

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK



## Class Times

Faithbuilders		
Sunday	1:00PM - 2:15PM	Grades 1-5
	3:00PM - 4:15PM	Grades 1-5
Monday	5:30PM - 6:45PM	Grades 1-5
Encounter		
Sunday	3:00PM - 4:15PM	Grade 6
Monday	5:30PM - 6:45PM	Grade 6
Ignite		
Sunday (see schedule for more information)	11:00PM - 1:30PM	Year 1 and Year 2

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## Contact Information

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### Parish Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday

9:00am-4:00pm

248-347-7778

### Religious Education Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday

9:00am-4:00pm & During Religious Education Sessions

### St. James Website:

[Stjamesnovi.org](http://Stjamesnovi.org)

[Attendance Form Link](#)

### Our Mission and Ministry



#### **St. James Parish Mission Statement**

The mission of St. James Catholic Church is to preach the Gospel. The church does this by teaching as Jesus did, drawing all the members into a holy community, serving the needs of all, and celebrating our common faith through the sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist.

#### **St. James Religious Education Mission Statement**

St. James Religious Education Program is a springboard for a lifetime of faith formation. Through dynamic, interactive lessons, students will experience God's love and answer Jesus' call to shine that love for others.

## From the Desk of Meredith Skowronski



Dear Parents, Students and Volunteers,

**To our Catechists and Volunteers:** Thank you for answering God's call to work with us this year! The gifts of your service and willingness to showcase God's love to our children is greatly appreciated by our staff and the families of our religious education students..

The Religious Education Department has compiled this handbook to assist you in teaching and serving our youth. Please know that we are here to assist you and provide anything you might need, please don't hesitate to ask!

**To our Parents:** Thank you for entrusting us with the faith formation of your children. We are excited to walk with them on their spiritual journeys. We look forward to partnering with you this year to help your children better experience and recognize the love of God in their lives. Remember, they learn the most from you!

Please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with this handbook and reach out to us with any questions.

Many blessings to all,

***Meredith Skowronski***

Director of Religious Education

## General Program Information





# FAITHBUILDERS CALENDAR 2023-2024

S-1#3

Projected calendars are subject to change

**Dates for classes: Sunday @ 1:00 & 3:00**

## September

September 24, 2023

## October

October 1, 2023

October 8, 2023

October 22, 2023

October 29, 2023

## November

November 12, 2023

## December

December 3, 2023

December 10, 2023

## January

January 7, 2024

January 21, 2024

January 28, 2024

## February

February 4, 2024

February 11, 2024

## March

March 3, 2024

March 10, 2024

March 17, 2024

## April

April 7, 2024

April 14, 2024

April 21, 2024

## HOME LESSONS

November 5, 2023

November 19, 2023

December 24, 2023

January 14, 2024

March 24, 2024

# FAITHBUILDERS CALENDAR 2023-2024

M- 530

Projected calendars are subject to change

**Dates for classes: Monday @ 5:30**

## September

September 25, 2023

## October

October 2, 2023

October 9, 2023

October 23, 2023

October 30, 2023

## November

November 13, 2023

## December

December 4, 2023

December 11, 2023

## January

January 8, 2024

January 22, 2024

January 29, 2024

## February

February 5, 2024

February 12, 2024

## March

March 4, 2024

March 11, 2024

March 18, 2024

## April

April 8, 2024

April 15, 2024

April 22, 2024

## HOME LESSONS

November 6, 2023

November 20, 2023

December 25, 2023

January 15, 2024

March 25, 2024



Encounter CALENDAR  
2023-2024

S - 6<sup>th</sup> @3

Dates for classes: Sunday at 3:00

September

September 24, 2023

October

October 1, 2023

October 8, 2023

October 22, 2023

October 29, 2023

November

November 12, 2023

December

December 3, 2023

December 10, 2023

January

January 7, 2024

January 21, 2024

January 28, 2024

February

February 4, 2024

February 11, 2024

March

March 3, 2024

March 10, 2024

March 17, 2024

April

April 7, 2024

April 14, 2024

April 21, 2024

HOME LESSONS

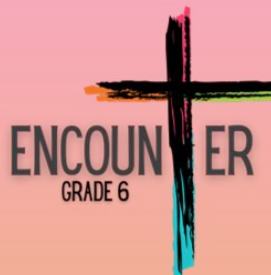
November 5, 2023

November 19, 2023

December 24, 2023

January 14, 2024

March 24, 2024



Projected calendars are subject to change

Encounter CALENDAR  
2023-2024

M - 6<sup>th</sup> 5:30

Dates for classes: **MONDAY at 5:30**

**September**

September 25, 2023

**October**

October 2, 2023

October 9, 2023

October 23, 2023

October 30, 2023

**November**

November 13, 2023

**December**

December 4, 2023

December 11, 2023

**January**

January 8, 2024

January 22, 2024

January 29, 2024

**February**

February 5, 2024

February 12, 2024

**March**

March 4, 2024

March 11, 2024

March 18, 2024

**April**

April 8, 2024

April 15, 2024

April 22, 2024

**HOME LESSONS**

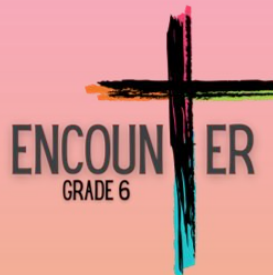
November 6, 2023

November 20, 2023

December 25, 2023

January 15, 2024

March 25, 2024



**Projected calendars are subject to change**





2023 - 2024 Class Schedule  
Sundays, 11am – 130pm **(Year 1)**  
Confirmation Preparation Classes

***Attendance is required at all Classes and Events***

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Event</u></b>
<b>September</b>		
09/24/2023	5pm – 6pm	Parent and Student Meeting
<b>October</b>		
10/1/2023	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
10/8/2023	11am - 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
10/29/2023	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>November</b>		
11/05/2023	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
11/26/2023	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
<b>December</b>		
12/10/2023	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>January</b>		
01/07/2024	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
01/21/2024	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>February</b>		
02/04/2024	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>March</b>		
03/03/2024	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
03/10/2024	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>April</b>		
04/07/2024	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
04/21/2024	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)

***Projected calendars are subject to change***



2023 - 2024 Class Schedule  
Sundays, 11am – 130pm **(Year 2)**  
Confirmation Preparation Classes

***Attendance is required at all Classes and Events***

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
<b>September</b>		
09/24/2023	5pm – 6pm	Parent and Student Meeting
<b>October</b>		
10/1/2023	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
10/22/2023	11am - 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>November</b>		
11/05/2023	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
11/12/2023	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
11/26/2023	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
<b>December</b>		
12/02/2023	1pm- 8pm	Confirmation Retreat
<b>January</b>		
01/07/2024	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
01/28/2024	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>February</b>		
02/11/2024	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>March</b>		
03/03/2024	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
03/17/2024	11am – 130pm	In-person class (including attending mass)
<b>April</b>		
04/07/2023	Home Lesson	Home Lesson
04/09/2024	7pm	Reconciliation
04/14/2024	6pm – 8pm	Sponsor Night/Rehearsal

***Projected calendars are subject to change***

## Curriculum

### Religious Education Curriculum

The Religious Education Curriculum uses an experiential approach in faith formation for children in grades 1 -8. We understand that there are many ways to understand and experience God. We try to incorporate these into the classroom as much as we can- through the stories in the Bible, our worship in the church, serving others, and in how we live our faith in our daily lives.

Our theme this year is, "Shine with Jesus"! A portion of each class will focus on this theme and how we can live it in our daily lives. We will explore practical ways to embrace God's love in our lives and discover ways to reflect that love outwards to those we encounter each day.

We provide diverse and age-appropriate curriculum to best meet the needs of our students. Each lesson consists of reading, writing, small group discussions, prayer-time, activity time and time for students to ask questions and explore concepts. While hearing the "Good News" is a wonderful first step- we strive, within each lesson, to teach students how to live the good news of Jesus, as well!

### Grade-level themes for the year:

Focused on how we can incorporate Jesus into our lives so that we can Shine with Him!

1st Grade: Shine with Jesus by knowing Him

2nd Grade: Shine with Jesus by experiencing Him through the Sacraments

3rd Grade: Shine with Jesus by learning about His Saints

4th Grade: Shine with Jesus by learning about Him through Bible stories

5th Grade: Shine with Jesus by learning to ask Him questions and through the Sacraments

Encounter/6th Grade: Shine with Jesus by studying His word and learning to pray.

Ignite: Shine with Jesus by learning to love yourself and others as you prepare to become missionary disciples and receive the full gift of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation.

### **Faithbuilders - Grades 1-5**

These dynamic and faith-filled lessons are designed to engage your child in the wonders of the church and teach them to be better disciples of Christ.

Our theme for this year is "Shine with Jesus" (Matthew 5:14-16). We are eager for our students to learn ways to embrace the love of Jesus and practice how we can then reflect His love and light to others: Just like Jesus taught us to do!

### **FOGO - Family based home program for Grades 1, 3, 4, 5**

Faith on the Go is a home study option of religious education offered to:

- Grades 1, 3, 4, 5: (Sacrament years, grades 2, 7 and 8, are completed in-person.)
- Parents and children will attend two large group sessions and will be guided via email to complete discussion and experience faith-based lessons at home that are due each week.
- Faith on the Go students will be invited to join their in-class friends for Faithbuilder enrichment experiences such as the Nativity Play, Stations of the Cross, and more!
- Faith on the Go home study program will be offered during the Religious Education class calendar.
- To enroll, please select the Faith on the Go option on the Religious Education registration form.

### **Encounter - Grade 6**

Students will spend time in a youth-ministry style setting participating in large group activities and lectures based upon the book and video series, *Encounter-Exploring God in Every Day*, by Mark Hart). Students will learn about the Bible as a guide and resource, find comfort and strength in prayer, attend reconciliation, and participate in small-group discussions, pray for others, and learn the value of service.



### **Ignite Confirmation Preparation Program: (2 year program- generally 7th and 8th grade)**

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes a person's Initiation into the Catholic Church. Through the Ignite program, Confirmation candidates will develop a deeper understanding of God's love and learn about the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are strengthened in this sacrament. We'll explore how to use those gifts to give back to God and our community.

Ignite lectures, prayer experiences and small group activities will help students develop a more mature relationship with Jesus, teaching them to discern and welcome His voice, not as a stranger, but as a trusted guide for their life journey.

Please see the [schedules on pages 13 & 14](#) for more information on days and times.

## Arrival and Dismissal

### General Traffic Flow of Students and Parents

For arrival and dismissal, please enter the parking lot via the east drive (the driveway nearest to Taft Road) and leave the parking lot via the west drive (the driveway nearest to Beck Road). This allows traffic to keep moving, eliminates turning around and reduces the number of cars in the area where families are exiting the building. PLEASE DO NOT PARK AT THE CURB. Park in a designated parking space only. We want to ensure the safety of all the children entering and leaving the building.

### Arrival of Students - Grades 1- 6

All parents of children grades 1-6 will park their cars in the lot and escort children into the building. Upon entering the building through the Religious Education Doors, Door 3, parents will escort their children into their classroom. When exiting the property, parents will proceed to the west drive (nearest Beck Road). By implementing these policies, we are focused on the safety of all children.

### Arrival of Students - Ignite

Parents of students in grades 7 and 8 can park in the main church lot. Students can enter through the Religious Education Doors, Door 3. All students report to the Parish Hall for the beginning of class.

### Dismissal

All parents will park their cars in the lot and come into the building through Door 3 to pick up their children. Please wait in the RE Gathering Space near the gym until classes have been dismissed. Parents of 1st - 5th graders may proceed to the classroom to pick-up their child after the session bell has rung. Children will be matched with their parent by the classroom catechist and then dismissed. Parents of children in Encounter and Ignite will continue to wait in the Gathering Space for their student to be dismissed after the session is over.

## Policy and Procedures

### Early Dismissal

Early dismissal can be disruptive for catechists and children and we discourage pick-up prior to the end of class. If early pick-up is needed, a phone call or email from the parent is necessary. If leaving early, parents **MUST** stop at the Session Support Desk to “sign out” their child. Session Support Staff will then proceed to the classroom to retrieve their child. In an effort to keep your child safe, children will not be released without being signed out.

### Late Pick-Up

If a child has not been picked up from the classroom ten minutes after the end of a Religious Education session, the catechist will accompany the child to the Religious Education Office and a member of the RE team will attempt to contact the parent. At that time, the RE team will assume responsibility for the student. Please ensure that we have correct contact information for both parents.

### Communication During Class

Please know that we are busy during classes and may not be reading emails in a very timely manner. Please do your best to arrange early dismissal/late arrival before class when possible.

## Policy and Procedures

### RE Office Communication with Parents and Catechists

The most current and effective means of communication is email. Please read weekly email correspondence. Please ensure that we have your most up to date email address at all times during the year. If you are not receiving a weekly email via Flocknote, please contact Kimberly Tannahill, [religiously@sjnovi.net](mailto:religiously@sjnovi.net), so that we can update our records.

Flocknote is an email distribution platform that St. James uses to communicate with our parents and students. These notes are sent weekly on Wednesdays with pertinent class information, updates and news. The email address(es) you provide at registration will be added to our Flocknote system. If you do not receive a Flocknote from us within the first week of class, please contact our office.

### Guest Policy

No guests will be allowed in the classroom without prior approval by the Director of Religious Education and permission of the catechist. Visitors must sign in with the Religious Education Department prior to visiting the classroom.

### Cancellation of Session

The Religious Education Department follows the Novi School District weather cancellation policy. If Novi Public Schools have closed due to weather the Religious Education session will also be canceled.

In the event that Religious Education sessions are canceled but public school has not been canceled, catechists will be notified promptly via Flocknote email. Cancellation information will also be posted on the website.

### Housekeeping

As a community, our facilities are shared by many groups. Please include children in straightening the room at the end of the session, prior to dismissal. Contact the Religious Education Department with any housekeeping issues.



## Weather and Drills

### Severe Weather

When [Novi Public Schools](#) are closed due to severe weather there will be no Religious Education classes. If classes need to be canceled you will be notified by email via Flocknote. This information will also be posted on the parish website.

### Fire Drill

Children and staff will be educated how to properly proceed during a fire. Children will be taught our fire evacuation routes and meeting locations.

### Severe Weather Drill

Students will participate in a severe weather drill in which we will practice taking cover in the case of a tornado or high wind warning. Children will be educated on how to properly proceed in case of severe weather. Children will be escorted to the designated “safe” space in our building.

### Lock-Down Drill

Specific directions for an enhanced lock-down drill in the event of an intruder will be covered during safety week.



### **First Aid, Medication and Snacks**

#### **First Aid**

If a child requires minor first aid, please call Safety and Session Support through the walkie talkie and send the child and a fellow student to accompany him or her to the Religious Education Office. If an emergency situation arises, keep the injured child in the classroom and use the walkie-talkie to contact the Religious Education Office to request assistance. Religious Education staff is first aid trained.

#### **Dispensing Medication**

No medication, including over-the-counter medicine, will be given to a child (under 18 years of age) without the written permission of the parent. All medication will be stored in the Religious Education Office and must be signed in/out by a parent each session.

#### **Food/Snacks in the Classroom**

Due to the large number of food allergies in children, we do not allow food in the classrooms. Please do not hand out special gifts at holidays that contain any food items.



## Behavior Management/Discipline

### We ask the following of our students

As children of God, each student will treat their classmates and teachers with respect and reverence. The Religious Education Program should model a school setting where students respect their teachers, administrators and peers. Occasionally, a child may fail to be respectful or reverent and correction may be necessary. Below is a general outline of our disciplinary procedures and steps.

### Behavior Management

Upon occasion, children may need to be corrected for inappropriate behavior. Behavior Management is administered in a positive manner, never with the intent to humiliate or frighten a child. It is recommended to send a child to the office for an opportunity to reflect on poor choices and set a positive plan for returning to the classroom.

### Special Needs

We may have students with special needs or students receiving special services in school, (IEP, 504) if you need strategies for classroom management please notify the RE office.

### Discipline

It is the goal of St. James parish staff and volunteers to offer safe and productive learning opportunities for all of our students that allow each child to be respected, nurtured and lead to a sustaining, loving relationship with God and active participation in the Church.

- Classroom coaching – Catechist will verbally correct negative/disrespectful behavior.
- Referral to Religious Education Office – The RE Director will discuss and verbally correct negative/disrespectful behavior. Once the correction has been discussed the child will apologize to classmates and catechist upon return to classroom.
- Contact with Parents – RE Director will discuss and verbally correct behavior. Parent will be contacted and behavior plan will be discussed and implemented. The Child will apologize to classmates and catechist upon return to the classroom.

## Behavior Management/Discipline

- Transfer to Home Based Program – Director will discuss and verbally correct behavior. Parent will be contacted. Child will be transferred to Home Based Program.
- Immediate Transfer to Home Based Program- Any threatening or violent behavior may result in an immediate transfer to the Home-Based Program. The illegal use of cigarettes, vaping devices, alcohol, drugs or violent behavior will not be tolerated.





## Parent Information





### Sacramental Preparation

#### Reconciliation

As directed by the Archdiocese, children will be prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the reception of First Holy Eucharist, generally in second grade. We offer age-appropriate instruction which always focuses on God's unconditional love as well as a retreat experience and other sacramental formation experiences.

#### Eucharist

Generally, preparation for the reception of the Holy Eucharist is in second grade following Reconciliation. Preparation is a collaborative effort of the Religious Education Department, the candidate, the parent, the catechist, and the parish community. A Blessing Cup craft and other sacramental formation experiences are offered to enrich the formation of the child.

*\*Note: It is important for all of our students to be with us as much as possible. However, due to the importance of understanding the sacraments, students enrolled in the Blessed program and will be participating in the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion will be allowed 2 absences between September and December and again between January and April. If a student misses more than 2 classes during these time periods, they will be asked to repeat the program before participating in the sacraments.*

#### Confirmation

The Ignite Confirmation preparation program is a two-year in-person program designed for students who wish to partake in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The program is designed for students to develop a deeper understanding of the love that God has for them, and to discover how He demonstrates this love to us through the gift of the Holy Spirit and by using the gifts that He has given to each of us. We will foster in our students a more enriched relationship with Jesus- teaching them how to discern the still, small voice of the Spirit within them and welcoming Him, not as a stranger, but as a trusted guide at the time of their Confirmation.

Over the course of the program students will spend time participating in large group activities and lectures, prayer services, small-group discussions, a confirmation retreat and learn the value of service through service projects and service retreat days.

### Sacramental Preparation

#### **OCIC for Children (Order of Christian Initiation of Children)**

Children who have not received the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, Reconciliation, or Confirmation at the traditional age will have an opportunity to experience God's Grace through the sacraments in our OCIC program. Each eligible candidate will have an individualized curriculum developed to meet his or her specific faith journey. The Director of Religious Education will work with the candidate, family, and catechist to offer systematic faith formation opportunities as well as sacramental catechesis.



ST. JAMES  
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
**OCIC**  
ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF CHILDREN

### First Reconciliation FAQ's:

- Can I attend First Reconciliation with my child?
  - YES! We encourage families to attend and participate in the sacrament after the children have finished.
- How can I help settle my child's nerves before they receive this sacrament?
  - Remind your child that reconciliation is a time for God to show us how much He loves us! The priests are friendly and eager to help your child through the process.
  - Also remind them that they can not make a mistake!

### First Communion FAQ's:

- What should my child wear for their First Communion?
  - It's customary for girls to wear a white dress. If your daughter chooses to wear gloves, they must be removed before they accept the host.
  - It is customary for boys to wear a suit.
- Are photos allowed during mass?
  - We will open the church 45 minutes before each scheduled mass time to allow for photos. You may also remain after mass to take photos with Father Ed and around the church. Out of respect for the sacrament, we ask that no photos are taken during mass.
- How many people can attend my child's First Communion Mass?
  - You are welcome to invite as many people as you would like. However, you will be choosing one row for immediate family in the center sections of the church. Additional guests are asked to sit in the side sections.
- How long does the First Communion Mass take?
  - Please expect the mass to last an 1hr - 1.5hrs.

### Confirmation FAQ's:

- Who can be a confirmation sponsor?
  - Any baptized and confirmed Catholic over the age of 16 who is not the parent of the confirmandi.
- Who should my child choose for their Patron Saint?
  - Encourage your child to take some time and research saints to determine a saint that resonates with them and that they feel led to. Patron Saints can be either male or female- girls do not have to choose a female saint, and boys do not have to choose a male saint.
- How should a sponsor and confirmandi dress for Confirmation?
  - Females avoid low cut tops, spaghetti straps and short, tight skirts/dresses. Males typically wear a suit or suit pants with a dress shirt and tie. Males please avoid tennis shoes and jeans.
- How many people can attend the confirmation mass?
  - As many as you would like to invite!
- Where do I sit during confirmation?
  - Seats will be reserved in the front center rows for sponsors and confirmandi. Families can sit wherever they like within the church that is not reserved.
- Can I take photos during mass?
  - Doors will open an hour before mass so that you can take photos and will remain open after mass for photos. We ask, out of respect for the sacrament, that no photos are taken during mass.
- How long is a Confirmation Mass?
  - Please plan to be with us for 1.5 - 2hrs.
- Can I change the name of my Patron Saint?
  - Yes. Changes can be made to who you selected as your patron saint until Confirmation Rehearsal. At this point, changes can no longer be made.



### **Confirmation Prep (2 year program, 7th and 8th grades)**

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes a person's Initiation into the Catholic Church. Through the Ignite program, Confirmation candidates will develop a deeper understanding of God's love and learn about the gifts of the Holy Spirit which are strengthened in this sacrament. We'll explore how to use those gifts to give back to God and our community.

Ignite lectures, prayer experiences and small group activities will help students will develop a more mature relationship with Jesus, teaching them to discern and welcome His voice, not as a stranger, but as an active and service-filled member of the church.

Please see the schedules on [pages 15 & 16](#) for more information on days and times.



## Ignite Confirmation Program Information



### Attendance

Students are required to attend all in-person classes as well as complete all home assignments. Two absences are allowed per program year. (An absence consists of missing either an in-person or a home lesson). If a student is absent more than twice during the program year, the student will need to repeat their current year before moving forward to confirmation. To report a student absence, please complete our Attendance Google form <https://forms.gle/NoGMNkQzHnsxsSPF7>. Email Kimberly Tannahill at [religioused@sinovi.net](mailto:religioused@sinovi.net) with questions.

*\*No tuition refunds will be issued if a student needs to repeat a year due to lack of attendance.*

### Tardies and Absences

Students are considered tardy when they are less than 15 minutes late. If a student is more than 15 minutes late, they will be marked absent. Students will also be marked absent if they leave class more than 10 min before dismissal.

### Please complete our Attendance Google form

<https://forms.gle/NoGMNkQzHnsxsSPF7> to report absences.

### Confirmation Retreat

All 2nd year students are required to attend the Confirmation Retreat on Saturday, December 2nd from 1pm - 8pm.

*Students who are unable to attend the Confirmation Retreat at St. James are required to attend a full-day, in person retreat at another parish.*

### Service Hours

All students are required to complete at least 10 hours of community service each year during the two-year preparation program. All hours will be recorded and submitted using Google Forms.

Please contact Meredith Skowronski, [mskowronski@sinovi.net](mailto:mskowronski@sinovi.net) with any questions.

# SACRAMENT FORM FOR FIRST EUCHARIST

Please complete this form and return to the Religious Education Office

by **December 12, 2022**

Archdiocesan directives state:

“Since the Sacrament of Eucharist is an integral part of the initiation process, verification of the reception of the Sacrament of Baptism is obtained and a record of the reception of the Sacrament of Eucharist is kept in both parish of reception and the parish of Baptism.”

We record your child's First Eucharist here at St. James, but we need you to assist in the verification of Baptism. You can do this by:

1. Providing a copy of your child's **Baptismal Certificate**. If you do not have one, please call/email the parish where your child was baptized and request a new baptismal certificate be issued.
2. Complete the information below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Baptismal Parish

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Baptismal Parish (City and State only)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Baptism

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mother's Full Name (include Maiden name, please)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Father's Full Name

**Office** Date \_\_\_\_\_ Baptism Verified \_\_\_\_\_ V= \_\_\_\_\_ P= \_\_\_\_\_ L= \_\_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_\_

# Confirmation Information

**Please complete this form and return it to the Religious Education Office  
By: December 12, 2022**

It is important that all information be filled out completely as the final step in receiving this sacrament is to inform your baptismal parish of your achievement. Confirmation is documented in each parish's sacramental record books. **If you were baptized at another parish please attach a copy of your Baptismal certificate to this form.** *If you were baptized at St. James please return the completed form only.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate full name (First, middle, last)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Baptizing Parish

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Baptizing Parish (city and state only)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Baptism

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Table Number      Office Use Only

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's Mother's Name (include maiden name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's Father's Full Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Family Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

The name I choose for my Confirmation Name is: \_\_\_\_\_

My Confirmation Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Full Name of person to be the sponsor (First and last name printed)

**Please choose your name carefully and with thought as certificates will be printed prior to Confirmation day and cannot be altered.**

I have discussed with my child the guidelines for choosing a Confirmation Name and Sponsor and approve of his/her choices. These names will appear on your student's Confirmation Certificate and will be recorded in the Parish records. This information cannot be changed at the Confirmation service or afterwards.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND CHECK THE SPELLING OF YOUR NAME BEFORE SUBMITTING**  
**Office Use Only**

Sacrament Date \_\_\_\_\_ Baptism Verified: \_\_\_\_\_ V \_\_\_ P \_\_\_ L \_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_\_



## CARPOOL \ ADDITIONAL PICK-UP CONSENT FORM 2022- 2023

Typically, children are not allowed to leave St. James Religious Education church grounds with any person other than their custodial parent. To participate in a carpool arrangement, parent(s) and/or natural guardians(s) are required to complete and submit this form at the start of the Religious Education school year. If you would like your child to have permission to leave with another adult, you must provide the Religious Education office with a signed permission slip.

If there are ANY changes, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to resubmit this form to the Religious Education office.

I hereby authorize the St. James Religious Education Office and classroom catechist to release my child(ren)

**Student Name (First & Last)**

**Grade**

**Day and Time**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

to the following person(s):

**Name**

**Cell Phone**

**Relationship to Child**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Parent or Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_

St. James Catholic Church does not assume any liability for carpooling. By signing this agreement, I agree to release St. James Catholic Church entirely from any and all liability, including financial responsibility for any injuries incurred in carpooling, regardless of whether injuries are caused by negligence.

## Volunteer Information



## Volunteer Responsibilities

### Catechists Grades 1-5:

#### General Lesson Format

#### Each Lesson will follow the same general weekly format

- Prayer and Share Time: This is a time for the students to share their prayer requests and intentions with their classmates and catechists. They will also use this time to learn some common prayers used in church.
- Listen and Learn Time: This is the time when students will review their lesson from the previous week, learn new material and participate in interactive activities and crafts!

### Table Mentors: Encounter and Ignite

As a Table Mentor, you will help to build a community with the students who are assigned to your table group. You will be with the same students for the entire year which gives you an amazing opportunity to build relationships with them and help them develop relationships with one another. You will also be responsible for taking weekly attendance, monitoring behavior and helping with group activities.

### Session Support Team

The Session Support Team monitors the hallways, assists catechists, and is available for first aid, bathroom breaks and other students needs. The Session Support Team also helps to prepare crafts and activities for upcoming classes.

As a member of the Session Support Team, you may also be asked to substitute teach in a classroom with another catechist if needed.



### Expectations of a Catechist

#### Lesson Planning and Preparation

We ask that catechists be well prepared for each session. Detailed lesson plans will be available via flocknote ahead of each scheduled class.

Preparation time can vary with each session and catechist.

Please refrain from cell phone use during class time!

#### Additional Lesson Materials

If a catechist wishes to use their own supplemental teaching materials they must be approved by the DRE before use.

#### Safe Church Policies

Per A.O.D. policy, all catechists must have a criminal background check at the start of their ministry and must attend a Protecting God's Children Workshop within six months of accepting the position.

#### Reporting Suspected Abuse

Catechetical personnel, as persons of faith, have a moral obligation to report suspected abuse. If you have a healthy suspicion of a child experiencing abuse, immediately notify the Director of Religious Education, Meredith Skowronski, at 248-347-3434 or email at [mskowronski@sinovi.net](mailto:mskowronski@sinovi.net).

### Catechist Support

#### Catechists Expectations of Parish and Staff

Catechists will be supported administratively by the Religious Education Department. All materials for a successful catechetical experience will be provided, i.e. lesson plans, catechist materials, student materials, student supplies, liturgical aids, etc. Catechists will be supported through prayer and gratitude by the St. James parish staff and community.

### Volunteer Support

#### Tuition for Catechists

Catechists are offered free tuition for their children in Religious Education. Consistent catechist attendance is required. Catechists who miss more than 3 classes per semester (Sept - Dec and Jan - April) will be billed for full tuition.



### **Audio-Visual Equipment**

A variety of audio-visual equipment and materials are available for the catechist's use. Each classroom is equipped with an Apple TV which connects directly to the church wifi. If A-V equipment is part of the provided lesson plan, the equipment will be set up prior to class.

### **Placement of Faithbuilders Volunteer's Own Children**

A catechist's child will be placed with the parent unless otherwise requested.

### **Placement of Encounter/Ignite Volunteer's Own Children.**

Volunteer Parent Table Mentors will not be placed at the same table as their child(ren),

### **Volunteer Arrival**

Please arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled class start time. As students arrive in the classroom please greet children and parents with a friendly smile. Sessions will begin promptly at their scheduled start times. As always, notification of a late arrival is appreciated.

### **Catechist's Communication/Letters Home**

All written communication must receive prior approval from the Director of Religious Education before being sent home.

### **Volunteer Attendance**

In the case of a catechist absence, please contact the Religious Education Department with as much advance notice as possible through email to [religioused@sjnovi.net](mailto:religioused@sjnovi.net) or [Attendance Form](#). The Religious Education Department will procure a substitute catechist as necessary. Please remember that it is challenging for our staff when Volunteers are absent: we do not have a large substitute pool. It is assumed that, as a volunteer, you are present at every session.

### **Catechist Certification**

The Archdiocese of Detroit strongly encourages that all catechists are certified or in the process of certification to be a Master Catechist. Workshops are offered locally throughout the year. The Director of Religious Education will advise catechists of formation opportunities in the vicariate as well as track completed workshops. Tuition for catechist formation will be covered by St. James Parish.

## EEEEASY Class Management

Simple steps to creating a class of engaged, happy learners

### **Theme:** Live like Jesus, love like Jesus, teach like Jesus

How did Jesus teach God's love? He was respectful and loving, even to those who disagreed with Him. He was helpful. He saw when people needed help and responded.

### **Expectations:**

Set the expectations on day one, keeping them positive!

On day one and every time you say something, get children's attention first.

Make sure all are focused on you using a sound or a game (*Everyone who is listening touch your ear.*

*Everyone who is listening touch your shoulders, etc.)*

Go through expectations with the class, discussing what each means in behavior terms.

Have students give examples of specific actions that fit that expectation.

Expectations will be posted in your classroom.

Having the expectations posted gives you a reference point when behavior corrections need to be made.

Grades 1-3 children can recite them at the beginning of each class.

### **Elevate Positive Behavior:**

Be constantly on the lookout for students who are being respectful, responsible, and helpful.

Praise those behaviors aloud. *"Cassie, thank you for working so quietly That is responsible behavior."*

*"Nick, thank you for picking up those crayons. That was very helpful."*

### **Eliminate Negative Behavior:**

Be constantly on the lookout for deviations from the expectations. Your best-case scenario on day one is to gently correct someone who interrupts, distracts from the lesson or is disrespectful. When you gently say, *"Jimmy, remember that being respectful means listening when someone is talking."*

The whole class sees that you will be consistent. Distracting behaviors are like weeds in a garden. If you ignore them your whole garden will be full of weeds and it will be nearly impossible to remove them.

### **Engage Your Students:**

Speaking with students about their work shows that you care about them and wins them over.

*Make eye contact, ask about their interests, etc.* Circulate (Physically or with attention) among students or throughout the session.

Walk with students in the hall, one teacher at the front and one at the end of the line.

Choosing students to *help (passing out supplies, cleaning up, assisting with someone who needs help)* makes them feel like a valuable part of the team and encourages cooperation.

In the hall, walk with students, one teacher at the front and one at the end of the line.

**Exceptions:** There are children who, for a variety of reasons, cannot control their behavior.

They want to meet your expectations but are impeded by emotional, psychological, or physical reasons.

If this seems to be the case for a student in your class see Meredith to create a plan.

The child's parents are the experts and can give suggestions for what works for their child.

*The religious education team is ready to help you with any behavior management issues.*



## Archdiocese of Detroit

Safe Environments

September 2004

*The following is a reprint from the **Code of Pastoral Conduct For Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Ministers, Administrators, Staff and Volunteers**. The **Code of Conduct for Volunteers** can be found on the Archdiocese of Detroit website at [www.AODonline.org](http://www.AODonline.org). Click on Promise to Protect Pledge to Heal and then on Volunteer Code of Conduct.*

### IV. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. A volunteer must strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this *Code of Conduct for Volunteers* as a condition of providing services to the children and youth of our archdiocese.

#### **A volunteer must:**

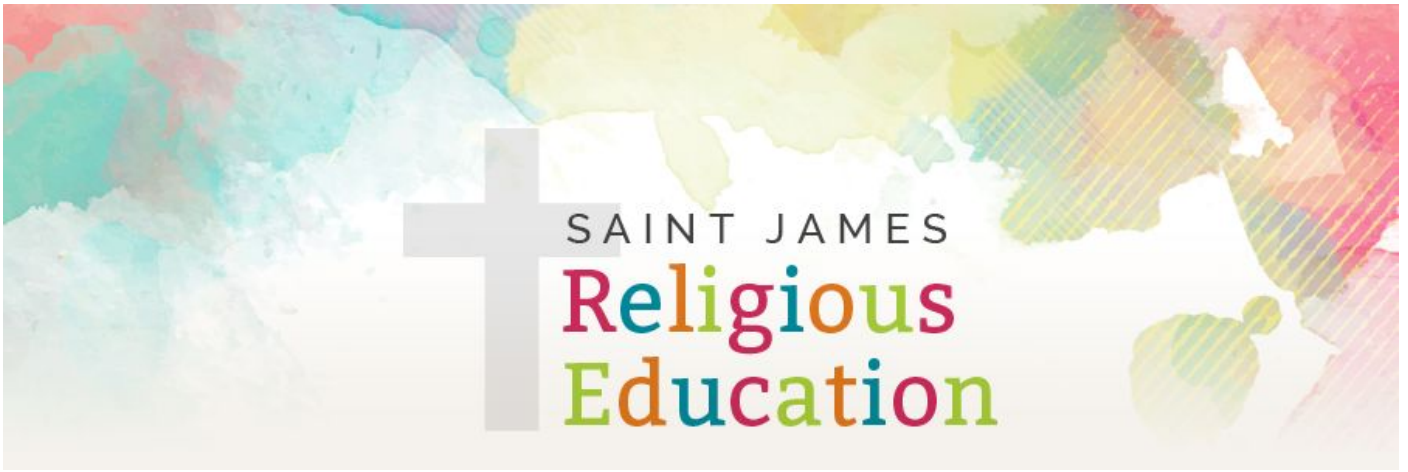
- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Avoid situations where he or she is alone with children and/or youth at Church activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children, youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator.
- Report suspected abuse to the pastor, administrator or appropriate supervisor and the local Child Protection Services agency. Failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities (by required reporters) is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

#### **A volunteer must not:**

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Pose any health risk to children and/or youth through fevers or other contagious situations.
- Strike, spank, shake or slap children and/or youth.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten or degrade children and/or youth.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

A volunteer working with children and/or youth is subject to a thorough background check, including criminal history. Any action inconsistent with this *Code of Pastoral Conduct* or failure to take action mandated by this *Code of Pastoral Conduct* may result in removal as a volunteer with children and/or youth.





Code of Conduct for Volunteers  
2023 - 2024

I have read and understand the Code of Conduct for  
Volunteers.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Archdiocese of Detroit

## Church Personnel and Volunteer Criminal Background Check Disclosure and Authorization Form

Hiring Entity Name/Address: St. James Parish, Novi, MI 48374

As a church we value the safety of children in our care, our employees and volunteers and the people whom we serve. We want to take prudent measures to protect our human and material resources. Therefore, the Archdiocese mandates that criminal history background checks be conducted for all Church personnel and Volunteers, who may have unsupervised contact with a child, the elderly or persons with disabilities. Please complete this form of basic information about you, which assures the best possible program and safety for all and return this form to the designated Administrator for Criminal Background Checks at your Parish/School/AOD Central Services.

Name:		Contact Phone Number		*Date of Birth:	
Known by any other name(s) (Maiden Name/Previous Names or Aliases Used):				Social Security #	
Address:		City:		State:	Zip:
Number of years in Michigan:	If less than 7 years, previous residence(s) outside of Michigan (If more than a & b please list on back) (Enhanced CBC Required)				
a.	Street	City	State	Zip	County From/To
b.	Street	City	State	Zip	County From/To
Current Place of Employment:		Work Phone:		Home Phone:	
Position(s) you are seeking/volunteering:			Email Address:		
Driver's license #:		State:	*Race:	*Sex: Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	

### Disclosure/Authorization:

The Archdiocese of Detroit hereby discloses and I understand that consumer reports and/or investigative consumer reports on my background may be made on me, to assess me in connection with hire or initial assignment, promotion or reassignment or retention. These reports may be obtained before initial hire or assignment or during my employment or assignment and may consist of a criminal history background check, driving record, education verification, employment verification, credit check, and/or personal references using the services of the Archdiocese of Detroit/Department of Human Resources and/or a designated outside firm. The information received will be kept confidential and will be used only to determine my suitability to work at the Archdiocese of Detroit, or volunteer for the above noted entity.

I authorize the Archdiocese of Detroit or a designated consumer reporting agency to obtain the information and authorize without reservation, any party contacted to furnish any or all of the above-mentioned information. Further, I will allow a photocopy of this authorization to be as valid as the original for purposes conducting the necessary investigation.

In addition, I agree to abide by the policies, procedures and code of conduct that currently exist or may be amended in the future.

I acknowledge I have been provided with a document entitled "Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act" prior to signing this Disclosure and Authorization form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Church Personnel/Volunteer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\*NOTE: Date of birth, sex, and race are being requested only for purposes of identification in obtaining accurate retrieval of records.

-----For Office Use only-----

**Select Searches:** ☐ ICHAT/Enhanced Nationwide Criminal Check ☐ Driving Record  
☐ Education Verification ☐ Employment Verification ☐ Credit Report

2/24/14



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK 2023-2024

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC RISK RETENTION GROUP, INC.



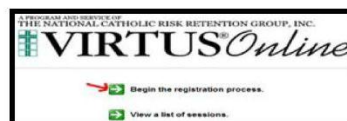
## Registration Instructions

Before attending a **live** session of **Protecting God's Children** – Or – before completing the **Online** version of **Protecting God's Children** training, all participants **must** first register with **VIRTUS Online**.

Go to <http://www.virtusonline.org>

On the left side of the screen, click the **First-Time Registrant** tab, to begin registration.

To proceed, click on **Begin the registration process**.



Choose the name of your organization (**Des Moines (IA), Diocese**) from the pull-down menu by clicking the downward arrow and highlighting your organization.

Once your organization is selected, click **Select**.

Please select your Archdiocese/Diocese/Religious Organization from the list below:

- Select your organization -----> [Select]

**Create** a user ID and a password you can easily remember. This is necessary for all participants. This establishes your account within your Diocese and the VIRTUS program. If your preferred user ID is already taken, please choose another ID. We suggest the use of email addresses as user names.

Click **Continue** to proceed.

Please create a user id and password that you will use to access your account

Common names like Mary and John are not good choices as they are most likely already in use.  
Common abbreviations like 'james' and 'michael' are also likely to already be in use.  
We suggest using your full name (without spaces) or email address as they are more likely to be unique.

Create a User ID: [text box]  
Create a Password: [text box]  
[Continue]

Your user id is case sensitive. We recommend that you use all lower case letters and avoid spaces and punctuation. Email addresses are ok. Your user id must be at least 4 characters long.  
Your password must be at least 4 characters long.

Provide the information requested on the following page. Several fields are required, such as name, address, phone number and e-mail address. Click **Continue** to proceed.

- **If you do not have an email address, consider obtaining a free email account at mail.yahoo.com, or any other free service. This is necessary for your VIRTUS Coordinator to communicate with you. If you cannot obtain an email address, enter: noaddress@virtus.org. This will signify to your VIRTUS Coordinator that you do not have an email address.**

Select the **PRIMARY** location where you work (**Catholic Charities-Des Moines**), volunteer or worship. You will be able to select additional locations later if you serve at multiple locations within your organization.

Click **Continue** to proceed.

Please select the primary location where you work, volunteer or worship

Location: - Please select - [dropdown]  
[Continue]

If you are associated with multiple locations, please choose the primary (work) location first. Then click the continue button to select additional locations such as those where you volunteer or worship.

Your current list of locations is displayed.

If you need to add an additional location, choose **YES**. Otherwise, choose **NO**.

This is the list of locations with which you are associated:

St. James Parish (Charles Town)

Do you work, volunteer or worship in another location?

[YES] [NO]

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# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK 2023-2024

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC RISK RETENTION GROUP, INC.



## Registration Instructions

Select the role(s) that you serve within your organization (**Volunteer**). Please check all roles that apply.

Additionally, please enter your title in the box provided (which best describes your role with the Diocese – ie. Catechist, Coach, DRE, Eucharistic Minister, Math Teacher, Room Mom, Seminarian, etc).

Click **Continue** to proceed.

Answer three YES/NO questions.  
Click **Continue** to proceed.

If you have already attended a Protecting God's Children Session, choose **YES**.  
Otherwise choose **NO**.

If you chose **NO** during the previous step, you will be presented with a list of upcoming "live" sessions scheduled within the **Diocese of Des Moines (IA)**. When you find the "live" session you would like to attend, click in the circle next to the title for that date.

If you wish to complete the **Online** version of the training (*rather than attend a live session*), click in the circle next to the title for the **Online Training** (found at the bottom of the session listing).

(If you chose YES during the previous step, skip this step.)

If you chose **YES**, you will be presented with a list of all sessions that have been held within your organization. Choose the session you attended by clicking the downward arrow to highlight the session, and then click **Complete Registration**.

A message will appear on your screen confirming completion of the registration process. If you correctly entered your email address during the process, you will receive an email confirming your registration.

If you registered to attend a "live" upcoming session at local parish or school, click on **Close Browser** to leave the website.

If you selected **Online Training**, click on **Go to VIRTUS Online** to access the training.

At the VIRTUS Home Page, enter the User ID & Password created during registration, click **Login**.

Click on the **green circle** to begin the **Online Training**.

Upon completion, the last screen will direct you to exit the training by closing the screen. The next screen reflects completion of the **Online Training** and allows you to print a certificate of completion (for your personal records, as well as for your parish and school).

To print a certificate, click on the link labeled **print certificate**.  
On the next screen, click on **Open**. When certificate appears on the screen, click on the print icon. From the next screen, click on **OK**.  
Once printing is complete, close the Adobe Acrobat screen to return to your VIRTUS Online account.

If you have additional questions about VIRTUS Online training, please contact the VIRTUS Help Desk at 1-888-847-8870 or your Diocesan VIRTUS Coordinator.

### Completion of Training Material

Congratulations, you have now completed the Protecting God's Children Online Awareness Session. Please exit by closing this screen.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to protect children.







