

St. Joseph Parish
Religious Education Staff
101 North Howes St
Fort Collins, CO 80521
(970) 482-4148

St. Joseph



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Handbook
2009-2010

Fr. Roger Lascelle, Pastor ext 278
pastor@stjosephchurchfc.org

Fr. Jacob Chennathu ext 212
jchennathu@gmail.com

Tina Dihle, Co-Coordinator of Pre-K – 5th Religious Education ext 229
religioused@stjosephchurchfc.org

Chad Bauer, Youth Minister / 6th – 12th Religious Education ext 211
cbauer@stjosephchurchfc.org

Fax 221-0635

Website www.stjosephchurchfc.org

Table of Contents

Introduction and Mission Statement 1

Goals & Objectives 1

Schedules & Fees 2

Sacraments 3

Policy and Procedure 4

Discipline Policy 5

Religious Ed: Outside the Classroom 6

Introduction

Catechetical Ministry is a partnership between the Church and its members whereby all Catholics are called to share in the ministry by being witnesses to the faith. A Religious Education Program is only one link in this unique partnership that recognizes that faith comes from God, that parents and guardians are the primary catechists of their children and that the entire parish is a catechizing community. The Catechism of the Catholic Church lays it out another way:

“Catechesis is an education in the faith of children, young people and adults which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way, with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life.” (#5, Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCC)

“Catechesis is built on ... the initial proclamation of the Gospel or missionary preaching to arouse faith; examination of the reasons for belief; experience of Christian living; celebration of the sacraments; integration into the ecclesial community; and apostolic and missionary witness.” (#6, CCC)

St. Joseph Parish Mission Statement

Saint Joseph Catholic Parish ...united in Christ's Word and Sacrament, so all people may know and experience God's love.

St. Joseph Religious Education Goals & Objectives

As a Catholic faith community inspired by Gospel values, we strive to foster the spiritual growth of our members of all ages by providing on-going religious formation for our parish community.

We recognize that “Parents are by word and example the first heralds of the faith with regards to their children.” (#1656, CCC) Our goal is to support our parents in their on-going Baptismal commitment to guide their children in the acquisition and practice of the faith by providing a firm foundation in the doctrines, morality, and traditions of the Catholic Church. We strive to encourage enthusiastic participation in class by all our students.

To help foster unity and community among our parish families we offer opportunities to pray, work, and socialize together as well as celebrate special family events, such as: Living Rosary, All Saints/Souls Day, Christmas Pageant, Children’s Way of the Cross, Living Stations, Prayer Buddy program, May Crowning and Vacation Bible School.

Class Schedules

Religious Education classes are held as follows:

Pre-K - Grade 5	Sundays	10:00 – 11:30 AM
	St. Joseph School Classrooms & Gym	
Grades 6, 7 & 8	Wednesdays	6:30 – 8:00 PM
	St. Joseph School Gym	
Grades 9 – 12	Sundays	6:30 – 8:00 PM
	St. Joseph Church Hall	
	Choice Classes – various times	

In addition, we offer the following opportunities:

LifeTeen Mass Every Sunday evening at 5:00pm
(Contemporary Service which all families are invited to attend)

Dinner after LifeTeen Mass is available for all our students before classes begin.

The LifeTeen Mass and dinner are NOT required for participation in our Jr/Sr High Religious Education program.

Seasonal activities for students and families will be offered throughout the year.

Fees

Grades Preschool – 12	1 child	\$50*
	2 children	\$70*
	3 or more	\$90*

* In addition to sacrificial giving through the Sunday collection.

No child will be denied religious education due to financial difficulties. Please contact Tina Dihle (Elementary) or Chad Bauer (Jr/Sr High) to discuss payment options.

Sacraments

Our archdiocesan guidelines stress that parents who choose to prepare their children for Sacraments should become involved in the child's preparation through prayer in the home, regular experiences of Sunday Mass and attendance at parent meetings for each of these sacraments. Education and formation on the adult level happens as parents and other interested adults (catechist, sponsors, etc) seek to deepen their own faith understanding.

Reconciliation: Regular attendance and active participation in a religious education program is required as well as formal preparation which typically takes place in the second grade with the celebration of the Sacrament taking place in January. A special book is given to the family to be completed at home. Students & parents will attend Wednesday evening sessions. Parent/Child interviews will be scheduled with the Pastor prior to receiving the Sacrament.

Eucharist: All children preparing to receive First Communion must also have been prepared for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Sacrament typically takes place in May. A special book is given to the family to be completed at home. Students & parents will attend Wednesday evening sessions. Parent/Child interviews will be scheduled with the Pastor prior to receiving the sacrament.

Confirmation: Confirmation is a sacrament which ratifies and strengthens the commitment made at Baptism. An intensive Confirmation program has been developed at the Archbishop's request consisting of:

- Regular attendance and active participation in a religious education program (either at St. Joseph Church or a Catholic school) for two years immediately preceding the sacrament, which is typically received in the 10th grade
- Regular attendance and active participation in specific Confirmation preparation classes during the year the sacrament is to be received
- Attend at least 3 choice classes
- Community Service
- Participation in a retreat
- A pre-Confirmation interview with the Pastor or Youth Minister

Policy and Procedure

Arrival/Dismissal: For the safety of the students, extreme caution should be used by all drivers entering the grounds. No unaccompanied child in Preschool through 6th grade will be allowed to leave without an adult. **All elementary students are to be dropped off at their classroom and picked up at the gym unless otherwise noted. All Jr. High students should be dropped off in the parking lot between the Church & School.**

Attendance: Regular attendance is importance if your child is to benefit from our program. If your student must miss a class, please notify us prior to class time. A courtesy call will be made following three consecutive absences.

Emergency/Health matters: In case of an emergency, we will first try to contact a parent/guardian. If we are unable to reach you, we will then try the emergency contact listed on your registration form. Parents/guardians please supply any information necessary to your child's health in the area provided on your registration form.

Registration Information: Throughout the year, should there be any changes in your address and/or phone number, please inform us as soon as possible. We need current and complete information should an emergency arise while your child is in class or when we need to contact you.

Custody: If parents are divorced or separated, the religious education program presumes that both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide evidence that he/she has that sole right. Please inform us prior to class time if someone other than a parent or legal guardian will be picking up a child.

Inclement Weather: If there is inclement weather, use discretion. We do not want anyone taking chances with their safety to come to class in bad weather. If classes are cancelled, we will notify families via email and phone calls.



Discipline

The goal in developing a Classroom Discipline Policy is to have a fair and consistent way in which to deal with all students. In order to insure a positive learning environment that builds up those involved in the program and tears no one down, the following class rules and procedures are established:

Respect: All students are expected to be respectful and courteous towards others. The following behaviors will not be tolerated:

- Teasing, name calling or making any disparaging remarks.
- Throwing objects.
- Inappropriate language.
- Disrespect for parish property and/or the property of others.
- Bringing toys, food or gum to class, unless directed to do so by a teacher.
- Unsafe behavior: walk safely and slowly in classrooms, halls and stairways. No running is permitted in the school.
- Fighting of any kind will cause immediate removal from the classroom.

Environment: We take pride in parish buildings and grounds. It is expected that students treat both with respect. Intentional defacing, damaging, or destroying any parish property is unacceptable. Students will be held responsible for the cost of repair or replacement. Any damage to the personal property of another person will be reimbursed by the student and/or their parents.

Consequences of Discipline Infractions

Verbal Warning:

The student will be given a verbal warning that a rule is not being followed. Their behavior is expected to become acceptable or a written warning will be given.

Written Warning:

If the unacceptable behavior continues, the student will be removed from the classroom. Their parents will be notified with a written notice that is to be signed and returned with the child at the next class.

Parent Conferences:

If the behavior persists, parents will be called in for a conference with the student, the catechist and the Religious Education Coordinator.

Religious Education: Outside the Classroom

Service to others is considered an important part of living a Christ-like life. Even young children can be taught to recognize occasions when they are able to help others. Below are some suggestions, by grades, for service opportunities.

Grades Pre-K - 5:

- Help parents, relatives, and neighbors without being paid
- Serve at Mass
- Bake cookies or make decorations for nursing homes
- Donate gently used items to charity (i.e. Mary's Closet)
- Participate in Canned Food Drives

Grades 6-7-8:

- Bake cookies or make decorations for nursing homes
- Serve, Lector or Usher at Mass
- Babysit at Religious Education Parent nights
- Participate in youth ministry service projects

Grades 9-12

- Participate in youth ministry service projects
- Serve as Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Greeter or Usher at Mass
- Babysit at Religious Education Parent nights
- Help with the Elementary Religious Ed program as a classroom aide, art project coordinator, prayer person or office assistant
- Assist with Vacation Bible School
- Attend the Summer Mission Trip in 2009

Parental Commitment

Understanding the importance of your child's Faith formation and the centrality of the Mass in our lives as Catholics, parents are asked to regularly attend weekend Mass with their children, to attempt daily family prayer and to participate in all Religious Education family events.