



C O R E

CONTENT OVERVIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUICATION

PROGRAM BOOKLET

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the Sea Church*

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our Religious Education Philosophy

Religious Education is seen as a process of Continuing Christian Development from birth to death. This ongoing process involves the development of a personal relationship between God and each child. Traditionally, Religious education or “CCD” was seen merely as a transmission of factual knowledge to children. We no longer consider faith a subject to be mastered but rather a sharing of information about one's beliefs centered on a lived relationship with Jesus. Our faith relationship grows in the same way other human relationships develop.

During the Baptism ceremony, the celebrant welcomes the one being Baptized into our family of faith, but initiation into the Roman Catholic Church is not completed at Baptism or at any other single moment of life. Religious growth is merely initiated at Baptism and needs to be nurtured by parents and family members, who give witness to their faith through weekly attendance at Mass and frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. The formal Religious Education Program is designed to cooperate with and support the family.

The Role of Parents

The Roman Catholic Church has taught for centuries that parents are the primary teachers of the faith to their children. It is expected that all families attend Mass weekly and receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist regularly, pray daily at home, and live their faith in daily life.

This truly is the most important aspect of Religious Education. Family life is a place where Religious Education is powerfully taught, and parents are the most important role model of faith for their children.

With this in mind, we offer the following guidance on how to effectively model and emphasize faith each day for your children and families:

1. Mass Attendance - The Liturgy is the central focus of all Catholic families. It is important to worship together and receive the Sacraments regularly as a family. This is a meaningful thing to do together and a critical aspect of living a strong Catholic life.

2. Daily Prayer - Children need to understand the value of talking to God every day, by informal as well as formal prayers. Communication is a basic element in all relationships, especially a personal relationship with God.

3. Family Faith Environment - Children need to live in a home where faith is a lived experience. The basic prayers to be learned are listed by grade level later in this *CORE Program Booklet*. It is also important for you to talk to your children about God and show them that you have a personal relationship with Him! Some suggestions might be incorporating a "prayer space" into your home where the Bible is kept and quiet time with God is encouraged. Your prayer space may have seasonal prayers and the Rosary as well as a candle.

Some additional traditions and suggestions are:

- A family baptismal celebration each year on the anniversary of each child's baptism when the white garment, candle, and pictures are taken out. This can also be done as they light the candles on their birthday cake.
- A daily Examination of Conscience at bedtime, which helps children learn to reflect on loving and unloving behavioral patterns from an early age and the need to say, "I'm Sorry" or "I Forgive You." This may include asking your children simple questions, such as: "How was your day today? Did anyone say or do anything that was hurtful to you? We need to forgive them." Or, "Did you do anything today that may have been hurtful to anyone? If yes, you need to say, 'I'm Sorry.'" When children are in Sacraments 2, they should say the Act of Contrition at bedtime in addition to the Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be To The Father.
- Prayers at mealtimes and talking about God's presence in our lives throughout the day are also much encouraged.

4. Christian Behavior – We look forward to working with your children but ask that you teach them to respect themselves, their catechists, and peers. Talk to them about Jesus’ Laws of Love: Love of God, Self, and Others. Students’ behavior in Religious Education classes is expected to be Christian at all times.



5. Attendance/Absence - We request that catechists be notified by telephone of any student's absence. We encourage parents to contact their child’s catechist to notify him/her of the child’s absence and obtain a “make-up” homework assignment that will be due when the child returns to class.

6. Communication Is Crucial - We have devised several ways in which we can provide ample communication with parents. It is our hope that two-way communication will aid in parental awareness and involvement, as well as provide for a better experience for all involved in the process. Some of our key means of communication are:

- Bulletin announcements
- Our parish website(s)
- Emails from the St. Mary-St. Patrick Office of Religious Education

Parental communication with our office is also of utmost importance. We encourage you to contact your children's catechists if questions or concerns arise. Please feel free as well to contact the Office of Religious Education in order to speak with our Director of Religious Education, Eileen Dignazio.

7. St. Mary-St. Patrick 2022-23 Religious Education Calendar -
This full calendar of classes and events has been provided to all families. It may be found on the parish website(s) and is also being distributed to all those parents and families who attend the Religious Education Parent Orientation Meetings.

The Role of The Catechist

Catechists are greatly appreciated for sharing their faith with the children and youth of this parish. It is difficult to overstate the importance of the catechists in the Religious Education Program. Many catechists are volunteers who teach a class to help ensure the quality Religious Education of their own children and others. These people make the program a reality. We are indeed privileged to work with them and offer them catechist training. We also encourage all parents to be catechists or team members. Please contact Eileen Dignazio for more information.

All catechists and hallway monitors have been background checked and have attended a VIRTUS Training as required by the Archdiocese of Hartford Safe Environment Office. This is to ensure a safe environment for all Religious Education students in which they can learn about the love that God has for all of us.

Liturgy of the Word For Children & Children's Mass

The "Liturgy of the Word for Children" will be celebrated every Sunday, with the exception of the First Sunday of the Month. This takes place during the 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. Patrick Church and the 9:30 a.m. Mass at St. Mary Star of the Sea Church. The children are invited to leave the Mass for a time in order to have the opportunity to hear the Sunday Gospel Reading in an adapted form that is easier for them to understand. In this way, the beauty of our Sacred Scripture can be shared with them on a level that they can clearly and fully understand.

On the First Sunday, there is no "Liturgy of the Word for Children" because those Sundays feature a full Children's Mass at that time where students may be invited to participate in roles, and a special homily is preached for the children present.

Program Overview

Preschool & Kindergarten

The Preschool/Kindergarten Program is informal but important in a child's faith development. The classes meet every Sunday beginning in late September and ending in May from 9:00-10:00 a.m. at St. Patrick Church as an extension of the "Liturgy of the Word for Children" and from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at St. Mary Star of the Sea Church as part of the "Little Stars" program.

Sacraments Classes – Years 1 & 2

Beginning in Grade 1, Religious Education classes meet from mid-September through May in the newly constructed classrooms at St. Patrick Church. Please check the calendar for a listing of days and times that your children will be meeting.

Our classes for the Sacramental Preparation for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion are called "Sacraments 1" and "Sacraments 2". The Sacraments 1 class is typically for children in Grade 1. As a two-year Sacramental Preparation program, Sacraments 1 focuses on teaching prayers and doctrines of our faith as specified in the *CORE Curriculum* portion of this booklet. This is the year in which the children begin their preparation for the Sacraments that they receive in Sacraments 2.

The Sacraments 2 class is typically for children in Grades 2 & 3, but some children that are older may also be prepared for the Sacraments in a separate section of this class. It is never too late for a child to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist, and this program can accommodate for various needs.

Grades 3-6

Beginning in these years, the curriculum is "Lectionary-Based Catechesis", which means that the children hear the Sunday Readings in class as the Opening Prayer and experience reinforcement activities and lessons supporting the themes of those readings. When they attend Mass the following weekend, they have already heard the Word of God on their level and have enjoyed the activities matching with the theme of the week.

Grades 7-8

Students in Grades 7 & 8 will meet using a similar format and calendar as the students in Grades 3-6, following a curriculum structured around “Lectionary-Based Catechesis”.

In addition, these students are asked to do 2 service projects each year for their parish. With guidance from their catechists, these students will complete these projects and provide information about them to the Director of Religious Education, Eileen Dignazio, so that this material can be placed in the student’s file. These projects, done in addition to the weekly classes, help give the students a broader awareness of the needs of others and the ways in which they can use the gifts that God has given them.



Doctrine & Teaching Materials

The textbooks/booklets that are used in most of our classes are published by *Pflaum Gospel Weeklies*, with additional online digital materials and supplementary resources incorporated by the catechists. The Sacraments 1 & 2 classes will use books published by *Dynamic Catholic*. All of these materials incorporate the Doctrine and teachings of the Catholic Church and the important themes and concepts found in the Sunday Readings, providing our students with a strong foundation for their faith.

All of these materials produced by both *Pflaum* and *Dynamic Catholic* are approved under the “Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series” produced by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

CORE CURRICULUM

Content Overview of Religious Education

What Should Your Children Know by the Time They Enter the Confirmation Program in Grades 9 & 10?

This section of the *CORE Program Booklet* is designed to assist parents in understanding the Doctrines, Practices, and Prayers of the Roman Catholic Church that are taught during classes in the St. Mary-St. Patrick Religious Education Program. This knowledge is cumulative and should be reviewed each year of the children's faith formation from Grades 1 through 8. The *CORE* is a compilation of questions and statements that reflect the teachings on each grade level. Parents are encouraged to periodically review this content overview with their children and to discuss the importance of these questions and prayers to their faith and lives. Catechists will use this as a "review tool" throughout the year of catechesis. Because of the importance of knowing and understanding this information, parents will be informed if their children are having difficulty with any of the content. A strong partnership between the home and classroom will benefit your children in Religious Education and will help them to become familiar with our faith and ready to receive the Sacraments. Having our traditional prayers become part of their daily routine at mealtime, bedtime, or at other points of the day will also provide a meaningful structure in which they learn to live their faith and build a relationship with our loving God. Having parents and other family members join in these patterns of daily prayer with their children will not only help with this process but will also assist in strengthening the faith life of all those involved.

Please note that the questions, prayers, and vocabulary listed to be learned in a given year are in addition all those expected to have been known from previous years.

Preschool & Kindergarten

- Who is God? (*an informal understanding*)
- Who is Jesus?
- Who is Mary?
- What colors do we see in the Liturgical Calendar?

Prayers to Know

Sign of the Cross, Our Father

Sacraments 1

- Who is God the Father?
- Who is Jesus?
- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- What is Advent?
- What is Christmas?
- What is Lent?
- What is Easter?
- Jesus died on _____ and was risen on _____.
- What is the name of the Church you attend?
- Who are the priests?
- What religion are you? (*Roman Catholic*)

Prayers to Know

Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be To The Father

Vocabulary to Know

God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Blessed Mother, Cross

Sacraments 2

- What are the Ten Commandments?
- How many Apostles were there?
- Who wrote the Gospels?
- What are Jesus' Laws of Love?
- What Sacrament did you receive as a baby?

- What is sin?
- How can we tell God we are sorry for our sins?
- What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation?
- In connection to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, what is:
 - Confession?
 - Contrition?
 - Penance?
 - Absolution?
 - Examination of Conscience? (*the Five-Finger Prayer*)
- What is the Sacrament of Eucharist?
- What happened at the Last Supper?

Prayers to Know

Act of Contrition, Our Father, Hail Mary,
Glory Be To The Father

Vocabulary to Know

Reconciliation, Baptism, Eucharist, Contrition, Penance,
Absolution, Examination of Conscience, Ten Commandments,
Jesus' Laws of Love, Holy Spirit, Sin, Confession,
Body of Christ, Eucharist, Baptism, Holy Week, Heaven,
Ordinary Time, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter

Grade 3

- Who are the Persons of the Blessed Trinity?
- What are the Seven Sacraments?
- What is the Bible?
- What is the Liturgical Year?
- When was Jesus born?
- Why did Jesus come to earth?
- When did Jesus die?
- When did Jesus rise from the dead?
- Who are the Shepherds of our Church?
- When did Jesus send His Spirit to the Church? Why?
- What is the Epiphany?
- What is Original Sin?
- Who are the Gospel Writers?

Prayers & Practices to Know

The Ten Commandments, Rosary, Stations of the Cross

Vocabulary to Know

Sacraments, Saints, Communion of Saints, Eternal Life, Bible

Grade 4

- What are the Beatitudes?
- What are the Sacraments of Initiation?
- What are the Sacraments of Healing?
- What are the Sacraments of Service?
- What are the Four Marks of the Church?
- What does it mean that Jesus is truly human and truly divine?

Prayers & Practices to Know

Using the Bible, Mass Responses, The Seven Sacraments

Vocabulary to Know

Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Easter Vigil, Holy Week, Pentecost, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Mass

Grade 5

- What is the Paschal Triduum?
- What are the Seasons of the Liturgical Year?
- What are the Parts of the Bible?
- Who inspired the writers of the Bible?
- Who are the Four Evangelists? (*of the Gospels*)
- What is the Incarnation? What does it mean?
- When were the Gates of Heaven closed?
- Who opened the Gates of Heaven? When and how?

Prayers & Practices to Know

Using the Bible, Seasons of the Liturgical Year, Advent Calendar

Vocabulary to Know

Paschal Triduum, Bishop, Missionaries, Pastor, Holy Orders, Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Service, Sacraments of Healing

Grade 6

- What is Holy Week?
- What is Passover?
- What is a Covenant?
- What are the Corporal Works of Mercy?
- What are the Spiritual Works of Mercy?
- What are the Holy Days of Obligation?
- What is Corpus Christi?
- What is Pentecost?
- Why do we call it the “birthday” of the Church?

- What is the Ascension?
- Who was the first Pope? And who were the first Bishops?
- Can you name the Apostles?
- What is Apostolic Tradition?

Prayers & Practices to Know

Holy Days of Obligation, Beatitudes, Rosary, Spiritual & Corporal Works of Mercy, Stations of the Cross, Prayers of Petition

Vocabulary to Know

Profession of Faith, Christians, Messiah, Apostles, Evangelists

Grades 7 & 8

- Name the parts of the Mass.
- What are the Four Marks of the Church?
- Why is it important for Catholics to attend Mass?
- What is Faith?
- What is Social Justice?
- Define “Resurrection”.
- Define “Conscience”.
- What are the 3 conditions necessary to commit a mortal sin?
- What is Original Sin?
- Who are the 12 Apostles?
- What is a covenant? Give an example of a covenant in the Bible.
- What connection is there between Jesus’ parables and your life?
- What is the Easter Triduum?
- What is Holy Week? And what is the meaning of each day?
- Know who Jesus is, his life, and his teaching.
- What is Transubstantiation?
- Who was the first head of the church? (*The first Pope*)
- Who is the current Pope? Who is the Archbishop of Hartford?
- Who is your Pastor?
- What are the Great Commandments according to Jesus?
- Explain the term “Blessed Trinity”.
- The Apostles’ Creed explains the Paschal Mystery. What is it?

These precepts will be incorporated into the lessons in both Grades 7 & 8. No test will be given, but rather activities will be used to help make the spiritual life a lived reality for each student. This is our Faith – we must know it to live it.