

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
HANDBOOK AND CALENDAR
2009 – 2010



Our Lady of the Mountains
Office of Religious Education
Telephone: 356-7582
Extension 18 or 23

RESPONSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS FOR THE SUCCESS OF OUR PROGRAM

THE PARISH

will provide the opportunity for religious education to children in grades 1 – 10 whose parents have chosen our church form of education.

will assist and support the catechists in their class preparation, presentation, and enrichment opportunities.

will include students in parish activities, giving them opportunities to grow and develop into mature Catholics.

will abide by Safe Environment policies of the Diocese of Manchester.

will provide family and children-oriented liturgies for various occasions throughout the year.

will provide guidelines for parents working with the children preparing for special moments such as the Sacraments of First Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Confirmation.

will keep parents aware of activities in the Religious Education Program and Parish.

will seek out those families where the faith is not being lived out and invite them to a fuller life in the community of the church.

THE CATECHISTS

will do their best to be well prepared for and manage their classes effectively.

will be witnesses of their faith to their students.

will be in regular contact with the parents, sharing information regarding classes, student achievements, and asking for assistance when needed.

Will issue progress reports twice a year, once at about the halfway point, and once at the end of the year.

will make an effort to enrich their own faith through teacher training, videos, books, and/or classes.

will release students promptly at the end of class.

THE PARENTS

Should be aware that they are responsible for the religious education of their children.

are encouraged to visit their children's classes. Please give the office and catechist at least one week's notice.

for classroom participation, will be responsible for the faithful weekly attendance of their children.

will set a good example by attending Mass regularly with their children and by practicing Christian morals at home.

will notify the teacher or the Religious Education Office in the case of a necessary absence.

will encourage and guide their children through home assignments.

will contact their child's teacher with any questions regarding class time, homework, behavior questions or possible misunderstandings.

will instill a positive attitude toward religious education as well as respect for the teachers and their children's peers.

will pick up their children promptly at the close of classes and activities.

will attend parent meetings.

Home Study

Our Lady of the Mountains offers Home Study as an alternative to classroom study for the entire curriculum except Sacramental preparation classes. Your child needs to be registered for the Home Study program. The Home Study program uses the same textbooks and has the same requirements as the classroom study program. Please contact the Office of Religious Education for more information. Sacramental preparation for first Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation **must** take place in the classroom.

Parents will provide classes which will lead the children in deeper understanding of the Catholic Faith, help them apply faith to daily life, and instill in them a sense of prayer and worship.

will ensure that their children have completed the program's objectives and assignments.

will schedule meetings with the Director to review their children's progress.

will attend parent meetings as scheduled during the year; if unable to attend, will call the Director in advance.

will show support and interest in our parish and its various activities in order to encourage the faith life of their children.

THE STUDENTS

will attend religious education classes weekly.

will come to class prepared with any completed homework from the previous week.

will follow the instructions of the teacher and aides in the program.

will make every effort to be attentive to lessons as well as complete all necessary work relating to the lesson.

will treat the teachers and peers with respect, following the Golden Rule.

will take care of all materials loaned to them.

will try their best to practice what they learn in the lessons.

will make use of the sacraments.

GENERAL RULES

Respect for catechists and classmates

Appropriate behavior is expected of all students. If necessary, parents will be contacted to discuss their child's inappropriate and/or disrespectful behavior. If the behavior continues, children may be dismissed from the program.

Appropriate dress

Students are expected to wear appropriate dress for religious classes. T-shirts or other articles of clothing that carry crude or offensive slogans or alcoholic products are unacceptable. Hats must be removed upon entering the building, and remain off until the student leaves.

Gum – is not permitted.

Respect for Church property

Students who damage any church property or educational materials will be charged the cost of repair or replacement.

Electronic Equipment

Use of cellular phones, blackberries, or other electronic equipment is not permitted during class.

Classroom Policy

Each child will have a pocket folder for any notices he or she may receive. Please be sure to check your child's folder weekly for any new handouts. **IMPORTANT** – This is how parents will be informed of any changes in the schedule, special events, and upcoming material your child will be learning.

Curriculum

At this time, grades 1 through 5 are using the textbook series, "We Believe" from Sadlier Publishing Company. Each child has his or her own book which is kept in the classroom. This means that no one has to remember to bring it in each week.

Grades 6 through 8 will be using the Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church as well as the Christ Our Life series from Loyola Press.

Grades 9 & 10 will be using the Bible and Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Loyola Press “Confirmed in the Spirit”. Additional notes and worksheets will be provided.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Please show your children the importance of their religious education by regular attendance, with absences only for illness or family emergencies.

All absences require that a parent or guardian inform the Religious Education Department.

In the event of an absence, children are expected to make up missed work . If the work is not made up, the absence will be considered unexcused.

More than 4 unexcused absences may result in your child having to repeat the year. Please arrange make up work with your child’s catechist.

Please note that, unless a parent or guardian has informed the Religious Education Department, any child who misses 4 consecutive classes will be dropped from the class role. Before returning to class, the student and a parent must meet with the Director of the Religious Education Program.

Elementary

Our Religious Education Program consists of 23 classes and various other activities. **It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their children attend a minimum of 20 classes and attend Mass each week. The 10:30 am Mass on the last Sunday of each month is set aside for the participation of the parish youth and their families.**

Objectives for each grade level have been developed (and will be sent home with children on the first day of the program). Children are expected to achieve these objectives, with parental review and reinforcement, and to complete all assignments. **There may be outside assignments, especially for children in grades 4 – 6.**

Children are expected to be present at all classes for the **entire** class and for the **entire** year. Continuous early dismissal and tardiness are unacceptable. Switching between class days or home school into parish classes is only allowed for serious reasons.

When a concern arises regarding a student's attendance, the catechist will advise the School Director, and the parents will be contacted.

Secondary

Parents are expected to make every effort to ensure that their children attend Mass each week. Our Religious Education Program consists of 26 classes. **Students are expected to attend a minimum of 21 classes.**

All students are expected to participate in the life of their parish. At least ½ of their service hours must be spent serving in a parish ministry such as ushers, greeters, lectors, altar servers, etc. Students are required to perform these functions at the Family Masses.

Students are expected to be present at all classes for the **entire** class and for the **entire** year. We do **not** shut down for a winter recess, sporting events, Super bowl Sunday, etc. Continuous early dismissal and tardiness are unacceptable.

When a concern arises regarding a student's attendance, the catechist will advise the Director, and the parents will be contacted.

GETTING TO AND FROM CLASS

We need everyone's cooperation to ensure a safe environment. The area around the door tends to get congested. During arrival and departure periods there are cars backing out of parking spaces.

Elementary school children **MUST** be escorted out of the building by an adult. No children will be allowed to leave the building unless they are escorted by an authorized adult. No children will be dismissed early directly to a parent. In the event that an early dismissal is needed, the escorting adult should inform the director who will then go to the classroom to remove the child. For the children's safety, we can not allow **ANY** exceptions. This rule does not apply to the junior and senior high students, although they should be reminded to be careful.

The children are also not allowed to roam through the building. Unless they are brought up to the Church by their teachers, the children are restricted to their classrooms, the Parish Hall, the bathrooms and the short hall leading to them.

CLASS CANCELLATIONS

Elementary

Religious Education classes will be cancelled automatically when the public schools have cancelled classes, or when after-school activities have been cancelled.

Classes will also be cancelled if, during the day, the weather forecast predicts early evening storms and/or hazardous driving conditions. The decision to cancel will be made by 2:00pm whenever possible.

Notification Procedure

- School director will call the catechists, aides, and youth ministry leaders.
- Catechists will call parents.
- School director will also leave a message on the voicemail system (356-7582 x18) and will ask area schools to make an announcement

Secondary

In addition to the listing in this handbook and the calendar, classes will be listed in the monthly calendar in the weekly bulletin. In the event of a conflict, please call the office.

Classes will be held unless otherwise announced.

Occasionally, it may be necessary to cancel classes due to weather. If classes are cancelled, there will be a message on the voicemail system, 356-7582 extension 18. If there is any question about whether or not classes are being cancelled, call. If classes have been cancelled, please do not hang up. Leave your name on the system.

If required, any classes cancelled by the school will be made up at the end of the school year.

CONFIRMATION

The Confirmation program is a two year program beginning in the 9th grade. The program is open to those 9th graders who have completed the 7th and 8th grade. The focus of these classes will be on integrating the candidates' Catholic Beliefs into their identities and everyday lives.

Candidates must have received Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and Reconciliation and have the desire to deepen their faith.

There is a **MANDATORY** Confirmation Retreat for **ALL CANDIDATES** expecting to be Confirmed in May.

A separate letter will be sent to this year's Confirmation class describing their preparation in detail.

This year Confirmation will be on Friday, May 14, 2010 at 7pm at Our Lady of the Mountains.

OTHER EVENTS

Mass – every Sunday especially 10:30am on the last Sunday of each month and on World Youth Day, October 26..

November 29 – An Advent “Event” for the students and their families

January 3 – Nativity Pageant

March 28 – A Seder for catechists, students in grades 6 – 10 and their families.

*** VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! ***

Please consider volunteering in the Religious Education Program. There are many ways to help. In most cases, you'll be dropping off and picking up your children.

Save some gas. Stay and help.

CATECHISTS

Teach a small class, usually no more than 12 children. We will train and support you. Two adults, especially married couples, can share most classes.

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Assist the Catechists in the classroom.

SUBSTITUTE CATECHISTS

Are called to cover a class when a Catechist will not be able to teach.

CONFIRMATION FACILITATORS

Aid the Confirmation Director in coordinating activities relating to Confirmation (retreats, rehearsals, letter writing, interviews, etc.)

***ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST ATTEND A "PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN" SEMINAR AND COMPLETE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK. DATES AND TIMES WILL BE LISTED IN THE PARISH BULLETIN.**

We are also in need of volunteers to help with the snacks and cleanup for the grammar school

2009-2010 Schedule of Classes

Grades 1 – 6

All classes meet from 3:45 pm until 5:00 pm

MONDAYS

September: 14, 21, 28

October: 4, 18, 25

November: 2, 9, 16, 23

December: 14, 21

January: 11, 25

February: 1, 8, 22

March: 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

April: 12, 26

May: 3, 10

WEDNESDAYS

September: 16, 23, 30

October: 7, 20, 21, 28

November: 4, 11, 18

December: 9, 16, 23

January: 6, 13, 20, 27

February: 3, 10, 24

March: 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

April: 14, 28

May: 5, 12

Anticipated Sacramental Dates:

First Reconciliation: TBD

First Communion: May 22nd

Confirmation: 7pm, May 14th at Our Lady of the Mountains.

Complete schedules of workshops and rehearsals will be available in September.

2009 – 2010 7th and 8th Grade Schedule of Classes

All classes meet from 6PM until 7PM on Wednesdays

September: 14, 21, 28
October: 7, 20, 21, 28
November: 4, 11, 18
December: 9, 16, 23
January: 4, 11, 25

February: 1, 8, 22
March: 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
April: 5, 26
May: 3, 10,

2009 – 2010 9th and 10th Grade Schedule of Classes

All classes meet from 6PM until 7:30 PM on Sundays

September: 13, 20, 27
October: 4, 18, 25
November: 1, 8, 15, 22
December: 13, 20
January: 10, 17, 24, 31

February: 21, 28
March: 7, 14, 21, 28 *
April: 11, 25
May: 2

* The March 28th class will be a Seder held in the Parish Hall.

