



**Saint Andrew's**

**Religious Education**

**Handbook**

**2017-2018**



## Saint Andrew Religious Education Personnel

**Pastor**                      Father Joseph Farrell  
**CRE**                             Mrs. Celeste Grant  
**Assistant**                    Mrs. Geri Reilley

**Religious Education Office Phone Number**            (609) 723 – 4243 ( ext 6)

### Traditional Program – Monday and Tuesday evenings

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Grades First and Second   | Monday 5:30 pm to 6:45 pm  |
| Grades Third and Fourth   | Tuesday 5:30 pm to 6:45 pm |
| Grades Fifth and Sixth    | Monday 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm  |
| Grades Seventh and Eighth | Tuesday 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm |

### Family Program – Monthly on Wednesday Evening 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

This program is a combination of monthly gatherings and home learning assignments. Monthly gatherings are attended by child/ren and parent/guardian.

All Catechetical Sessions are held at Saint Andrew Church.

### Catechists

Catechists are dedicated and generous volunteers who give of their time and talents to help our parish children grow in our Catholic faith. They are formed as Catechists (one who echoes’ God’s Word) and are certified by the Diocesan Office of Catechesis. Catechists are provided with materials to help them accomplish this important and awesome task of handing on the faith.

Keeping with the United States Bishop’s charter *Protecting All God’s Children*, all catechists participate in criminal background checks and the special *Virtus* training program.

### Fees

Annual fee is \$80 per child. In the event a child loses their religion book, there is a \$10 replacement fee.

### Curriculum

“Catechesis is education in the faith of children, young people and adults which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine, with the purpose of initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 5)”

The areas of catechesis are: God, Sacraments, Church, Prayer/Worship, Moral Life and Scripture.

Our Religious Education program adheres to the Guidelines set by the Diocesan Office of Catechesis.

### **Texts used:**

*Be My Disciples* published by RCL - Grades 1 through 7

and 8<sup>th</sup> grade- *Decision Point* published by *Dynamic Catholic Institute*.

*All texts are in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church and in keeping with the spirit of the national Directory for Catechesis.*

### **RCL Benziger Family Life Series**

In keeping with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, the *Family Life Series* has been adopted by our Diocese. We are integrating this series during the regular Religious Education sessions for all grades.

**Lived Faith** opportunities are offered throughout the year to enable our children to live the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. These opportunities include mission outreach, food drives, clothing collection and hospitality weekends, etc.

**Reconciliation Services** will be scheduled throughout Lent this year, during the regularly scheduled weekly sessions. This affords each child the opportunity to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation.

## **Sacramental Celebrations**

**First Reconciliation** celebrates God's loving forgiveness. The experience of forgiveness is at the heart of the Gospel message. Jesus came to show us the Father who is loving and forgiving. This is the God whom we wish our children to meet in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. *First Reconciliation is celebrated during the month of December.*

**First Eucharist** is an opportunity to introduce the children of our parish into a fuller participation in God's family of which they are members through Baptism. The faith community of Saint Andrew welcomes these children to the Table of the Lord, as they receive for the first time the Body and Blood of Jesus.

*Usually, our parish children are in Level Two when they celebrate these sacraments for the first time. Family meetings are scheduled to help families fully prepare their children to celebrate these sacraments.*

**Confirmation** is the celebration of God's Spirit, during which our candidates affirm their Baptismal promises. This sacrament is usually celebrated during the spring, when our candidates are in *Level Eight*. Three, Parent/Candidate meetings will be scheduled early in

the year to begin the immediate preparation. A third meeting will be held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year.

## **Policies**

### **Registration**

Registration for new children is held during the summer months. Registration forms can be downloaded from our website or picked up after Mass. Baptism certificates must be presented at the time of registration. Once a child is registered in our program there is no need to re-register. However, each family is requested to complete the annual Religious Education Family Update form.

### **Attendance**

Faithful attendance is required to provide continuous opportunities for faith development.

Parents are requested to call the Religious Education Office if their child will be absent. The parents are expected to cover the assigned lesson, so that their child is prepared to continue with their group on return.

When a child has more than **three absences**, the coordinator will discuss alternative programs and/or procedures with the family that may meet their needs, and ensure that the child/ren will be fully prepared to move to the next level.

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

Children are expected to arrive on time and leave at the end of each session. If a child needs to be dismissed early, a note must be sent to the director and the parent/guardian must enter the building to pick up the child.

If an adult other than the parent/guardian is picking up the child, *we must be informed prior to their arrival. They must enter the building and provide proper identification before picking the child up.*

**No child will be permitted to leave the building early unless accompanied by an adult.**

**Monday Session I** - Children should be escorted to and picked up from their group by a parent/guardian, not a sibling (under the age of eighteen).

**All other Sessions** - Children are to enter and leave the building by the rear door. When dismissed they are to wait close to the building, on the grassy area. *Safety guards have been assigned to supervise dismissal. Families and children are to follow their directions.*

**Please note: For safety reasons doors of the building will be locked during each session. Please knock on rear door if you need to enter the building.**

## **Cancellation of Religious Education**

If inclement conditions are present, cancellation of religious education classes will be posted on the St. Andrew's Website ([www.standrewsjobstown.org](http://www.standrewsjobstown.org)) Also, if the sending districts are closed, RE sessions will be canceled.

## **Health Concerns and Special Needs**

At registration, health, education, special needs and family concerns should be brought to the attention of the Administrator of Religious Education.

*If a child is diagnosed with a medical condition and/or allergies after registration, please inform the administrator as soon as possible.*

## **Child Abuse**

New Jersey state law requires that any staff member having reason to suspect that a child is the subject of child abuse must immediately report the suspicion to DYFS. This law applies to all catechetical staff personal.

## **Discipline and Problem Situations**

All students are expected to share in the faith learning experiences of the parish program. If a child's behavior disrupts the learning process for him/herself or others, the steps listed below will be followed to ensure that group participation may continue.

1. At the first incident the child will be reminded of expected behavior and the consequences of misbehavior.
2. After the second incident, the child will be sent to the coordinator.
3. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child will again be sent to the coordinator with his/her religious education assignment. The child's parent/guardian will be contacted.
4. At steps 1-3, the child will be allowed the opportunity to rejoin his/her group if an understanding can be reached as to how all involved may best continue to learn and grow in their faith.  
If however, the child's behavior continues to disrupt the learning environment an individualized program will be arranged or the child will be dismissed from the program.

## Dress Code

All students are to dress appropriately conveying respect for self and the place where we gather. In general children are expected to follow the dress codes observed in our local township schools.

- Clothing with words or graphics contrary to our Christian message is not allowed
- **Students inappropriately dressed will be sent home.**

## Expectations

To provide a positive faith centered environment families, students and staff need to work together for the common mission of handing on our faith. Below are the expectations of:

### Parents/Guardians

- Ensure that their child/ren attend catechetical sessions regularly and on time.
- Communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect their child/ren in a group setting.
- When a child is absent see that their missed lessons are covered and returned to the Catechist.
- Be an active part of their children's learning and be involved in the catechetical process. **Attend Mass regularly, especially on RE Family Mass Sundays.**
- Follow the procedures for arrival and dismissal.

### Children

- Behave in a Christian manner at all times showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students
- Actively participate in group activities and discussions
- Attend catechetical sessions regularly and complete any assignments
- Adherence to our dress code
- Adherence to our code of conduct:
  - Respect for others and for other's property
  - Prepared for group sessions with books, pencils and assignments and leaving toys, radios, **cell phones**, all gadgets etc. at home
  - Compliance with group's rules and regulations
  - Follow the procedures for arrival and dismissal
  - No use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs
  - No weapons are permitted on premises

## **Catechists**

- Provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that children will be able to grow in their faith
- Prepare and teach the designated lessons
- Be a Christian role model
- Communicate regularly with and involve parents in the faith development of their child/ren

## **Communication**

We are here to serve the religious education needs of our families. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions please feel free to share them with your child's catechist or call the Religious Education office. (609) 723 – 4243 extension 6 or visit the parish's website ([www.standrewsjobstown.org](http://www.standrewsjobstown.org))