programs and Growing Together: Adolescent Religious Education, a Manual for Parish and School Programs* have been approved by the Archdiocesan Commission on Education and promulgated by Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk as the official content to be followed for all early childhood, elementary and high school catechesis in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. All catechists for children or youth are expected to follow the content outlined in these documents.
- Parents should be invited to use the parish resource libraries and the Archdiocesan Media Centers to supplement their educational efforts.
- Parents and their children are welcome and encouraged to participate in parish liturgies and/or other events prepared specifically for children and their families.
- The Pastor and/or his delegate should invite parents to participate in the catechist certification process of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati as outlined in *The Ministry of the Catechist*. (Canons 779, 780)
- Parents are encouraged to meet with the Pastor and/or his delegate periodically to review the progress of their catechetical efforts.
- When parents believe that their child is ready to receive a sacrament for the first time, the Pastor of the parish to which the child belongs is to decide whether he or she is properly prepared. (Canons 777, 914) The parish to which a child belongs is either the parish in which he or she resides or is another parish in which he or she is registered. Section V of *Growing Together: Ministry to Children* should be used as the basis for determining readiness.