

*Our Lady of the Mountains  
Religious Education*

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[www.OurLadyoftheMountainsnh.org](http://www.OurLadyoftheMountainsnh.org)

*Rev. Donald F. Gauthier, Jr., Pastor*



*Mark 10:13-14 . . . and people were bringing children to him that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."*

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK 2010 – 2011

As stated on the Diocese of Manchester website,  
September 1, 2010.

*“Parents, as the first teachers of the faith, are the primary catechists of their children. Those called to be catechists within the parish partner with parents in handing on the faith. The whole parish community shares in and supports this awesome task through liturgical celebrations, faith formation opportunities, service to those most in need and all other aspects of parish life.”*

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## **Religious Education Class Schedule 2010 – 2011**

Monday classes begin on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Wednesday classes begin on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010  
at the following times:

### **Grades 1 to 6**

Monday	4:00 pm to 5:15 pm
Wednesday	4:00 pm to 5:15 pm

### **Grades 7 & 8**

Wednesday	6:00 pm to 7:15 pm
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### **Grades 9 & 10**

Wednesday	6:00 pm to 7:15 pm
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**Please note:** Teachers and assistants will be available to receive the students by 3:30 p.m. each class day. A non-peanut snack will be served to the students as they arrive.

# **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARISH, CATECHISTS AND ASSISTANTS FOR THE SUCCESS OF OUR PROGRAM**

## **THE PARISH**

- will provide the opportunity for religious education to children in grades 1 through 10 whose parents have chosen our church form of religious 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 and responsible Catholics;
- will abide by Safe Environment policies of the Diocese of Manchester;
- 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.

## **CATECHISTS AND ASSISTANTS**

- 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 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.

## **PARENTS**

- will be responsible for the faithful weekly attendance of their children at religious education classes;
- 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 Director 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 as scheduled during the year; if unable to attend, the parent will call the Director in advance.

## **PARENTS OF HOME STUDY STUDENTS**

- 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 teacher 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.

## **STUDENTS**

- will attend religious education classes and attend weekly Mass and will make use of the sacraments;
- 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.

# 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.

## 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, iPod's and other electronic equipment is not permitted during class.

## 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.

## 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 informing you of any changes in the schedule, special events, and upcoming material your child will be learning. You will also be notified by **email** if you have provided your email address.

# 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 and 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.

In September you will receive the objectives and goals for each grade level. Children are expected to achieve these objectives, with parental review and reinforcement, and to complete all assignments.

## **HOME STUDY PROGRAM**

Our Lady of the Mountains offers a Home Study program as an alternative to classroom study for Grades 1 through 8. The Home Study program uses the same textbooks as the classroom study program. Students preparing for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist may be home-schooled; however the student is required to meet with the second grade teacher in January to review the student’s progress and to confirm that the student is adequately prepared to receive these sacraments. Also, the student **must attend** the workshops, retreat, and rehearsal with the parish group.

**IMPORTANT:** If you plan to home-school, you must register your child for the Home Study Program by calling or meeting with the Director.

## **CONFIRMATION**

Confirmation is scheduled for **Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at 7:00 pm** at Our Lady of the Mountains. ***Please reserve the date.***

The Confirmation program is a two-year program beginning with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The program is open to those 9<sup>th</sup> graders who have completed the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade programs.

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

It is important that we have the dates and locations of all sacraments received, on file, **before** the student can receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

There will be a Retreat for the Confirmation class, which the student is required to attend. Information regarding the retreat will be provided as soon as possible.

All students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades are expected to participate in the life of their parish. At least one-half of their service hours must be spent serving in a parish ministry such as ushers, greeters, altar servers, etc. Students are required to perform these functions at our weekly Masses.

A separate information package will be given to this year's Confirmation class describing their preparation in detail.

## CLASS ATTENDANCE

Please instill in your children the importance of their religious education by their 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.

### **Elementary**

Our Religious Education Program consists of approximately 26 scheduled classes and various other activities. **It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their children attend a minimum of 22 classes.**

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 and with permission from the Director.

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

## **Secondary**

Our Religious Education Program consists of approximately 26 scheduled classes. **Students are required to attend a minimum of 22 classes.**

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, Superbowl Sunday, etc. Continuous early dismissals 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.

## **SAFETY**

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. 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 escorted to the Church by their teachers. The children are

restricted to their classrooms, the parish hall, the bathrooms and the short hall leading to those areas.

**All areas are covered by surveillance cameras.**

**NOTE:** We must be notified in advance if a child will be picked up by someone other than their parent. Please call 356-7582 to let the Director know who will be responsible for picking up the student.

## CANCELLATIONS

Religious Education classes **will be cancelled** when the public schools have cancelled classes, or when after-school activities have been cancelled due to weather conditions.

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 2:00 pm whenever possible.

### **Notification Procedure**

- The Director will call the catechists, assistants, and youth ministry leaders to notify them of the cancellation of classes.
- The catechists will call all parents.
- The Director will leave a message on the voicemail system (356-7582 x18).
- The Director will call area schools to announce the closure, if possible.
- Cancellation of classes or activities is also posted on the parish website: [www.OurLadyoftheMountainsnh.org](http://www.OurLadyoftheMountainsnh.org)

Beginning September 2010, if there is no class on Monday due to a holiday, there will be no class on Wednesday of that week. Similarly, if there is no class on Wednesday as on Ash Wednesday, there will be no class on Monday of that week.

**\*\*\*THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO SNOW DAYS\*\*\***

## **PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN**

All new teachers, assistants and volunteers **MUST ATTEND** the “Protecting God’s Children” seminar and complete a criminal background check as soon as possible.

You will be notified of the dates and times for the seminars as soon as they are scheduled.

Our parish contact for the “Protecting God’s Children” program is Bonnie Kimmach. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this program, please contact Bonnie at 356-2316.

## **CIRCLES OF CARE Safe Environment Curriculum**

During the school year, all children will have a lesson about our dignity as children of God, personal safety, good choices, and healthy relationships. This lesson is a part of the commitment made by the Bishops of the United States to provide safe environment training for children and young people.

You will be notified when your child’s Circles of Care class is scheduled. You will be given the lesson plan for this class as well as the Objectives/Outcomes for each grade level. Materials are available for your preview.

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Please consider joining our team and helping us to share our faith with the children of Our Lady of the Mountains by volunteering in the Religious Education Program. These are your children and the future of our Church. We will train you, support you and give you all the materials you will need to have a successful experience. Here is a list of opportunities:

### **CATECHIST**

Teach a small class of no more than 12 children. We will train and support you. Two adults can share most classes.

### **CLASSROOM ASSISTANT**

Assist the Catechist in the classroom.

### **SUBSTITUTE CATECHIST**

You may be called to cover a class if the Catechist is not available to teach.

### **CONFIRMATION FACILITATOR**

Assist the Confirmation Coordinator in helping with activities relating to Confirmation such as the retreat and rehearsals or with kitchen help.

### **SERVICE HOURS MENTOR**

Help to guide Confirmation candidates in integrating Christian service into their lives. Meet with the candidates one-on-one or with a small group once per month to discuss and guide them in completing their service hours. These meetings will take place before or after class hours, but must be held in the Parish Hall.

### **KITCHEN HELPER**

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

Please call Mary Ann in the Religious Education Office (356-7582) to discuss how you can share in the responsibility of Sowing the Seeds of Our Catholic Faith with our children. **THANK YOU!!**

## NOTES