

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Patrick Cathedral's Parish Religious Education Program! We are honored to share the truths of the Catholic faith with your child. It is our hope that each one will develop a strong relationship with our Lord – to know, love, and serve Him - now and in the years ahead.

Our responsibility as a parish is to support parents as the primary teachers of their children. Through our Religious Education classes from first through twelfth grade, we seek to impart knowledge, experience, and skills necessary to become faithful and fruitful followers of Jesus Christ.

However, we only see your children for a little over an hour each week! This means that the bulk of religious education must be done at home. I know this may be daunting or difficult at times – but it is our job as parents! Through our prayers, example, and interactions with our children, we have the opportunity to help them develop the most important relationship they will ever have – their relationship with Jesus Christ. This is a great privilege.

We are never too young or too old to grow in our faith, and religious education is a life long process. A few ways we can help our children grow as Catholic Christians are to:

- Attend mass together each week. This is even more important than coming to religious education classes!
- Pray for our children. Prayer is powerful.
- Pray together. We can pray before meals, before bed, and at other times throughout the day; we can pray for people who are sick, for our family's needs, for help with homework or on tests; we can thank God for the gifts He has given us...the list is endless (especially with children!).
- Ask what your child learned in class that Sunday.
- Answer children's questions. If you don't know an answer, someone else probably does. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is a great resource. Feel free to ask me questions as well – if I don't know the answer, I'll help you find it.
- Take advantage of the sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Nurture our own faith by reading from the Catechism and the Bible.

Know that I am here as a resource, and am excited to support you in the religious education of your children. If I can help you in any way, or if you have questions or concerns about our parish religious education program, don't hesitate to contact me.

May God bless our year together!

Sincerely,

Becky Fair  
Coordinator of Religious Education

*Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents.” (Catechism, 2226).*

### **CLASS TIMES**

Classes take place on Sundays from 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Please bring your child to class on time. Grades 1- 8 are located in the Cathedral School building on Liberty Street. Grades 9 - 12 are located in the Cathedral Hall. If the building has not opened, please stay with your child until the building is opened and staffed appropriately.

Please pick your child up at noon. The children get worried when their parents do not show up on time, and it is necessary to clear the area for those coming to Mass at 12:15 p.m. We will stay with your children until you arrive, but your attention to this matter will be greatly appreciated.

### **SECURITY**

The school doors are kept locked and monitored at all times. If no one is at the door when you arrive, please ring the bell. The C/DRE or designee should be in the building by 10:40 a.m.

If there are child custody issues in regards to picking up your children, you **must** notify the CRE (Becky).

Each catechist is required to complete the State Police background and Child Abuse Clearances, as well as a diocesan Safe Environment Training, according to the Diocese of Harrisburg Child Protection Policies.

### **EMERGENCIES**

If you must call the school during class time, please call 234-3797; you will only be able to get through during class time. Do not leave a voice mail, as it won't be checked until school reopens Monday. If you are unable to reach anyone at this number, call Becky's cell phone at 917-0092.

### **ATTENDANCE**

If you know in advance your child will be absent, please notify your child's teacher. If a child is ill, you can leave a message at the Religious Education office (232-2169 x211), or send a brief note the following week.

### **DISCIPLINE**

If a child needs to be removed from a classroom due to behavior, the student will spend some time in the office with the Coordinator of Religious Education. The catechist or CRE will let parents know of any ongoing problems. If anything is going on in a child's life that the catechist should be aware of, parents should not hesitate to communicate that to the catechist or CRE.

### **WEAPONS**

If a student is discovered with a weapon, law enforcement will be notified. Students will be suspended from the program pending review of their situation.

### **FOOD**

Other than prearranged snacks for the class, please do not bring food or drinks into the school.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

For cancellations due to weather, please watch channel 27 WHTM. You can also call the Religious Education office and listen to the voicemail message.