



ST. ROSE OF LIMA
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Parent Handbook
September 2021 - May 2022

Please note: This Handbook is for general use and does not address the concerns and alterations we will need to consider due to the COVID-19 virus, nor does it list state and local guidelines for the return to classes.

This document is only meant to provide parents and guardians with the expectations and guidelines for Religious Education on-campus classes during a regular school year.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

St. Rose of Lima Religious Education Office Staff

NAME	POSITION	PHONE #	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Cate Gosselin	Director – Parish Faith Formation	203-426-2333, ext. 1	dre@strosechurch.com
Sandy Jarvis	Coordinator, Grades K - 3 1 st Reconciliation & 1 st Communion	203-426-2333, ext. 4	cre@strosechurch.com
Mary Craig	Coordinator, Grades 4 – 8 and Confirmation	203-426-2333, ext. 2	sacraments@strosechurch.com
Silvia Harper	Database Administrator & Registration	203-426-2333, ext. 3	database@strosechurch.com
Office Fax #		203-426-8074	

Religious Education Office Hours:

(Please note these are the open office hours when we will see visitors by appointment only)

Summer Hours: Monday – Friday: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

School Year Hours: Monday - Tuesday: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm
(Staff are in classroom buildings after 3 p.m.)

Wednesday – Friday: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Saturday / Sunday: **CLOSED**

Communication:

St. Rose Religious Education web page can be found under the Religious Education heading of the St. Rose of Lima Church website (www.strosechurch.com). Occasionally our office sends emails to families. **It is the family's responsibility to notify the Religious Education office of any updates or changes to your email address. Please do not unsubscribe from our emails.** By doing so you remove yourself from all future emails containing updates and/or changes to classes, events or sacraments.

Parents are called to be the First Catechists of their child.

What is Family Catechesis?*



What is Family Catechesis? by Joe Paprocki

Joe Paprocki, DMin, is National Consultant for Faith Formation at Loyola Press. He has been involved in the catechetical ministry for over 35 years.

“Most parents understandably react to being told that they are their child’s primary catechist by reminding us that they are not teachers. My friend David Heimann, Director of Religious Education at St. Andrew Parish in Chicago, explains that he reminds parents that they teach their children all the time: parents teach children how to walk, how to talk, how to tie their shoes, how to look both ways before crossing the street, how to know right from wrong, how to say “please” and “thank you,” and so much more. When it comes to family catechesis, we need to remind parents that they are not called to be theologians with extensive knowledge of Catholic doctrine, but rather role models who believe that God calls us to live as Jesus lived. They are called to teach their children not primarily doctrines, concepts, and dogmas, but a way of life.”

“Our first responsibility in equipping and empowering parents to embrace their role as the primary catechists of their children is to reassure them with the words, ‘You can do this!’”

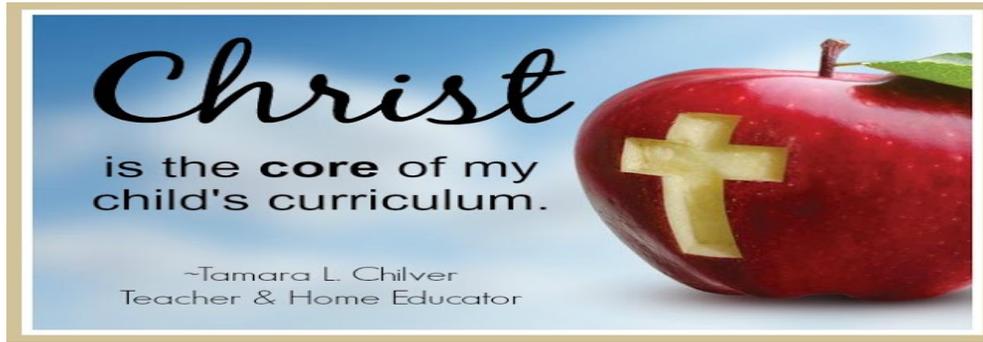
* Please note: some parishes in our area offer Whole Family Catechesis. This is not the program that we offer at St. Rose of Lima Parish. Our program is based on approximately 25 weeks of in-class, on-campus sessions, taught by volunteer catechists.



Parents as Substitute Teachers

When introducing yourself to your child’s catechist, kindly offer to be a substitute teacher for the class should the need arise, and there are times throughout the year that we need your support and availability.

Our office will provide you with all necessary materials and the teacher’s manual to “walk” you through the lessons. By substitute teaching your child’s class, you assist us in making sure there is continuity in the classroom and we appreciate your support of your child’s catechist in their time of need. THANK YOU.



Religious Education Curriculum

The Diocese of Bridgeport has developed curriculum guidelines to assist us in the instruction of the Roman Catholic faith, as required for each grade level. St. Rose of Lima adheres to curriculum and Diocesan guidelines. **It is essential that students complete all grade levels, starting with Grade 1. This is a prerequisite for celebrating the Sacraments (see Sacrament section).**

GRADE	THEME / TOPICS COVERED	PRAYERS / DOCTRINE TO BE LEARNED
Grade K	Introduction to God as Creator of all good things and Jesus, His Son; Prayer, Family.	Introduction to formal prayers; Children will learn to work in a faith-based classroom setting.
Grade 1	Introduction to the Trinity, Holy Family, Holy days of Christmas and Easter.	Sign of the Cross; Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be
Grade 2	Jesus forgives our sins; Preparation and receipt of First Reconciliation. Jesus lives in the Eucharist; Preparation and Receipt of First Communion.	Act of Contrition, as well as those learned in Grade 1.
Grade 3	Introduction to our role in the Church and our relationship with Jesus. The Rosary.	Apostles Creed, as well as those learned in Grade 1 and Grade 2. How to pray the Rosary.
Grade 4	Introduction to the 10 Commandments.	<i>Students should be comfortable reciting all learned prayers.</i> Able to recite the Ten Commandments.
Grade 5	Introduction to the Seven Sacraments.	<i>Students should be comfortable reciting all learned prayers.</i> Able to recite the Seven Sacraments.
Grade 6	Introduction to the Bible; Students receive their own copy of the bible. Introduction to the Old Testament.	<i>Students should be comfortable reciting all learned prayers.</i>
Grade 7	Introduction to the New Testament; In-depth discussion of the Saints; Choosing a Confirmation (saint) name. Putting Faith in Action (Community Service.)	<i>Students should be comfortable reciting all learned prayers.</i>
Grade 8	Serving our community of faith; Students will have a Day of Community Service as part of their curriculum. The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Preparation and receipt of Confirmation.	<i>Students should be comfortable reciting all learned prayers.</i> Able to recite the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.



Attendance Policy

To provide the best religious education experience for your child, it is important that students attend all classes (per their class schedule) and be on time. Since class time is limited to one hour, it is important (and extremely helpful) that students do not develop poor attendance habits. **The child's attendance and tardiness record will be noted on his/her progress report.**

If your child is sick, please call or email the catechist as soon as possible. The catechist will inform you of the chapter that you need to teach at home. You can also check our website: www.strosechurch.com for grade level curriculum/schedules. Please call the Religious Education office if you need assistance or have any questions.

If your child is habitually late or absent, the parent/guardian should consider if this is the appropriate class time and day for their child. The Religious Education office will gladly work with you to find a more appropriate session or help you develop an alternative plan for teaching your child.

Student Textbooks

Grade level textbooks are the principal teaching resource used in each class and grade; it is important that the student brings it to class every time students meet. Since some of the student's work/activities are completed in the textbook during class, it does not serve the student to be without their own copy of the textbook. Students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades should also bring their bibles to class each week. Students are encouraged to bring their own pens/pencils as well. **Students are responsible for bringing these materials to the class, as it shows responsibility and preparedness.** We kindly request parents/guardians assist your children, especially younger students, in this responsibility. Thank you.

Parents, as primary educators of our faith, must support the catechists by reviewing with their child/ren what they learned during class, what was covered in the student book, and/or discuss any artwork or crafts that the children bring home and how it relates to the week's lesson.

Formation Assessments and Progress Reports

Formal assessments will be given throughout the year, either in the form of chapter quizzes, unit reviews or tests, half-year assessments or online quizzes. The type of assessment is based on the grade level and thorough review by the Religious Education office. Any assessment is based on textbook topics and formal prayers taught in the grade level. All assessments are sent home to parents with the intention that parents will work with their child to reinforce and increase fundamental knowledge of the Catholic faith and practice with their child any prayers that he/she is struggling to recite. **Also, students are required to master the doctrine and prayers before being promoted to the next grade level.**

Progress Reports will be handed out to all students at the mid-year. The progress report will carry the following information: Attendance/Tardiness; Comprehension of doctrine/theme for the particular grade; Formal prayers to be learned and recited for the particular grade. There is also a comment section for catechists to share concerns and successes with the parents/guardians. **Parents/guardians should review this progress report with their child, sign and return the progress report to the catechist.**

Arrival and Dismissal of Children

The safety of all children is our first priority; therefore, your cooperation and compliance with the following procedures are needed to ensure their security. Though parents may feel comfortable allowing their child to enter the parking lot and/or cross traffic without an adult present, it is for the safety and welfare of all that the following guidelines are strictly enforced.



Please note: ALL STUDENTS SHOULD BE WALKED TO CLASS ON THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF CLASS. Please come to the classroom to meet the Catechist, introduce yourself as the parent/guardian, and learn the exit/pickup location for your child/ren.

If your child is in Grades K through 3 (in Holy Innocents):

You must park your car and accompany your child to and from the *classroom door* (so that they are under adult supervision at all times).

If your child is in Grades 4 through 8: (in Holy Innocents or Religious Ed. Offices building):

- Drop-off: Parents may drop off children at the sidewalk in front of Holy Innocents. Children should exit the vehicle on the side closest to the buildings. To avoid the back-up of incoming traffic, please do not linger in the driving lane.
- Pick-up: Parents are to park their car and **MUST walk to the classroom door** to collect their child and escort them back to their cars.
- **Our parking lot is a high traffic area at a busy time of the day; students ARE NEVER PERMITTED to enter the parking lot and cross the traffic without an adult accompanying them.**

Gentle Reminders:

- Do not park alongside the curb by 38 Church Hill to wait for pick-up; this poses a safety risk and traffic congestion for children using the sidewalk and for drivers entering or exiting the driveway/parking lot.
- Please send a note to the catechist if someone other than the parent will pick up your child/ren.
- We ask that you do not pick up your child from class early, unless absolutely necessary, as this upsets the rhythm of the class, and your child will miss any announcements and/or notices going home. Incomplete class work **MUST BE COMPLETED** at home before the class meets again.
- If you must pick up your child early, you must notify staff as you enter the building and pick up the child from the classroom. **NO Child will be dismissed early and be allowed to wait outside.**

Closings/Cancellations

Sunday

- If inclement weather is expected or occurring, we will try to make a decision ASAP (Saturday evening if possible; no later than 7am on Sunday) whether to cancel religious education classes on Sunday. Notice will be posted on the parish website www.strosechurch.com, and social media, as well as sent via Constant Contact messaging.

Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday

- If the Newtown Public School System cancels classes or has early dismissal due to inclement weather, all Religious Education classes are also cancelled.

- If public school dismisses at the regular time but inclement weather is getting worse, we will decide ASAP whether to have religious education classes that day. If we cancel we will send out notice by email; parish website announcement (www.strosechurch.com); and place a cancellation message on social media and the Religious Education Office telephone answering machine as well.

If we have not cancelled class but you are concerned about travel conditions, use your best judgement whether to bring your child/ren to class. If you decide to keep your child/ren home, please contact your child/ren's catechist(s) to let the him/her know your child will be absent and to find out the week's classwork, which you will make up at home.

SACRAMENTS

Baptism

The Sacrament of Baptism is scheduled through the Parish Rectory Office. Pre-Baptism classes are held for parents on a regular basis. Please call the Rectory (203-426-1014) for more information.

Profession of Faith

As we prepare students for the sacrament of First Communion, we must have a copy of their Baptism Certificate on record. If your child was not baptized in the Catholic faith, then we will discuss preparing your child for a Profession of Faith.

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

Preparation for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist begins with the Instructional/Enrollment Mass in the Fall. This is an essential component for preparation for these Sacraments, and attendance of parent/guardian and child is required. A detailed informational packet that outlines the schedule of events and workshops related to the sacramental preparation and celebrations is usually distributed at this gathering.

First Reconciliation takes place in January. First Eucharist takes place in May. Students enrolled in Grade Two religious education are considered candidates for these Sacraments.

Confirmation

Active Confirmation preparation begins in Grade Seven and is completed before the celebration of the Sacrament in Grade Eight (provided the child has fulfilled Diocesan Guidelines.) Confirmation is celebrated in the Spring. The actual date of the Sacrament is determined by the Bishop's office and is announced once our office has received the notification.

The following foundational topics are addressed over the course of this two-year preparation period:

- Saints (understanding the Communion of Saints/Choosing a Patron Saint)
- Faith in Action (Community Service)
- Holy Spirit (Gifts and Fruits received during Confirmation)
- Development of Spirituality (retreats)
- Development of Moral Thinking and Decision Making
- Social Justice
- Role of Confirmed Catholics in the Church

SUMMARY

The mission of the St. Rose Religious Education program is to offer a practical and fully engaging religion instruction to students in grades 1 – 8, with each grade paying particular attention to the teachings of the Catholic Faith, as advised by the Diocese of Bridgeport.

Our mission is to foster the faith of our youngest parishioners and those of the greater Newtown community to understand their faith, develop a relationship with God, and a spirit of compassion and service for their “neighbors”.

The sacraments are celebrated in Grades 2 and 8 in accordance with Diocesan Guidelines. We will work with families to attain all necessary instruction to be ready to celebrate the sacraments within a timely manner, with the assistance of the parents/guardians to either tutor their child or pay for a tutor as necessary, and as one is available.

Families enrolled in St. Rose of Lima Religious Education will adhere by all policies and procedures, including resolution of any outstanding tuition balance in the current year prior to registering their child for the upcoming/new school year and BEFORE their child receives the sacrament of First Communion or Confirmation. (Balances will NOT be allowed to roll over from one school year to the next.)

All decisions, resolutions, policies and procedures will be the final approval of the St. Rose of Lima Religious Education office and through the advisement of Monsignor Robert Weiss (Pastor), the St. Rose of Lima Board of Religious Education, and/or the Parish Finance Council.

Signed,

*Cate Gosselin, Director of Religious Education
and
St. Rose of Lima Board of Religious Education*