

Religious Education of Children at St. Cecilia Policy Handbook

CLASS SCHEDULE

There are approximately 30 classes each year for Kindergarten through Confirmation.
Class is each Sunday 9:30 AM – 10:50 AM

PROGRAM GOALS

1. To support parents as they enable their child's faith to become "Living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction".
2. To build up the community of Christian believers in order to educate children according to Catholic beliefs as found in the Holy Scriptures and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.
3. To foster a spirit of service to others within the Christian community and to understand the meaning of being disciples of Jesus Christ.

MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

The task of religious education requires the combine efforts of parents, catechists, and above all, the support of God's grace.

Parents, by their reverence for God and the Church, their love for all men and women and by the values they live out each day, **are the primary religion teachers of their children.**

The role of the **catechist** is to augment the spiritual direction, which the parents impart to their children. They work to form as well as to inform our young Catholic Christian students.

ATTENDANCE

It is very important in any educational program that students attend regularly to ensure their progress. This is especially true in a weekly religious program. Parental cooperation is anticipated to ensure that absentees are at a minimum. In the event of an absence please send a note, call the Religious Education Office to leave a message 219-987-3511 or e-mail saint2@netnitco.net

1. Since five (5) classes represent over one month of classes, the maximum of unexcused absences is 5 days.
2. If more than five (5) unexcused days are missed, and class work has not been satisfactorily made up, the child may be expected to repeat the same grade level the following year.
3. Pre-arranged absence under certain circumstances is allowable as long as the parents contact the DRE and arrange for the work to be made up.
4. It is a common courtesy to contact the Catechist or Religious Education Office if the student is going to be absent. If parents do not show their children the importance of religious education, it will not be important to the children.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

1. To attend Mass with their children each Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation.
2. To receive the Sacraments frequently.
3. To attend parental meetings as required.
4. To make sure the children arrive to class prepared on Sundays.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

1. To attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
2. To attend and participate in religious education each Sunday.
3. To complete homework assignments given by Catechist
4. To display a Christian attitude towards your Catechist and Classmates.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Catechists are in class to teach. Students are in class to learn. There is little time each week. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

1. First offense, the student will be given a verbal warning in the classroom.
2. Second offense, the student will be sent to see the DRE.
3. Third offense, the parents will be called.
4. Fourth offense, failing all of the above, the parent will be required to sit in the classroom.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

The Catechist will evaluate students once each semester. The evaluation will include knowledge of topics covered in class, assigned prayers memorized, and classroom participation and positive attitude.

SACRAMENT CLASSES

Each year St. Cecilia Religious Education Program offers a First Reconciliation in second grade, and First Communion in the third grade. Confirmation is a two year program. Every student must attend Religious Education Classes two (2) years prior to receiving the Sacraments. Attendance at another Church's R.E. Program with written proof of attendance, will count toward the two (2) year requirement.

1. If your child was not baptized at St. Cecilia you must provide a baptismal certificate from the church where your child was baptized. This must be on file before any sacraments can be received.
2. All students entering a Sacrament Class are to attend regular classes each Sunday. If your child falls behind, it becomes the responsibility of the parents to work with their child at home. All materials will be provided by the Religious Education Department and lessons will be assigned. Children will be tested, outside of regular class time, on a monthly basis or as necessary. Children will be assessed on their knowledge of the materials assigned.
3. Parents will be required to attend informational meetings concerning the sacraments their child is preparing to receive.
4. Students may have no more than five unexcused absences in the school year.
5. A mandatory retreat is required of all Confirmandi's.
6. Confirmandi's are required to participate in a minimum of 30 hours community service.

CELEBRATIONS

First Reconciliation: There is a small reception for students and parents after the second graders have received First Reconciliation.

First Communion: A lunch is provided after practice on the Saturday before First Communion. This is a mandatory practice for all students.

Confirmation: There is a reception following the Mass.

The Ladies Sodality provides the refreshments for all of the above occasions.

SEQUENTIAL COURSE OF STUDY

"As a precept of the Church, weekly Mass attendance is obligatory for all Catholics. The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin." This paragraph has been taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church #2181

KINDERGARTEN

Students are helped to realize that God created everything out of love and that His house is a special place. Students are encouraged to realize that God's love enables them to love themselves and others and to reach out to God through prayer. Bible stories from the Old and New Testament are the focus of the program. They also learn how to bless themselves, work on the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be, and prayer before meals.

FIRST GRADE

Students are introduced to God, our Father and Creator, His Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. First Graders also study the Catholic Church, Mass, and Baptism. Various celebrations throughout the year are introduced and Catholic Prayers are reviewed.

SECOND GRADE

Students are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Special emphasis is placed on the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and the study of the Ten Commandments, The Saints, and Mary.

THIRD GRADE

The students are prepared to receive Jesus in the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time. Students study each part of the Mass in depth and are encouraged to look on the Catholic Church as a community of believers.

FOURTH GRADE

The students are given the opportunity to discuss and develop the ability to make good choices by learning and applying the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes to daily life.

FIFTH GRADE

The focus of the fifth grade is to study the seven sacraments, the ministry of Jesus, the founding of the Church, and the student's role in the Church today. The students are given opportunities to discuss values, choices, and decision making in the light of the teaching of Jesus Christ and the Church.

SIXTH GRADE

Sixth graders focus on the Old Testament and salvation history. The students study the story of the Israelites as they are formed into the people of God. The students also discuss how they too are called to be a part of God's Kingdom.

SEVENTH GRADE

The seventh grade program focuses on the People of the Old Testament, the early Church. Jesus' ministry is examined in detail, and His teaching is discussed to help students to continue to form their conscience in the light of Christ.

EIGHT GRADE

The eighth grade students study morality as it relates to their changing needs. Emphasis is placed on strengthening the students' relations with family, friends and with the Lord Jesus Christ.

HIGH SCHOOL

The High School students review the Sacraments, The Ten Commandments, The Beatitudes, and the precepts of the Church. Various Church ministries are discussed to help each student begin to see where he or she fits in as a part of the Church.

CONFIRMATION

Students are formed in their obligations to become fully initiated members of the Catholic Church. This is a two-year formation process at St.Cecilia. Students are to choose a saint they wish to emulate and to write one page paper outlining the qualities of the chosen saint and their reason for choosing him or her. Students are also required to have 30 hours of service.

YOUTH GROUP

The goal is to provide spiritual leadership by providing a Christian atmosphere for fellowship among young people and their friends. The youth group is offered to all students who are in at least 8th grade. Participation by all young people is strongly encouraged in order for our youth to have a successful organization. Parent support is extremely important for the success of the youth group. Parents are urged to help by driving to events and by participating in fund raisers.

RCIA

The **R**ite of **C**hristian **I**nitiation of **A**dults is the process by which adult converts are received into full communion with the Catholic Church. RCIA classes will be scheduled according to the need for instruction. If you are interested in embracing the Catholic Faith, you are most welcome to phone the Religious Education Office 219-987-3511.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

All Employees, Volunteers, and Catechists, are required to complete Safe Environment training and complete a back ground check.

COOPERATION

It is rightfully expected that the parents cooperate with the pastor, director, catechist, and other religious education staff members. Cooperation is expected in the following way;

1. Helping your child to understand the importance that you place on the instruction received in religious education.
2. Letting your child know that you expect steady attendance and correct behavior during religious education.
3. Reinforcing the goals of the Religious Education Program, especially by your regular attendance at Sunday Mass.
4. Checking to see that assigned work is being completed from week to week.
5. Staying in touch with the child's Catechist during the year.
6. Helping the child with his/her homework and in the memorization of prayers.