

St. Patrick's Office of Religious Education  
117 Moseman Road  
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598  
Tel. 962-5586/Fax 962-3207

## PARENT HANDBOOK

This brochure has been prepared to provide both a framework for understanding the intentions of St. Patrick's Religious Education Program and to provide useful information to parents in our program. Here is an overview of what topics are included in this handbook.

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## MISSION OF ST. PATRICK'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The mission of the St. Patrick's Religious Education Program is to journey in faith with children and families and to transmit the Christian message with excellence and love so that, through intimacy with the person of Jesus Christ, each person may live a life that will transform society.

## PARENTAL ROLE

Parents are primarily responsible for the religious development of their children. How a child prays and worships God and how he or she relates to others in a Christian way are values which children are already experiencing before they begin formal religious education in the first grade. These are values that develop from the religious environment at home.

The Eucharist, the center of our life of faith, is the focal point of religious education and growth in faith. The main purpose of the programs we offer is to reinforce a Eucharistic spirituality. It is therefore essential and expected that the children attend Mass each weekend.

## TASKS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The role of the religious education program is described at length in a Church document titled General Directory for Catechesis. This document outlines six tasks of Catechesis that every catechist strives to incorporate in lessons during the year. These six tasks are: Promoting knowledge of the faith, Liturgical education, Moral formation, Teaching to pray, Education for community life and Missionary initiative. Everything that is required for participation in this parish program is related to our Mission Statement and the accomplishment of these six tasks.

## OFFICE HOURS AND STAFF

### Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday from 9:30 am to 8:00 pm and Fridays from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm (when class is in session).

### Office Staff:

Susan Wallace, Coordinator of Religious Education  
Mary Ellen Falco, Assistant Coordinator of Religious Education and Registrar  
Cathy Scola, Sacramental Coordinator  
Gloria Golia, Administrative Assistant

## CLASS SCHEDULE

- Classes in Grades 1-7 are offered Monday through Friday from 4:30 to 6:00 pm
- Classes in Grades 2-7 are also offered Wednesday evening from 6:30 to 8:00 pm and grades 4-7 are again offered on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.
- Classes in Grade 8 is offered Monday and Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 pm.
- The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is offered on Monday and Wednesdays from 4:30 pm to 5:45 pm and on Wednesdays from 2:15 to 3:30 pm.
- Our Pre K/Kindergarten Class is offered Thursday morning from 9:00 to 10:00 am.

## ADMISSION POLICY

Children in families registered in St. Patrick's Parish are encouraged to enroll their children in the program. There is no discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin or disability.

Children who have not been baptized for some reason and older children who have been baptized but have not yet received First Reconciliation, First Communion or Confirmation are also encouraged to enroll and we will try to provide special classes to meet their needs.

## ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, PARKING

All arrivals, dismissals and parking take place in the Church parking lot at the top of the stairs. By town zoning ordinance, no parking is permitted in the rear exit road behind Building B.

VERY IMPORTANT - No cars are permitted in the school quad at any time. Any student, parent or catechist who requires handicap drop-off, pick-up or parking must arrange it in advance with the Office of Religious Education.

For dismissal, parents are asked to meet their children in the designated area and please let the teacher know you are taking your child. If you are in a carpool, a letter must be given to the teacher(s) in advance so that we know which children are to be dismissed to which parent.

All children in grades 1 and 2 should be dropped off and picked up at the classroom. If needed, an older sibling can pick up a younger brother or sister at their classroom if the parent sends in a note in advance.

## ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

Regular and consistent class attendance is necessary for instruction to be effective and therefore, every effort should be made to avoid absences.

Parents are asked to call the office (962-5586) when they know their child will miss class for any reason. The child or a parent should then follow-up with the teacher to make sure that the missed work is completed at a later date. The Archdiocese considers more than six absences a year to be unacceptable and therefore, in that instance, promotion to the next grade level may need to be evaluated.

## CALENDAR

A program calendar will be sent home to each family in August. The Archdiocese recommends a minimum of 45 hours of class time supplemented by five hours of family time. The Yorktown school district calendar is followed for seasonal recesses and holiday observance. Classes are not held when the local district is off for these or weather related reasons. We are not closed for parent-teacher conferences. Weather cancellations are announced on WHUD radio (FM 100.7) and on their website: [www.whud.com](http://www.whud.com).

Religious Education Calendar for 2006-2007 Year is located on our Parish Website at <http://www.stpatricks-yorktown.org/PDF-Files/Religious%20Education%20Calendar.pdf>

## CATECHISTS

Catechists are faith-filled people who answer a call to pass on the Christian message through word and witness. Many of our catechists are certified teachers. All are expected to be certified catechists or working towards certification through the Archdiocesan Catechist Formation Program or other continuing religious studies education. Anyone is welcome to attend these workshops and classes. If you are interested in attending, call the Religious Education Office for more information.

## COMMUNICATION

Important communications will be mailed to your home so please be sure that the office always has up to date address and telephone information for your family. Reminders, changes and any information regarding cancelled meetings, etc. will be sent home with the student. Please ask your child if there are any handouts.

## COST OF PROGRAM AND TUITION

The Religious Education Program runs on a budget which is funded in part from tuition and in part from a subsidy from the parish. Tuition is usually paid in the month of September, however, arrangements for budget payments may be made. If you are in a financially difficult situation, please call Susan Wallace to discuss payment options. Tuition is essential to the operation of the program, however, no child will be kept out of class because of financial concerns.

### TUITION FOR 2006-2007:

PRE K/KINDERGARTEN \$155.00

ONE CHILD IN PROGRAM \$180.00

TWO CHILDREN IN PROGRAM \$230.00

THREE OR MORE CHILDREN IN PROGRAM \$280.00.

## DISCIPLINE

We aim to transmit the Christian message with excellence and love. To do this, we understand that there needs to be an atmosphere of mutual respect and preparedness in each class. Students should arrive on time, with their textbook, pencil, Bible (grades 6-8), folder (grades 1-3), etc. and be prepared to participate to the best of their ability.

We have the right to remove a student from a class if we believe that the student would benefit from an individual or small group setting or if the student is seriously inhibiting the learning of others in the group.

Consultations with the student, his parent (s), the Coordinator and the catechist may be necessary to determine the best option for all involved. Verbal abuse or humiliation by the student or the catechist will not be tolerated. A parent who has a concern about behavior in a child's class should contact the Coordinator.

## HOMEWORK

For learning to truly take place, children need to review, use, teach others and integrate into their lives the information they have been given. For this reason, catechists are encouraged to require some type of written or practical work to be done between classes. Parents need to ask children about homework and see that the child follows through.

## REGISTRATION

Registration for children entering first grade and students new to the Religious Education Program is held every Spring (late April/early May). For families who already have a child in our program, you may register a new first grade student by mail. A copy of the baptismal certificate is required at the time of registration. Families with children of special needs should register in person. Once registered, children are re-registered automatically each year.

Every effort is made to keep class size limited to no more than eighteen students. Because of the size of our parish and our program, we may not always be able to accommodate parents on their choice of day although we will make every effort to do so.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Preparation for the reception of the sacraments takes place within the context of our state mission and is not the specific reason for the program. Receiving the sacraments is not an end in itself but a means by which we are able to live sacramental lives and to be Christ in our world. Therefore, the Religious Education Program is a period of time in which we journey in faith with the children and their families while the children are also preparing to receive certain sacraments. Ordinarily, a child will be in the program for a minimum of two years, as overall preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. However, specific preparation for the individual sacrament usually includes additional family sessions, rites and prayer services designed to enhance the understanding and community aspect of the sacrament.

## HOW TO CONTACT US

Telephone number: (914) 962-5586

Fax Number: (914) 962-3207

St. Patrick's Parish Website: [www.stpatricks-yorktown.org](http://www.stpatricks-yorktown.org)

Susan Wallace, Coordinator – email address – [susanw1118@yahoo.com](mailto:susanw1118@yahoo.com)