



**Sunday Evening  
Middle School  
Religious Education  
2009-2010**

**St. Benedict Parish  
St. Joseph University Parish  
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish  
St. Ann Parish**



## **SUNDAY EVENING MIDDLE SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The Sunday evening religious education classes are established by St Joseph University, Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Benedict and St. Ann Parishes to assist the faith development of young people, sixth through eighth grades. Sunday religion classes are designed to assist parents by fostering study, growth and understanding in a formal setting and through special celebration events.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The aim of the Sunday Evening Middle School Religious Education program is to work with families so that all of us: students, parents, teachers and parishioners may grow toward greater faith, hope, love and knowledge of God and our Church. Together we work toward becoming the Kingdom of God by living in the love of Christ.

### **ROLE OF PARENTS**

Parents are the primary religious educators for their children. Parents contribute to the spiritual growth of their children by nurturing the intellectual, emotional and physical growth of their children. At baptism the parish community promises to assist the parent in this role, however the family is the first place where faith is learned, lived and interpreted. The religious behavior of the parents will predict the religious performance of the children. The National Catechetical Directory tells us the “parents catechize informally but powerfully by example and instruction” (NCD 212), and that “though the influence of peers and of adult catechists is important, catechetical programs are not intended to supplant parents as the primary educators of their children.”

Faith development involves more than instruction in religious facts. It requires practice as well. Here are some suggestions to help parents pass on their religious faith to their children.

- ✠ Celebrate the liturgy regularly with your family. Fully participate in all aspects of the liturgy, including prayers and hymns, and encourage your children to do the same. Children learn it’s important if you make it so in your own life.
- ✠ Take part in adult religious formation yourself. Children need to see that religious growth doesn’t finish in Grade 8 or 12.
- ✠ Live a life of service. “Faith without works is dead”. Children will catch on by watching the ways you give your time, talent and treasure to others.
- ✠ Arrange for time to review each week’s lesson with your child. Complete family activities if they are sent home. Let your child know that their religious education is important to you by participating in it with them.
- ✠ Encourage your child’s religious curiosity. Don’t be afraid that you might not know the answer to a question...check the internet or ask someone on the parish staff.
- ✠ Use the Commandments and Beatitudes to make decisions.
- ✠ Make your home a place of justice and peace with consistent and respectful behavior.
- ✠ Pray together at home...morning, bedtime, and meals.
- ✠ Read the Bible at home.

Occasionally, parents may have concerns about things that occur during class times. We have found that open discussion with those directly involved helps create a more Christian climate and brings issues to closure much faster than holding them inside (or sharing them with others who are not involved). Parents are therefore encouraged to express any concerns they may have about the programs, teachers, or facilities by speaking directly with those involved or using the concerns form at the back of this handbook and returning it to the Pastoral Associate/DRE.

## **ROLE OF STUDENTS**

The student's role is to learn about our Christian religion and grow in faith. They are to accept themselves, their classmates, and their teachers as the wonderful persons God made them to be with individual talents and abilities, as well as limitations. They are to use their talents and abilities to help those around them. They are to accept God's grace and realize that religious education is a lifelong experience.

## **ROLE OF CATECHISTS**

Without volunteers religious education would not be a reality. We depend on those who have heard the call to be catechists for our children in the ongoing process of faith formation. These catechists are lay volunteers dedicated with active faith, enthusiasm and love of children. They are trained in the teaching of religion and are helped toward Archdiocesan certification.

All catechists and those working with children must undergo background checks and attend VIRTUS training, which are archdiocesan requirements to keep our children safe and secure.

To view the archdiocesan policy on abuse go to <http://archindy.org/abuse/policy.html>.

## **ENTRANCE POLICY**

Families enrolling in the Sunday evening middle school religious education classes must be registered members of St Joseph University, Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Benedict or St. Ann Parishes. Students will be assigned to religion classes at the same grade as regular school unless otherwise noted on the registration form. Non-parish families (registered in other parishes) should attend classes at the parishes where they are registered. Exceptions may be made with the consent of the Pastor where the family is registered.

Whenever possible, students with special needs are included in religious education classes. If your student has special needs please contact the Pastoral Associate/DRE to determine how those needs can best be met. Occasional gatherings for special needs students are also available at the deanery level.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular and prompt attendance at Sunday evening classes is vital to the growth in faith and community. We understand that some absences are unavoidable. Please contact the teacher in case of absences and work with your young person to cover materials missed during absences. Students missing more than half of the classes in a year may be required to do additional work during the summer or repeat that grade the following year.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

Evening middle school students will meet in the Gregorian Room of St. Joseph's parish hall twice a month from 4:45-6:45 p.m.

## **FEES**

The registration fee for all the Sunday Religious Education Programs is **\$30 per child** (\$90 family maximum). This fee helps cover the cost of books and materials used through the year

**All fees are payable at registration**, or may be made in payments. If this is a hardship for the family, please indicate so at time of registration or contact your parish DRE to make other arrangements. No child will be refused religious education for financial reasons.

## **CANCELLATION OF CLASSES DUE TO WEATHER**

The Pastoral Associate/DRE will contact the teachers who will in turn call their students. If time does not allow for phone calls, announcements will be made at the morning masses and signs will be posted on the doors. **Please do not drop off children and leave if there is any question of classes being canceled.**

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT & REPORTS**

Each year students in sixth and eighth grades will take the archdiocesan Faith 2000 Assessment. Individual results will be sent to parents and group results will be shared with all who are interested. These results will help us to assess areas of strength and weakness in our programs and make changes as needed.

Attendance reports will be sent out at the end of the religious education year.

## **STUDENT SAFETY**

On the registration form parents are asked to give emergency information and back-up persons to call in case parents cannot be reached. In case of serious accident or emergency, the Pastoral Associate/DRE will be notified and will contact parents or alternates and emergency personnel if needed. Once each year students will participate in fire and tornado drills.

## **USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Please do not allow students to bring IPODS, MP3 players, cell phones or other electronic devices to class. Those bringing such items will be asked to place them on the teacher's desk until the end of class.

## **SNACKS**

Parents are asked to sign up for one or more weeks to provide snacks, drinks and paper products. They are also encouraged to stay and sit in on classes to see what their children are learning.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL RE GUIDELINES**

1. Be on time to class - Class begins at 4:45.
2. Be respectful to everyone you meet - teachers and other adults, classmates and other students.
3. Walk quietly through the halls.
4. Be attentive to those speaking.
5. Do not hurt others with your words or actions.
6. Use supplies provided by your teacher, do not take things from the desks.
7. Clean up after yourself.

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE WHO CHOOSE NOT TO FOLLOW GUIDELINES:**

Students will be allowed two warnings during class time. At the second offense the student will be sent to the Pastoral Associate who will contact the parents to discuss appropriate consequences. After two offenses where parents need to be notified the student will be on probation. A third offense will result in an immediate call home, parents will be asked to continue their child's studies at home for the remainder of the year.

This information is also available on the parish website.

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

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

**CONCERNS SHEET**

This sheet may be used to file a concern from parents to catechists, or PASTORAL ASSOCIATE. The usual process is to contact the catechists or administrator involved. If you are not satisfied, make your concern known to the administrator. If you are still not satisfied, make your concern known to the pastor.

TO: \_\_\_\_\_

Please consider the following concern I have about

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What has happened:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What I did:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions on how to prevent this from happening again:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DATE

PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

