

Tricks, Lures, & Warning Signs

Abusers and sexual predators use various methods to entice children and ensure their cooperation/participation. Here are some you can warn your children about.

Bad News Trick:

The predator tells a child that something has happened (sickness or death of a parent, fire...), and that they have come to pick up the child and bring him/her home.

Bribes And Treats:

Offers of something special that the child may want, and then asking for sexual favors in return.

Trust Grooming:

The predator gives assistance to a child when needed or may offer to help the family of the child by offering rides or babysitting. This puts the predator in a position of trust for future abuse.

Drugs and Alcohol:

Drugs and/or alcohol can be given to a child to make them more compliant.

"Accidental" Touching:

Wrestling, tickling, accidental or deliberate contact with genitalia as part of the rules to a game.

Keeping Secrets:

The predator leads the child to believe that there is some secret that is just between them and shouldn't be told to parents.

Pornography:

Showing "dirty" pictures to children to raise curiosity about sex. (Speaking profanely and telling sexual jokes can also be used to gain a child's interest in sex.)

Help Me Tricks:

Requesting help from a child, i.e. asking for directions, finding a lost pet, carrying heavy packages.

Internet lures:

A predator will try to get personal information from the child. The predator may act as though he or she is the same age as the child in order to establish a friendship. He or she often will send the child sexual material and will try to set up a meeting with the child.

Abuse of Power or Authority:

A predator may be in a position of authority such as a coach, police officer, priest, or teacher and use this position to get children to be obedient to his or her request.

Special Attention/Favoritism:

The predator gives special attention or favor to a child to gain trust for future sexual abuse.



Internet Safety

Parents must take a full responsibility for their children's on-line computer use. Sexual predators often use the internet to sexually exploit children and teens. School age children should be strictly monitored whenever they use the computer. Here are some common sense rules to set for your children.

- * Never give personal, identifying information to anyone on-line.
- * Never respond to messages that are suggestive, obscene, or make you feel uncomfortable.
- * Not everything you read on-line is true. An offer that is "too good to be true" probably is.
- * Make the use of the computer a family activity. The computer should not be in a child's bedroom but in the family room or living room.
- * Use a filter to deny access to certain types of material.
- * Be suspicious if your child spends late-night time on the computer or if he or she changes the screen quickly when you come near.

Behavior Changes

If a child is experiencing emotional difficulties, his or her behavior often changes. The talkative child may become moody and reclusive; the quiet child may react with anger in fits of temper or voiced resentment. The vigilant parent must be sensitive to these changes in ordinary behavior. This is the time when communication is very important and a kind and caring approach is necessary. Make sure your children know your love for them and your interest in their concerns. Sometimes children will speak to a grandparent, aunt, or uncle if they are reluctant to speak to parents. Remember, if you suspect that something is wrong, it probably is. Bring in your family support system to help you in this situation.



All education programs present age-appropriate and doctrinally sound material to their students. Contact the Department of Education for details.

The Company Your Child Keeps

Always know where your children are and who is supervising them. Be aware if an adult chaperone is paying attention to your child to the exclusion of others. Be concerned about the adults with whom your child communicates via e-mail or phone, if the adult seems to monopolize his or her time. Be prudent about excursions and outings which you allow your child to attend, try to serve as chaperone yourself as often as possible. Let your children know that their friends are welcome in your home.

The Mission of the Department of Education is to bear witness to Jesus Christ through the education, religious formation and spiritual development of the people of God particularly through parishes, schools and institutes of higher learning. Please contact them if you have questions about your child at: Dept. of Education, Archdiocese of New York, 1011 First Ave., New York, NY 10022-4134, 212-371-1000

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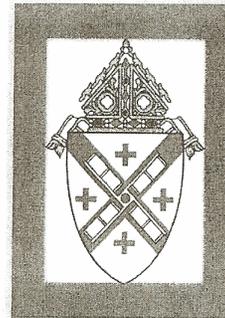
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Archdiocese of New York
Department Of Education



PARENT FACT SHEET
Keeping Your Children Safe

Dear Parents,

This is a copy of the information on the Archdiocese Safe Environment Program. Each year during the month of January your children will receive instruction on the Safe Environment Program.

This letter will keep you abreast of what is expected of our program and what is expected of you as parents to keep our children safe.

CHILDREN ARE GIFTS FROM GOD

OUR LORD HAS A SPECIAL PLACE IN HIS HEART FOR ALL CHILDREN. IN THE GOSPELS, HE ILLUSTRATED THE CAPACITY OF ADULTS TO SHOW "THE LITTLE ONES" A PATH TO HIM. PART OF THAT CAPACITY INCLUDES THE RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP ALL CHILDREN SAFE. AS THE PRIMARY EDUCATORS OF YOUR CHILDREN, HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR YOU TO ENSURE THEIR SAFETY.



Communicating With Children

Always keep communication open between you and your children. Encourage them to speak about their day in school and afterward. Always listen respectfully and try not to react with emotion if you hear something, which shocks or surprises you. Be ready to discuss, advise, and correct them in a calm and loving way. Praise your child whenever possible, and, if it is necessary to be disapproving, choose your words carefully and be as kind as possible when speaking. Young children want to please their parents and can be emotionally hurt by critical comments. Always let the child know you love him or her; it is the behavior you may not like. The more open a parent can be, the more interested in the child's behavior, the easier it will be for the child to speak to the parent if serious problems occur. Be a good listener.

Recognizing The Dignity Of Every Child

All of us are children of God and, as such, must be treated with dignity and respect. Teach your child about this dignity and that no one should touch him or her in a disrespectful way. Children should know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touches. We teach primary grade children that the parts of our bodies, which are covered by a bathing suit, are private. It is advisable to use proper names for the parts of the body when you have the discussion with your child. Tell the child that no one is ever to touch those private parts of their bodies unless they're at the doctor for a check-up (and you are there with them) or when they might ask you for some assistance. Teach your children that they are very precious to God and, if anyone tries to touch them in a private place, they are to say "NO" in a very loud voice and that they should tell you immediately. Assure your children that if someone touches them, they are NOT at fault - the adult who touched them is.



Safe Environment Program

Dear Parents,

Following is a copy of the information on the Archdiocese Safe Environment Program. Each year your children will receive instruction on the Safe Environment Program.

This will keep you abreast of what is expected of our program and what is expected of you as parents to keep our children safe.

Safe Environment Lesson—Opt Out

Usually taught in November. If parents choose not to have their child participate in the safe environment training that is mandated for all our religious education programs, they will be provided with the Parent Fact Sheet, and asked to sign a form acknowledging that information about preventing child sexual abuse was made available to them. Exact date for lesson will be posted in November calendar.

Please request form if you would like to have your child opt out.

<https://www.archny.org/safe-environment-program>

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A.

Statement of Philosophy

We at the parish of St. Denis look upon religious education as a total parish experience involving not just the child, but also parents, families, catechists, and priests that form our parish community of faith. We believe that religious education is getting to know Jesus and learning what is expected of one who chooses to follow Him in the Catholic tradition. Our program reflects an integrated learning experience, composed of learning, catechesis, prayer, sacramental preparation, traditional catholic doctrine, biblical studies, liturgy, community building, and other dimensions of vibrant church life. Through the light of faith, we hope to develop in those entrusted to our care a deeper relationship with God.

Evacuation:

The fire alarm will sound, the classes will evacuate the building to a secure location. The religious education office will notify rectory, police and parents. Law enforcement and emergency response personnel will redirect parents to the secured location. Parents will be able to sign out children from designated areas. Parents always maintain their authority to remove the students from the school. Clear written permission must be provided in order to allow adults other than parents or guardians to remove students from school.

Parents must be sure to notify the religious education office of any change in emergency contact person or new phone numbers.

Please do not call office, the phones will be needed to make calls. Please check for a Flocknote text or email.

Under no circumstances will any child ever be left unsupervised. It is unfortunate that these measures must be taken; however, we recognize that these steps need to be taken to ensure your children's safety.

Dear Parents,

Enclosed is a set of procedures that will be followed in case of any emergency that occurs during class sessions. Please read the instructions carefully and adhere to the procedure.

One of three plans will be put into action depending on the set of circumstances.

- Early dismissal
- Lockdown
- Evacuation

Early dismissal

The religious education office will notify the rectory and a Flocknote (text or email) will be sent to all families. Phone calls will be made to all parents/emergency contacts. Children will be released as parents arrive and sign them out.

Lockdown

The building will be secured by locking all windows, doors, and blinds drawn. The children will be brought to the atrium corridors and await parents/guardians arrival. The police, rectory and parents will be notified by the religious education office.

Parents will be informed and directed where and when children will be released by emergency personnel at site.

B.
Dear Parents:

Right after your children were baptized the priest offered this prayer for you as fathers and mothers:

“God is the giver of all life human and divine. May He bless the fathers of these children. With their wives they will be the first teachers of their children in the ways of the faith. May they also be the best teachers bearing witness to the faith by what they say and do, in Christ Jesus Our Lord.”

In addition to instructing your children in Christian truth we welcome the opportunity to assist you in fulfilling your primary obligation to help you teach your children to walk in the ways of faith. This can only be done when each family places Jesus Christ and His teachings at the center of their lives through Sunday worship, family prayer and daily living of the Christian message.

We ask you to consider especially your attendance, wherever possible, at the Family Mass. Whether you find it possible to attend at that time or not we urge you to consider regular attendance at Sunday Mass with your children as an essential part of their religious education.

We look forward to genuine cooperation with you in communicating Catholic Christian values to your children. We need to pray together, talk together and plan together. In that way we can draw fully from sacred scripture and church teachings and work to support each other in instilling them in our children who need these values so much in today’s world.

This excellent booklet will help all of us to establish our goals and to cooperate in fulfilling them. May God bless us in the work of Christian Education which we carry on in His name.

May all of us grow in wisdom, strength, and grace.

C. Living a Christian Life

Living the Catholic life is not simply done by going to Mass regularly or attending religious education classes. It is a lifestyle that is to be witnessed everyday by what we do at home, at work, at school and at play.

Mass Attendance

An integral part of our Religious Education Program is that our students attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and participate fully in an essential part of the sacramental life of the church. Learning in classes can be truly effective only when one meets the Lord sacramentally at the altar.

D. Role of Parent/Guardian

The parent/guardian has the primary and sacred responsibility to educate their child in the faith. St. Denis Religious Education Program is established to assist them in this responsibility.

It is essential to the child's growth and development in the Catholic faith that the parents/guardian live the life of faith at home. The effectiveness of the religious education process radically depends upon this. The child learns in the religious education classes that celebrating the Eucharist on Sunday in the local parish as a community of faith is essential to being Catholic. Therefore, the child must attend the weekly Sunday or Saturday evening liturgy supported by his/her parents.

It is obvious that the values of parents/guardians become the values of the child. The child receives a "mixed message" which causes inner conflict when what is taught by the church is not experienced by the child in his/her family.

The Director/Coordinator should be informed by the custodial parent of the rights of the non-custodial parent as these pertain to the child's participation in the program as well as release from the program.

Medical Condition of Student

The parent/guardian must inform the Director or Coordinator about their child who has a special medical condition which could flare up in a session or which could affect the teaching/learning environment (e.g. allergies, asthma, auditory or visual impairment, possibility of seizures, learning disability, hyperactivity, attention deficit disorder, etc.) This confidential information is communicated to the catechist by the Director.

The St. Denis Religious Education Emergency Plan Procedure

Field Trips

If a field trip is planned for the Catechetical program, the Parish-Sponsored Trip Form must be completed by the parent of every minor who will participate. Telephone calls will not be accepted in lieu of written permission forms. Great care must be taken to ensure the safety of the students during the entire course of the trip, including the provision of excellent supervision and proper insurance coverage. If field trips are taken, only hired buses, vans, etc. which are properly covered by insurance provided by the owner, should be used. There may be a situation where volunteers have agreed to use their own automobiles to transport children for various catechetical program activities. In these cases, the volunteers should understand that the automobile policy of the volunteer responds first in the event of any accident. (Insurance follows the car, not the driver.)

N. General Information

Phone Use - The office telephone is a business phone and is not to be used by students, except in an emergency.

Valuables - The catechetical staff cannot be responsible for valuables which students bring to class. It is recommended that all valuables be left at home.

Lost & Found - All clothing, money, jewelry or any other articles of value that are turned in, may be claimed at the Religious Education Office after proper identification

Snacks - It is recommended that the catechetical program avoid serving food during the sessions because some children may have medical restrictions or allergies to certain foods or ingredients.

Unscheduled Early Dismissals

At the end of the catechetical session children are dismissed to the care of the parent or parent substitute (must be someone designated in writing at registration on the "Student Information Record.") If someone other than the parent or parent substitute is to pick up the child, this change must be given in writing to the Director prior to the session in question. Catechetical staff should not drive students home. The recommended method of dismissal is to have the parent come to the classroom where the children are waiting under the care of the Catechist. If an individual student needs to be dismissed early, the request should be given in writing by the parent to the Director and presented prior to the scheduled class. This request should include: the name of the person picking up the child, date and time, reason and parent's signature. Please instruct your child to report to the Director in the unforeseen event of not being picked up. The child will then remain with the Director/Coordinator until the child's parent arrives.

E. Role of Student

Spiritual:

Regular attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, periodic participation in the Rite of Reconciliation, living a moral life that reflects value and teachings of Jesus Christ all contribute to the student's spirituality.

Religious Obligations for Children in Our Program:

- To participate in the Eucharistic Celebration of the Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
- To experience the Lord's forgiveness by receiving the Sacrament of Penance frequently.
- To lead a sacramental life, frequently receiving the Eucharist.
- To try to follow the laws, norms and guidelines that tell Catholics how to know God and their neighbor:
 - Ten Commandments
 - Beatitudes
 - Laws of the Church
 - Corporal Works of Mercy
 - Spiritual Works of Mercy

Academics:

- Weekly attendance at religious education classes
- Proper preparation for class instruction
- Complete homework
- Textbook available for each class
- Participation in class discussions and activities
- Satisfactory completion of special assignments
- Coming to class prepared with pencil, notebook, textbook, and other necessary materials.
- Doing the very best work possible. Just "getting by" is not a worthwhile goal.

F. Role of the Religious Education Director/Coordinator

The Director/Coordinator of the Religious Education Program of St. Denis is delegated by the Pastor to be responsible for the development, implementation and administration of the parish catechetical program, in accordance with the Guidelines of the Archdiocese of New York.

He/she has the responsibility of implementing the principles of civil law concerning the safety of students in accordance with the Archdiocesan Safety Guidelines.

The Director/Coordinator is also required to provide catechesis/religious education for all students of the parish including those who have physical, emotional, mental or learning disabilities. The Church is responsible to nourish the faith of the baptized person to the degree that the individual is capable of growing. The placement of the student is determined by the Director/Coordinator, after consultation with the parent and catechist. These programs are developed in accordance with the Archdiocesan Guidelines for students with special needs.

G. Role of the Catechist

A catechist is a person of faith, who has the task of creating the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit to bring about growth in faith among believers. They foster "mature faith" through a regular systematic presentation. The primary mission of catechists is to communicate God's love to those entrusted to their care, by proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. This is accomplished through the fourfold activities of message, community, worship and service. The task of the catechist are as follows:

- To help others grow in their personal faith & spirituality
- To initiate others into the faith community and its life, worship, symbols and practices.
- To pass on a world view, a set of shared meanings and values that are Catholic and Christian.

M. Safety

Transportation

Parents will assume responsibility for the transportation of their children to and from the parish site where classes take place with the exception of students who walk from home.

Fire Drills

At least once a semester a fire drill is held, making use, insofar as possible, of the procedures known to children from their public school drills. (refer to Handbook for Directors/Coordinators on page H-9)

Medical Emergency Procedures (in case of accident or illness)

If a relatively *minor accident* occurs to a student while attending the catechetical program, the following steps are taken:

- the catechist reports the accident immediately to the Director/Coordinator.
- if bleeding is involved, the procedure outlined under "Blood borne Pathogens" are followed;
- the Director notifies the parent; if parent cannot be reached, Director/Coordinator Follows instructions on Student Information Record;
- if there does appear to be injuries, a copy of the report should also be sent to the Archdiocesan Insurance Division;
- the Director/Coordinator completes an accident report and keeps it on file.

In case of *serious accident or illness*:

- Catechist reports the accident immediately to the Director/Coordinator.
- 911 or the local police/emergency rescue squad is called immediately.
- The Director/Coordinator notifies the parent; if parent cannot be reached, Director/Coordinator Follows instructions on Student Information Record;
- The Director notifies the Archdiocesan Insurance Division so that they will be prepared in the event that an accident/illness gives rise to the claim.
- The Director completes the accident form, keeps a copy in the file, and sends copies to: Archdiocesan Insurance Division, 1011 First Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10022

Medication

No medication of any kind (including both prescription and over-the-counter) should be administered to, or taken by, the student during the Parish Catechetical Program. If any exception has to be made, the parent must provide a written request and directives.

L. Communications

Parent/Catechist Conferences (if applicable). Conferences will be held on (specific to parish). Each student's progress will be discussed with the parent. Topics to be discussed during this conference will be the following:

homework	test scores
achievements	knowledge of prayers
class participation	behavior

You are invited to contact the catechist with any questions at any other time.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings will take place for all parents whose children are preparing for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation throughout the year. All are *expected* to attend.

Calendar

A calendar of all class dates, holidays, times of classes, all catechist and parent meetings, and all events for sacramental programs will be published and distributed in September. Monthly calendars and newsletters will be sent via Flocknote.

Letter/Flyer/Bulletin Announcement

Letters to parents will be sent via Flocknote text or email. Please check all Flocknote text messages and emails. Consult ***the parish bulletin*** each week for relevant information.

Cancellation of Classes/Event.

All families will be notified via Flocknote. It may be a text message or an email. Religious Education office voice mail will also be updated for any cancellations.

Visitors

Visitors are not permitted in the classrooms or building during class time. In case of a necessity, a visitor should report to the office of the Director/Coordinator.

H. Programs

Parish Based Program

Our Religious Education Program offers instruction to students in elementary and junior high school, who attend St. Denis. It offers an eight year course of study in which all Catholic children attending public school are expected to participate. The Religious Education Program offers an ongoing, continuing development of the Christian personality. This program is not a convenience for the reception of the three sacraments of Confirmation, Eucharist and Penance. Just as sacraments are not isolated events, but rather an integral part of the Christian life, so too, each grade in Religious Education adds to the development of the Christian life. Our aim is to provide a loving and caring Christian atmosphere in which our parish youth can grow sound, Christ-like attitudes and values.

Home Study

A home-study catechetical program is one in which the children of the family are instructed in faith at home by their own parents. Any request for a home-study program that replaces attendance at the parish catechetical program should be carefully discerned by the Pastor and the Director/Coordinator. Home-study should adhere to the following norms:

1. Textbook & materials used must be approved by the Director/Coordinator.
2. Archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis must be followed and taught in their entirety.
3. Parents in their teaching receive regular direction and guidance from him/her and should participate in the Archdiocesan Catechist Formation Program.
4. At least 4 or 5 times a year, the Director/Coordinator holds accountability sessions with those children to evaluate their progress.

The Role of the Parish Catechetical Program in Family-Centered Catechesis

The Catechetical Program complements the foundational education in faith already given by the parents. It furthers the child's growth in faith by giving specific religious instruction which builds upon and reinforced the positive faith development fostered by the parents. On entering the parish religious education program, the child begins to study in a community much wider than the family.

For those children who lack adequate religious formation in the home, the parish community can play an especially important role:

- by seeking to assist the parents to grow in the understanding of their faith, and to return to its regular practice,
- by providing the children with initiatory experiences and explanations of their faith.

The Sacramental Life of the child begun at Baptism continues with the reception of the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation, a process prepared for by the parents and the Religious Education Program working together.

As the child matures, the faith witness of Christians in the wider community becomes increasingly important. The Catechetical Program provides the necessary experience of belonging to and interacting in church community. This prepares the way for participation in liturgy and parish life.

The first grade through eight grade program gives the student the opportunity for a systematic presentation of the faith and at the same time the benefit of a variety of personality and teaching styles through the different Catechists they encounter.

Special Religious Education

Special Religious Education is a ministry that responds to the religious and spiritual needs of persons with a physical, mental, or emotional disability which impairs their functioning in a regular classroom. Because of that disability the student may require individualized instruction in a small group, or in a one-on-one setting, or may be mainstreamed into the regular catechetical program if assistance is provided.

The universality of the Christian message: "Go, teach all nations." includes those who are marginalized because of their disability. The Church's responsibility is to nourish the faith of the baptized person to the degree that the individual is capable of growing in that faith.

The Church constantly reaffirms the sacredness of all human life, especially those who are fragile in mind, spirit, and body and Catechetical programs reflect this love and concern of Jesus and the Church for persons with disabilities.

In consultation with the parent, the Director/Coordinator will appropriately place each child in a program that will service his/her special needs and further encourage spiritual growth.

Re-registration Requirements

1. Completion of registration form for each child enrolled in our program
2. Completion of student information record (medical emergency) for each child enrolled in our program
3. Payment of registration/tuition fee (see Tuition & Fees above)
4. Provide a registration card for Released Time Religious Instruction to the Principal of the public school your child attends (when applicable).

Registration takes place during the entire month of March during office hours, and parents will receive the proper notification of the dates, times, and the site where it will be conducted.

Class Placement

The following fulfill the directives of the Archdiocese of NY. Parish Religious Education Programs are preparation for life. The students are expected to attend Religious Education classes continuously from grade K through 8.

In order to be eligible to receive First Communion, the students must complete the first two years of the Religious Education Program. Any child older than the first grade level who enters the program without previous formal Religious Education must complete the first and second grade curriculum to receive First Communion or enter the Children's Catechumenate. The child will be placed in the appropriate grade level after completing the curriculum of the grade (s) missed.

Any child who leaves the Catechetical/Religious Education Program after receiving First Communion will (when re-entering the program) be required to complete the grade level (s) curriculum missed. The placement of the student is determined by the Director/Coordinator after consultation with the parent .

Student Transfer/ Early Withdrawal

If a student leaves the program before the completion of the catechetical year or at the end of the catechetical year, please advise the Director/Coordinator to facilitate the transfer of records to the new parish catechetical program that the child/children will be attending.

Student Information Record (medical emergency information)

Each parent is required to complete this form for *each student* in the program. The information given is vital in case of a medical emergency. A parental signature validates this form. It should be reviewed annually; any changes made to the record must be in writing by the parent.

Tuition & Fees

Registration Fee/Tuition Fee is used for educational materials, supplies, activities, A.V. resources, postage, copier, etc. Resources also contribute to quality education. The balance of the ongoing Religious Education budget is subsidized by the parish.

Tuition:

\$175.00 for 1 child

\$115 each additional child

2 children = \$290

2 children = \$405

4 children = \$520

Envelope us is a vital source of support for the religious education program. Your envelopes will be submitted to St. Denis Church even if you attend mass at St. Columba or St. Kateri; so please continue to use your envelopes on a regular basis.

Late Re-registration:

A fee of \$20.00 will be applied to any re-registration forms received after April 30th and a loss of day preference.

NO MONEY REFUNDED AFTER May 31st of registration year.

Sacramental Preparation

Christian initiation is celebrated in Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. Through these visible actions a young person is incorporated into the Church and shares its mission in the world: full initiation into the church occurs by stages.

Sacramental Catechesis has traditionally been of two kinds: preparation for the initial celebration of the sacraments and continued enrichment following their first reception.

Requirements for the reception of First Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation is determined by Canon Law:

1. Age of reason (to be able to distinguish right from wrong)
2. Proper knowledge of sacraments
3. Emotional and spiritual preparation
4. Approval by parent, pastor, catechist, Director/Coordinator

The policy of St. Denis is that a young person who will prepare for the sacraments (First Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation) must have completed one full year at St. Denis and is currently enrolled in the second year of the catechetical program at St. Denis.

Reconciliation

Jesus began His work on earth by calling people to repentance and faith: "Reform your lives and believe in the gospel." (*Mark 1, 15*) The Sacrament of Reconciliation continues his work of forgiving and reconciling. Catechesis of young people for reconciliation must always respect the natural disposition, ability, age and circumstances of individuals. It seeks:

1. to make clear the relationship of the sacrament to the child's life.
2. to help the child recognize moral good and evil, repent of wrong doing, and turn for forgiveness to Christ and the church.
3. to encourage the child to see that, in this sacrament faith is expressed by being forgiven and forgiving.
4. to encourage the child to approach the sacrament freely and regularly.

Parents should be involved in the preparation of children for this sacrament. Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation starts at the second grade level. It is a joint effort of the parents and catechists. The following is used in the instruction for this sacrament.

- Second grade curriculum covered weekly in class by the catechist.
- A special First Penance program that helps children learn what it means to share Jesus' greatest gift, himself, know they are forgiven, and understand that they belong to the community of Jesus' friends – the church.

Responsibilities of Parents

The example set by parents is of utmost importance.

Parents:

- are the primary educators of their children
- are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- serve as models for their children by being moral Christians
- receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly with their families
- help children in forming a good conscience and a Christian code of morality
- are asked to attend meetings, participate in activities and prayer services that are planned to help their child prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- are asked to take time with their child to talk about reconciliation, to read bible stories and to pray together
- are asked to determine their child's readiness for Reconciliation

The first reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is usually celebrated in January/February. All children preparing to receive their First Eucharist must first be instructed and prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Eucharist

Catechesis recognizes the Eucharist as the heart of Christian life. It helps young people understand that celebration of the Eucharist forms and nourishes the faithful with Christ, the bread of life.

Catechesis for children seeks to strengthen their awareness of the Father's love, of the call to participate in Christ's sacrifice, and of the gift of the Spirit. Children are taught that the Holy Eucharist is the real body and blood of Christ, and what appears to be bread and wine are actually his living body. They learn that the Eucharist is both meal and sacrifice and that it is a memorial of the last supper.

Parents have a right and duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for First Communion. Catechesis aims to help parents grow in understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist and participate readily in catechizing their children.

St. Denis Religious Education reserves the right to remove a student from the group session:

- If it is believed that the student would benefit significantly from individual or smaller situation,
- If the student's behavior is seriously inhibiting the learning of others in the group,
- If temporary removal is used as a disciplinary measure for serious and persistent disruptive behavior.

Such action should be preceded by a consultation involving the student, the family, the Catechist and the Director.

Vandalism

Willfully damaging or destroying property will not be tolerated. Vandal damage must be paid for by the parent of the student. Accidental damage should be reported to the coordinator immediately.

K. Admissions

Registration for New Students

Registration dates will be published in the parish bulletin and monthly calendar. To register a child in the Religious Education Program, a family must first be registered in the parish. All children regardless of race, sex, or national origin will be admitted to the parish program.

Requirements for Registration of New Students

1. Completion of a registration form for each child enrolled in our program.
2. Completion of a student information record (medical emergency) for each child enrolled in program.
3. Payment of a registration fee (tuition)
4. Baptismal certificate and First Communion certificate (when applicable)
5. Provide registration card for Released Time Religious Instruction to the Principal of the public school which your child attends (if applicable).
6. Previous records if child attended a Religious Education Program in a different parish

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Punctuality in arrival will result in punctuality in dismissal. Students should enter the building via front doors and exit from the same. Parents should park cars in the St. Denis parking lot.

Supervision/Loitering

Students should leave the parish premises after classes are dismissed. Therefore, parents should arrive on time at dismissal. No unnecessary "hanging around" before or after class is permitted. Non-students are not permitted on the grounds at any time. Children should arrive at the building for classes NO earlier than 10 minutes before class. Supervision is not provided prior to that time or after the dismissal time (as specified on the calendar). It is essential that all students be supervised when they are in the building. Those supervising are scheduled to arrive ten minutes before class.

J. Discipline

Student Behavior

Every student that attends the Religious Education Program is expected to cooperate in the maintenance of the building where classes are held as well as its grounds. Disruptions, disrespect, defacing or damaging property will not be tolerated. The behavior expected from students enrolled in the Religious Education Program is a combination of common courtesy and safety considerations.

The following types of conduct are inappropriate:

1. Fighting
2. Defiance of staff
3. Use of profanity
4. Refusal to prepare assignments or to participate in class
5. Possession of dangerous objects
6. Possession or use of tobacco
7. Possession or use of a controlled substance
8. Damage to property
9. Leaving the building/premises during the class without permission
10. Habitual tardiness & absenteeism
11. Intimidating fellow students/bullying
12. Cheating
13. Throwing snowballs
14. Gum chewing
15. Eating while classes are in session

Students will be held responsible for their conduct.

Catechesis for First Communion is conducted separately from introductory catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation since each sacrament deserves its own concentrated preparation. It starts at the second grade level. It is a joint effort of the parents and catechists. The following is the instruction for this sacrament:

- Second grade curriculum covered weekly in class by the catechist
- A First Eucharist program that helps explain to young people the Eucharist, familiarize them with the main events of Jesus' life, help them to participate more meaningfully in the action of mass, and to receive Christ's body and blood in communion in an informed and reverent manner. The children learn that they may receive Holy Communion in the hand, on the tongue and under both species. Catechesis includes the requirements for fasting (no food or drink except water or medicine for one hour before receiving Communion).

Responsibilities of Parents – Parents:

- are the primary educators of their children
- are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- serve as models for their children by being moral Christians
- worship regularly with their families
- nurture their child in faith
- are asked to attend two meetings, participate in activities and prayer services that are planned to help their child prepare for this important sacrament of Holy Eucharist
- are asked to take time with their first communicants to talk about the Eucharist, to read bible stories and to pray together
- are asked to determine their child's readiness for the Eucharist

The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is celebrated in the months of April or May. All children preparing to receive their First Eucharist must have already been prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Confirmation

As a Sacrament of Initiation, Confirmation is intimately related to Baptism and the Eucharist. Christians are reborn in Baptism, strengthened by Confirmation, and sustained by the food of the Eucharist. In Confirmation young people are signed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and become more perfect images of their Lord. This sacrament renews and strengthens their baptismal call to bear witness to Christ before the world and work eagerly for the building up of his body. **The candidate must be baptized.**

As the primary educators of their children, parents along with sponsors are to be intimately involved in catechesis for Confirmation. This will help them renew and strengthen their own faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children or godchildren.

Components of Confirmation Program

Weekly attendance at Religious Education classes.

Proper preparation for class instruction and completed homework assignments

Textbook available for each class and participation in class discussions and activities

Confirmation Interview (candidate gives sufficient evidence of readiness)

Confirmation Name (Saint's name) – preferably Baptismal name

Letter of Intent to Pastor or Bishop requesting a desire to be confirmed

Christian Community Service

Obtain Sponsor's Certificate or letter from Pastor.

Candidate demonstrates an adequate grasp of the content of the Catholic faith.

Spiritual

Regular attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation

Periodic participation in the Rite of Reconciliation

Living a moral life that reflects the values and teachings of Jesus

Participation in a Confirmation retreat

Participation in the Rite of Enrollment

Responsibilities of Parents -

Parents:

- are the primary educators of their children
- are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- serve as models for their children by being committed Christians
- worship regularly with their families
- share their faith with their children both in word and action
- should encourage their child to reflect on and thoughtfully consider the decision to receive the sacrament of Confirmation
- are asked to attend meetings, participate in activities and prayer services that are planned to assist their son/daughter prepare for and freely request sacrament of Confirmation
- are ask to assist their child with the immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, through prayer, study, and Christian service
- should stress the initiation aspect of the sacrament of encouraging their son/daughter to continue learning more about their faith
- should help their child in understanding that the confirmation service project is the beginning of a life committed to Christian service

Retention

Students who do not satisfactorily complete the course of study at each grade level or do not attend the required number of catechetical sessions may be retained and required to repeat the grade level course. This is at the sole discretion of the Director/Coordinator. In some cases make-up classes could be scheduled as a means of avoiding retention.

Textbooks

The Religious Education Program provides textbooks to all students enrolled in its class sessions. This is done with the hope that this investment will be properly safeguarded. Textbooks will be distributed by classroom catechist on the first day of classes. Students are to inscribe their name and the name of their catechist on the front inside cover of the book where appropriately indicated. Textbooks are to be brought home and back to class weekly. If a textbook is lost, stolen, or damaged, a new one must be purchased immediately.

Warning Notices:

Academic warning

Whenever a student is not working to one's potential, a deficiency notice will be mailed home to parents, advising them of the situation. It should be seriously regarded, signed, and returned to the Director/Coordinator.

Behavioral warning – From time to time some students find it difficult to follow the rules that are made to ensure the greatest convenience for the greatest number. Continued infraction of rules of conduct will necessitate the issuance of a student behavioral notice by the catechist or Director/Coordinator, noting the infraction of rules against the program's discipline regulations. It should be seriously regarded, signed, and returned to the Coordinator of Religious Education.

I. Attendance

Absentee

Your child's regular attendance at Religious Education classes is very important. These classes should take top priority over all other programs and activities. Absence from more than 5 classes may result in a student repeating the grade level and a conference between the Director/Coordinator and the parents regarding this matter.

Homework

Homework reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for their children to complete their assignments.

There are two types of homework:

Short term: Assignments that are given and are required to be completed and submitted on the following week of class to their respective catechist.

Long Term: Assignments are spread over a number of weeks. This type of assignment is outlined and explained in class by the catechist. It may include such activities as projects, extended reading or independent study.

Homework assignments are to be completed as part of the requirements for moving on to the next grade level. If homework assignments, whether short or long term, are not completed, the student must make up the work by the time designated by the catechist.

Testing

Since there will be formal testing at each grade level, a certain amount of knowledge will be expected to be retained by each student involved in our program. Home study is absolutely necessary. The objective of testing is to monitor student growth and effectiveness of our Religious Education Program. Students will be tested regularly, both orally and written unit tests. If a child does not fulfill grade level requirements, a meeting will be arranged with the parents, the catechist, and the Director/Coordinator of Religious Education to discuss the situation. The Director/Coordinator will decide if the child needs to repeat the year.

Progress Reports

Religious formation of the child takes place in the home, in church, and in the class setting. Progress reports for the Religious Education Program reflect class performance only. They are issued twice yearly to indicate the strengths and weaknesses that the students are demonstrating.

<u>The areas of evaluation are:</u>	<u>The marking code is</u>
· Achievement	E - Excellent
· Class participation	V G - Very Good
· Assignments	G - Good
· Effort	S - Satisfactory
· Behavior	I – Needs improvement

Youth Ministry

The St. Denis youth ministry offers high school youth of the parish an opportunity for deepening their relationship with God and one another and lots of fun! Meetings include discussion and reflection on living as Catholic Christians in our world today, group prayer, guest speakers and outreach projects. New members are invited at all times.

Contact Youth Ministry Office at 227-8382

Children’s Catechumenate

The children who participate in this process are between the ages of seven and thirteen. Most of them are un-baptized and are placed in a catechumenate for children while preparing to celebrate all three Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist – usually at the Easter Vigil. Through this process children are formed and trained in the Christian way of life with other children of the parish community. A parent’s involvement in this process is crucial to the child’s faith formation. The celebration of the various rites should take place according to the norms of these rites.

Instructional Guidelines

Archdiocesan Guidelines - The Archdiocese of N.Y. has published Guidelines for Catechesis for Grades 1-6 and Grades 7 & 8 which will ensure a clear and uniform presentation of the faith for each grade level. The Guidelines are not considered a substitute for the textbook. Rather, they are an assistance to the catechist in the use of the textbook by identifying the essential content to be taught.

Composition of St. Denis' Religious Education Program

Our Religious Education Program offers instruction to students in elementary and junior high school who attend St. Denis. It offers an eight year course of study in which all Catholic children attending public school are expected to participate. The Religious Education Program offers an ongoing, continuing development of the Christian personality. This program is not a convenience for the reception of the three Sacraments of Confirmation, Eucharist and Penance. Just as sacraments are not isolated events, but rather an integral part of Christian life, so, too, our aim is to provide a loving and caring Christian atmosphere in which our parish youth can grow in sound Christ-like attitudes and values.

Catechesis

St. Denis' Religious Education Program meets all of the requirements of the Catechetical Office of the Archdiocese of New York, and adheres to the Archdiocesan Guidelines for Catechesis. Our program ensures for all the children of our parish a clear and uniform presentation of the faith in concepts appropriate to each age level we instruct. The Religious Education Program is designed to assist parents in their sacred responsibility to educate their children in the faith. It complements, but can never replace parents in carrying out their responsibilities. "Parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children."
(National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States.)

In addition to enlightening your children in doctrines and tenets of our faith, our Religious Education Program welcomes the opportunity to assist you in teaching your children to walk along the path of faith. This can only be achieved when parents, through word and example, place Jesus Christ and His teachings at the center of their lives through liturgical worship, frequent prayer, and communication of Christian values and attitudes. In this way parents make meaningful their professions of belief and nurture faith in their children by showing them the richness and beauty of the lived faith.

Curriculum - The themes, objectives, and appropriate prayers of each grade level are as follows:

Theme : **Morality**

Through our relationship with Jesus, we grow in an ever-deepening awareness of who God is, who we are, and how God calls us to live. Catholic Christian morality gives direction to our response to God's call.

Objectives: To help the young adolescent grow in an understanding of the moral responsibilities arising from one's relationship with Jesus. To help the young adolescent understand what conscience is and how to form his or her conscience according to the Catholic faith. To help the young adolescent learn basic concepts of morality and develop skills for moral decision-making. To enable the young adolescent to recognize the role of the Spirit and the witness and guidance of the Catholic Christian community in moral living.

Theme: **Prayer**

Prayer is an expression of our awareness of and response to God's presence, love, goodness, and saving power.

Objectives: To assist the young adolescent to grow in a desire for and appreciation of prayer as essential to the Christian life. To help the young adolescent, through the presentation and experience of a variety of prayer forms, to develop the ability to pray.

Theme: **Human Sexuality**

Sexuality is a gift from God. It embraces psychological, spiritual and physical characteristics of men and women. We human beings need to integrate our sexuality into our total personality in order to develop into the persons God has called us to be.

Objectives: To help the young adolescent appreciate the gift of sexuality. To assist the young adolescent in developing correct and positive attitudes concerning sexuality. To clarify for the young adolescent how the gift of sexuality can be misused.

Grade Eight

Themes: Personal Growth, Part II: The Human Community
Church History
Morality
Prayer

Theme: **Personal Growth, Part II: The Human Community**
Developing relationships with others and God is essential to becoming our true selves.

Objectives: To help the young adolescent understand the elements which are essential to developing positive relationships. To help the young adolescent understand that true community is built on honest, loving and respectful relationships.

Theme: **Church History**
Jesus' life and mission continue through the Church, the community of believers called by God and empowered by the Spirit to be the sign of the Kingdom of God.

Objectives: To deepen the young adolescent's knowledge of the history of the Church. To lead the young adolescent to a fuller participation in the life and mission of the Church.

Grade One

Theme: God is our Father who loves us. Jesus is the Son of God who saves us. The Holy Spirit helps us to be holy.

Objective: To develop an awareness of God the Creator who gives us life and grace and promises us eternal life through Jesus.

Prayers: Sign of the Cross
Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory Be to the Father (Doxology)
First statement of the Apostles Creed: I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Prayers to be Encouraged: Morning and Evening Prayers
Grace at Meals

Grade Two

Theme: Jesus nourishes us and strengthens God's life and grace within us.

Objective: To present Jesus as the model for Christian living, and to introduce the sacraments of Baptism, Penance and Eucharist.

Prayers: Act of Contrition
Simple responses at mass
Apostles Creed to ..."He will come again to judge the living and the dead"
All prayers taught in Grade 1

Grade Three

Theme: Jesus continues his life and work through the church.

Objective: To deepen the child's understanding of the Church and help the child experience the church as a Christian community.

Prayers: The Apostles Creed
All prayers taught in Grades 1 and 2

Grade Four

Theme: As God's people we are called to live as Jesus did, choosing a life of love, characterized by obedience to God and service to others.

Objective: To help the children form their consciences according to the teachings of the Catholic Church and to learn the basis of Christian morality as taught in the Old and New Testament.

Prayers: Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, The Ten Commandments
All prayers taught in Grades 1, 2, and 3
Prayers to be Act of Faith
Encouraged: Stations of the Cross

Grade Five

Theme: Through the sacraments the church celebrates Christ's saving actions in our lives.

Objective: To help the child experience and understand the rites of the sacraments and so become a more conscious and active participant in the church's sacramental life.

Prayers: Gloria, Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary
All prayers taught in Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4

Prayers to be
Encouraged: Act of Love

Grade Six

Theme: God's saving actions are found throughout history. The bible, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, records God's plan of salvation.

Objective: To understand the Old Testament as the revelation of God in history of a people, a revelation fulfilled in the New Testament.

Prayers: Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary
All prayers taught in Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Prayers to be
Encouraged: Act of Hope

Grade Seven

Themes: Personal Growth, Part I: The Human Person
Jesus and the Gospel
Sacraments
Human Sexuality

Theme: **Personal Growth, Part I: The Human Person**
The growth and change experienced during adolescence are part of the unfolding of God's plan for our development as fully Christian persons.

Objectives: To develop in the young adolescent a sense of self-worth and self respect nurtured and strengthened by a knowledge of God's love. To acquaint the young adolescent with an understanding of the virtues necessary for a life of goodness and faith.

Theme: **Jesus and the Gospel Message**
The gospels reveal Jesus as the Savior and Risen Lord who calls us to advance the kingdom of God through discipleship.

Objectives: To broaden the young adolescent's understanding of the gospels through a study of their formation, themes, message, and literary aspects. To help the young adolescent grow in a personal relationship with Jesus by encountering Him in the gospels.

Theme: **Sacraments**
The mystery of Christ continues in the church through the sacraments which are visible signs of the love and saving action of Jesus.

Objectives: To help the young adolescent understand, appreciate and celebrate the continuing presence and saving action of Jesus in the church. To lead the young adolescent to a full and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church.