

St. Cecilia's Religious Education
Parent Handbook
www.stceciliakearny.org



2021-2022

PHILOSOPHY: Fellowship, Evangelization, Growth, Formation

St. Cecilia's Religious Education Program exists in order to aid parents in their privileged duty to form the souls of their children to secure their eternal salvation. We strive to help develop in each child a confidence in the loving mercy of God through a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Each child's response to God's invitation is fostered by a deep desire for sanctity through prayer, obedience, witness and service to the beliefs made known to us in the Sacred Scriptures, the sacraments and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Lastly, the children are welcomed and encouraged by the faith community as the hope and future of our Church.

SCHEDULE:

Classes for grades 1~ High School will meet bi-weekly at St. Cecilia School. The grades will be divided into two groups. Group 1 will consist of grades 1, 3, 5, 7 and High School Year I. Group 2 will consist of grades 2, 4, 6, 8 and High School Year 2. On off weeks, each student will be handed assignment to complete with the assistance of their parents. **Students are required to attend Mass with their family during the regular weekend schedule.**

Students in grades 9-12 as well as *older children preparing for baptism and first communion* will have an additional class on the first Sunday of the month...see sacramental class schedule.

Classes begin for Group A September 19, 2021 (Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, HS Year 1)

Classes begin for Group B September 26, 2021 (Grades 2, 4, 6, 8, HS Year 2).

Students preparing to receive a sacrament (Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, Confirmation) **have additional sacramental requirements.** Please see **sacramental preparation booklet** for dates and details.

FLOCKNOTE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

You may receive reminder TEXTS or EMAILS for upcoming events or to cancel an event.

In case of heavy snow, class will *be cancelled* and an automated TEXT message will be sent to your cell phone.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular Attendance is extremely important, as the children only have classes *once a week* (versus the daily Religious Education classes offered in Catholic School). Parents are expected to **report an absence by calling the office** with the child's name, class name and teacher's name, **and to send a note** when the child returns after being absent from class. After a second consecutive absence, parents will be contacted. It is the responsibility of parents to see that all absentee work is made up by the child. **If a child misses more than (4) classes in a year, he or she may be asked to repeat a year and/or take additional make-up classes.**

TARDIES:

Please bring your children to class on time; tardiness is distracting to the class, and a child is likely to miss important information. ***If a student is tardy 4 times, it will count as one absence.***

DROP OFF/PICK UP:

*Students will ENTER the school at door 2 on Chestnut Street. After class ends, 2nd-8th grade students will be escorted across the street to the Church (Hoyt Street) where they will meet their family. No child will be picked up outside of the school. 1st grade students will wait in the gym to be picked up by their parents. Any student not picked up at Church will wait to be picked up at the parish office. No child will be allowed to wait outside the Church, school or Parish Center without supervision. It is stressed that children are to attend Mass with their families at Mass. The schedule of Masses is posted in the parish bulletin. * THIS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO CHARTER SCHOOL.*

DISCIPLINE:

Since each hour of class is so vital, consistent disciplinary problems will not be tolerated. Students causing constant disciplinary classroom problems will have to be instructed at home by the parents. Parents are expected to make sure that their children complete their assignments, study, know and pray their prayers at home.

SPECIAL NEEDS:

Parents are asked to advise the Faith Formation Director of any learning, emotional, or physical difficulties the child may have. All such information assists us in helping us understand your child and is kept confidential. There are young people in the parish with learning, physical, or developmental disabilities who are unable to participate in regular classes, but arrangements can be made for

individualized instruction. We try to find qualified Catechists with special needs training.

DRESS CODE:

The basic guidelines for appropriate dress are neatness and modesty. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and should be treated with respect.

Gentlemen: please wear pants (with belts, if necessary—no sagging pants please) and a collared shirt. Hair should be neat.

Ladies: Blouses must be no lower than 4 fingers from the collar bone; sleeveless tops must have straps wide enough to cover bra straps. Skirts or dresses should be no more than 4 fingers above the knee. Clothing should not be tight fitting.

Underwear, including boxer shorts and bra straps are not to show. Lastly, logos promoting alcohol, drugs, gangs or inappropriate messages are not permitted.

***Due to the current pandemic, all students must wear masks throughout their time in class.**

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION:

“Parents are the primary educators in the faith...The family is defined as the ‘Domestic Church,’ that is, in every Christian family, the different aspects and functions of the life of the entire Church may be reflected: Mission, Catechesis, Witness, Prayer, etc.” – General Directory for Catechesis, chapter III.

As you are the primary educator, we at St. Cecilia’s exist to collaborate with you in your child’s education. Your participation in this our privileged duty, is therefore of vital importance. It is necessary to help assist the students in their assignments especially on their off-week. **All homework assignments are to be done as a family.**

All parents are required to attend 2 workshop of their choice. Workshops can be taken in one day or separated into 2 sessions. The Archdiocesan Women’s Conference and the Archdiocesan Men’s Conference also in March. For more info: www.rcan.org/womcom; www.rcanmenscommission.org Other workshop ***Dates and times to be announced.*** There are meetings for parents of children in sacramental preparation as well. Please see the list of dates at the end of this booklet.

Continued Religious Education at Home through FORMED.ORG

All families are encouraged to access the free parish registration through formed.org to view Catholic content online. View on your desktop, laptop or Smart TV. Bring the family together and watch Saint movies and other faith based programs that will benefit the whole family. Go to www.formed.org, enter your email and free parish code: DQNKPN.

Summary of Religious Education Curricula

Grade 1: *Getting to know God:* The focus is on the theme of Trinity. The children come to know God, our Father and Creator, Jesus, God's Son and our Savior, and the Holy Spirit, our Strength and guide. Key concepts of God's love, the life and teachings of Jesus and various prayers are taught. The sense of family love and joy are stressed in relationship to God in the Trinity at the child's level of understanding.

Grade 2: *Sacraments:* The Eucharist and Reconciliation are the focus of this year. The children are invited into a special relationship with Jesus in the Christian community. They will explore the saving actions of Jesus, moral choices involved being a good follower of Jesus with special emphasis placed on the Mass. Prayers and practices that help to deepen faith are taught. Baptism, the sacrament of belonging is introduced.

Grade 3: *Community:* The focus on the Church as the people of God, the Community of Faith helps the children to understand their part as members of the people of God. It is designed to help them see their role and to spread the Good News of the God's Kingdom. The works of Mercy are taught.

Grade 4: *Commandments:* Christian morality is explored as a way of life with a growing sense of Justice through a study of the Ten Commandments. Emphasis is on a covenant relationship with God and developing a well-formed conscience. Learning that which is true, good and loving to exercise free will in a relationship framework with God and practice of the beatitudes, the child becomes capable of directing himself to the true God and to seek the truth alone.

Grade 5: *Creed:* This level is directed at enriching the child's faith by an in-depth presentation of the creed, sacraments, Scripture, Church History and the lives of the saints. They highlight our heritage of belief, belonging, healing and service as we work for the Kingdom of God.

Grade 6: *Scripture*: The Bible is the church's book, our story of Faith and God's faithful love of His people. The child comes to the place of the Word of God in our lives with special emphasis on the Old Testament in the stories that bring the History of Salvation into focus. They are encouraged to "hear the Word of God and to live it".

Grade 7: *Christology*: The focus is totally on Jesus, the Son of God, Savior, and Redeemer of all humanity. Students enter into a deeper study of the person, life, teachings, miracles and actions of Jesus culminating in his passion, death and resurrection and descent of the Holy Spirit. The students are immersed in Christ's life story that they might, moved by the Spirit live and spread the Gospel message.

Grade 8: *Christian Moral Living*: Students delve more deeply into moral issues as they relate to the life of a young person and on making good moral choices founded on a formed conscience. It is expected that by completion of the 8th grade, the students have mastered all of the elementary doctrinal facts as well as all of the basic prayers of the Catholic faith and are rooted in a good foundation in the Scriptures.

Calendar of Religious Education Classes
2021-2022

Important Dates:

Sunday Classes for Group A Begin September 19, 2021
Sunday Classes for Group B Begin September 26, 2021

Holidays (NO CLASSES) for all students:

Thanksgiving Holiday:	<u>November 28th</u>
Christmas Holiday:	<u>December 26th, January 2nd</u>
Martin Luther King Jr.	<u>January 16th</u>
Presidents Day:	<u>February 20th</u>
Easter Holiday:	<u>April 17th & April 24th</u>

Last Day of Classes: May 1st , 2022

PARENT MEETINGS FOR 2021-2022

All parents are required to attend 2 workshop of their choice. Workshops can be taken in one day or separated into 2 sessions.

All Parents – Sunday, October 10, 2021 1:30 p.m. via Zoom

HS Confirmation – Sunday, October 17, 2021 ~ 1:30pm ~ Church Basement

Parent Workshop – Sunday, November 14, 2021- 1:30pm ~ Church Basement

Confirmation HS2 – Sunday, April 3, 2022-with students ~ TBD

First Communion (2nd year) Wednesday, February 3, 2022 ~ TBD

First Communion (2nd year) ~ Saturday, April 2, 2022 ~ TBD

*You and your families are in our prayers.
Please keep St. Cecilia's Church in your prayers too!*

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