

PREP Student and Parent Handbook

Remember that YOU are the First teachers of your child in the ways of Faith.

We hope this year will be a truly cooperative effort between you and the Catechists who will be teaching your child

Challenge

As YOU are the primary teacher and children follow by example allow your children to see you pray, help a neighbor, volunteer in the community or the Church. Your example will go a long way in connecting what they learn at PREP to living it in the real world.

Value of the Curriculum

Each level of the program has its own scope and sequence, which is to be covered during the year where it builds upon the previous one. In addition, at each level, the children learn about the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Liturgical Year, the Feasts of the Church, feast of Mary and other notable saints. These areas are covered in a way that each level can best understand. Catechists also speak to the children about Catholic Social Teaching and Social Justice.

The PREP Program is not intended to be just a Sacramental Program. The religious education of a child in the PREP program is intended to be a progressive formation in the truths and beliefs of our religion

Sacramental PREP

For children who are preparing for the reception of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation, specific information will be distributed at an appropriate time during the class year.

Parents and students are expected to attend meetings where the Sacrament and pertinent information will be discussed. Information about the dates and times of these meetings will be sent home and will also be published in the weekly bulletin, here on the website, on Facebook and in the Flocknotes app.

By attending these meetings, you are showing your child the commitment you have to their religious education. It is important for you to be a living example of what is taught weekly to your children. Penance is not just about FIRST Penance and Holy Communion is not just about FIRST Holy Communion. Your child will receive these sacraments repeatedly in their lifetime. Confirmation is about living our profession of faith.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are given to reinforce the classroom lesson. Sometimes the assignment is a written one and other times it is a discussion with family members regarding a topic covered in class or it might be watching a video on FORMED.ORG Your involvement in these assignments is important, for it reinforces our partnership in your child's faith development. Every student is issued a textbook and a folder at the start of the school year. The student IS REQUIRED to BRING these items to EVERY session

ATTENDANCE

Class is held on Thursday from 6:00 pm to 7:15 pm September through May

If your child will be absent from a PREP class, please call the Coordinator of Religious Education at the rectory , 215.535.6667 or by email at PREP@stjohncantiusparish.org before 4:00 PM. The faith formation provided in our programs involves incremental learning. That is each year builds upon the learning of the previous year. Therefore, it is essential that students remain enrolled in the program consistently from year-to-year. Any student who voluntarily leaves the program for a period of one year will be required to make-up the missed year upon re-enrollment into the program. (e.g. a student who leaves the program for a period of one year after completing level 3 and re-enrolls in the program when they are in grade 5 will be placed into the 4th level.) Any student who voluntarily leaves the program for two or more consecutive years must fulfill the following two requirements: 1. The student will be placed into a grade level that is one below their current day school grade level. 2. For example, a student who leaves the program after completing level 3 and re-enrolls when he is in the 6th grade * The parents are required to provide home based catechesis for level 4 * Upon completion of level 4, the child is accepted into level 5 to continue his/her faith formation. All students must complete make-up work for classes missed. If more than three classes are missed in a semester, weekend make-up class may be required. Sporadic class attendance (four or more absences per year) can be reason for the student not being admitted to

the next level of instruction. Irregular attendance (more than three absences) during a Sacrament preparation year can result in the postponement of the reception of the sacrament, as the Church charges us with the serious responsibility of seeing that children are adequately instructed before the initial reception of the sacraments. Students in grades one through six who play on parish CYO teams must be registered in the PREP program for the entire school year. The choice of sporadic attendance on the part of the student is cause for being dropped from the CYO team

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

It is the responsibility of both biological parents to provide the Parish with the latest, up to date Custodial Order or Custody Agreement. St. Patrick Parish will request these documents in the beginning of the year. If either the Custody Order or Custody Agreement changes during the course of the year, it remains the responsibility of both biological parents to provide that document to the Parish immediately. Our program abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, our program will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the records and other program related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official and latest copy of the court order. If a court prohibits our releasing a child into the custody of a non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official copy of the court order or custody section of the divorce decree.

FIRST RECEPTION OF SACRAMENTS

In conjunction with the recommendation of the Office for Religious Education of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, two years of catechesis are required for the initial reception of the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. In Saint John Cantius Parish these Sacraments are usually received at Level Two and Three. Candidates for these sacraments are expected to be participating weekly in Sunday Mass with their families and have an appreciation and understanding of the Sacraments, appropriate for their age. They are also required to have satisfactory attendance at classes and to participate in the Parish Presentation Ceremony, the retreats, and the rehearsals. Candidates for Confirmation are usually Sixth Level students who have completed three full years of catechesis subsequent to their reception of First Eucharist.

Candidates are expected to be participating weekly with their families at Sunday Mass. They are required to have consistent attendance at classes, participate in any Parish Presentation Ceremony, the Confirmation Retreat, rehearsals and other activities preparatory to the Sacraments. In addition, candidates for Confirmation are expected to volunteer their services for parish, school, community and family needs, as awareness of their call to take a more active part in the Works of Mercy. Candidates for

Confirmation must choose a sponsor who will help him/her throughout life to fulfill his/her baptismal commitment. The godparent who initially assumed this responsibility in Baptism is the ideal choice. The sponsor must be at least sixteen years of age, have received the sacrament of Confirmation, and be an actively practicing Catholic. A Letter of Eligibility from the pastor of the sponsor's parish is required. In conformity with the 1983 revised Code of Canon Law parents may not be sponsors. If, for emergency reasons, a Proxy Sponsor must be chosen, the same requirements hold for this person. Written notification of the proxy must be submitted to the Religious Education Office

Discipline:

Conduct by children or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the Parish is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to, immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate. Serious breaches of discipline include, but are not limited to: * ignoring the correction of catechists and staff * using inappropriate language * repeated interruptions in class * blatant disregard for classroom and program rules * indifference to reminders * disrespect to teachers and peers * using threatening or abusive behavior or language * speaking or writing about - or having in your possession - anything that could be used as or interpreted to be a weapon * use of cell phones, iPhone during class (It is the policy of this program that if a student brings a cell phone to class, the device will be held by the Catechist and it can be picked up after class). * bully which involves actions or words against another for the purpose of inflicting physical or emotional harm or discomfort or damage to a person's reputation that is intimidating or threatening and affects the learning and school environments. (If the bully is threatening harm, a student should tell a catechist, adult volunteer and/or the Director of Religious Education immediately.) In the event a participant engages in any of the above listed behaviors or any other inappropriate conduct, and has failed to respond to a catechist's attempt to stop or correct the behavior, the following action may be taken and at the discretion of the Pastor or Director of Religious Education. 1. First Incident: the student will be removed from the sessions and the parent or guardian will be immediately notified by phone by the program director. The program director will schedule a conference with the parents/guardians, student, and catechist to discuss the matter. 2. Second Incident: the student will be removed from the sessions and be suspended from the program for a period of one session. The parents/guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child. Prior to returning to the program the program director will schedule a conference with the parents, students, and catechists to further discuss this matter. 3. Third Incident: the student will be removed from the session and dismissed from the program. The parents or guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child. However, St. John

Cantius Parish reserves the right to supersede the forgoing course of action depending on the circumstances of any given situation.

Prayer

Prayer, the lifting of the mind and heart to God, plays an essential role in the life of a devout Catholic. Without a life of Catholic prayer, we risk losing the life of grace in our souls, grace that comes to us first in baptism and later chiefly through the other sacraments and through prayer itself (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2565). Catholic prayers allow us to adore God, by acknowledging his almighty power; prayers allow us to bring our thanks, our petitions, and our sorrow for sin before our Lord and God.

Prayer Memorization

“Prayer is the life of the new heart. It ought to animate us at every moment. “We must remember God more often than we draw breath.” “The Tradition of the Church proposes to the faithful certain rhythms of praying intended to nourish continual prayer. Some are daily, such as morning and evening prayer, grace before and after meals, the Liturgy of the Hours. Sundays, centered on the Eucharist, are kept holy primarily by prayer. The cycle of the liturgical year and its great feast are also basic rhythms of the Christian’s life of prayer.” (CCC 2697,2698) Please teach your children to memorize the following prayers:

Level 1 Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to Father, Grace Before and After Meals, Prayer to the Guardian Angel, a simple Morning Offering

Level 2 Same as Level 1 plus the Act of Contrition, Rosary

Level 3 Same as Level 2 plus Stations of the Cross, Apostles Creed, Hail Holy Queen

Level 4 - 6 Same as Level 3 plus Magnificat, Angelus, Prayers at Mass, Acts of Faith, Hope and Love, Come Holy Spirit, Memorare, Magnificat

Fundamental Catholic Prayers List

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our

trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers to Our Lady

The Rosary

The six fundamental Catholic prayers listed above are also part of the Catholic rosary, a devotion dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God. (CCC 971) The rosary consists of fifteen decades. Each decade focuses upon a particular mystery in the life of Christ and his Blessed Mother. It is customary to say five decades at a time, while meditating upon one set of mysteries.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, we turn to thee, O Virgin of virgins, our Mother. To thee we come, before thee we stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, do not despise our petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer us. Amen.

The Angelus

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. (Hail Mary . . .) Behold the handmaid of the Lord. R. Be it done unto me according to thy word. (Hail Mary ...) And the Word was made flesh. R. And dwelt among us. (Hail Mary ...) Pray for us, O holy Mother of God. R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts; that, we to whom the incarnation of Christ, thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by his passion and cross, be brought to the glory of his resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Daily Catholic Prayers

Prayer Before Meals

Bless us O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from thy bounty, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer to Our Guardian Angel

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of your sacred heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all the apostles of prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month.

Evening prayer

O my God, at the end of this day I thank you most heartily for all the graces I have received from you. I am sorry that I have not made a better use of them. I am sorry for all the sins I have committed against you. Forgive me, O my God, and graciously protect me this night. Blessed Virgin Mary, my dear heavenly mother, take me under your protection. St. Joseph, my dear guardian angel, and all you saints of God, pray for me. Sweet Jesus, have pity on all poor sinners, and save them from hell. Have mercy on the suffering souls in purgatory.

Generally, this evening prayer is followed by an act of contrition, which is usually said in conjunction with an examination of conscience. A daily examination of conscience consists of a brief recounting of our actions during the day. What sins did we commit? Where did we fail? In what areas of our lives can we strive to make virtuous progress? Having determined our failures and sins, we make an act of contrition.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend thee, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life.

Prayer after Mass

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, make me holy. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, fill me with love. Water from Christ's side, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. Good Jesus, hear me. Within your wounds, hide me. Never let me be parted from you. From the evil enemy, protect me. At the hour of my death, call me, and tell me to come to you that with your saints I may praise you through all eternity. Amen.

Prayers to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit

Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray

O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of the same Spirit we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers to the Angels and Saints

Prayer to Saint Joseph

O glorious Saint Joseph, you were chosen by God to be the foster father of Jesus, the most pure spouse of Mary, ever virgin, and the head of the Holy Family. You have been chosen by Christ's vicar as the heavenly patron and protector of the Church founded by Christ.

Protect the Holy Father, our sovereign pontiff, and all bishops and priests united with him. Be the protector of all who labor for souls amid the trials and tribulations of this life, and grant that all peoples of the world may follow Christ and the Church he founded.

Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle; be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all the other evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

NIHIL OBSTAT: I have concluded that the materials

presented in this work are free of doctrinal or moral errors.

Bernadeane Carr, STL, Censor Librorum, August 10, 2004

IMPRIMATUR: In accord with 1983 CIC 827
permission to publish this work is hereby granted.
+Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego, August 10, 2004

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia provides a Safe Environment lesson for PREP catechists and mandates that this lesson be taught one session of the instruction year. The Safe Environment lessons are posted for your review at www.archphila.org/catechetical/resources/resources.htm. Scroll down to Safe Environment and click on lessons. Then click on the grade that your child has in PREP and review the entire lesson. The Safe Environment lesson is intended to supplement the conversations that you are having with your child(ren) about their personal safety. It is recommended that parents who choose not to have their child present during safe environment instruction, review the lesson with their child(ren) at home.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Because Our Lord's life is an example of total self-discipline, the Religious Education Program strives to teach discipline as well as doctrines of our faith. In order to accomplish this we ask that the student adhere to the following:

General Information

- respectful attitude and speech to teachers and fellow students
- cooperation in classroom and program projects
- students may only enter the classroom when the catechist/aide are present
- personal habits of : punctuality (arrival ON TIME) preparedness (textbook, homework and study) appropriate dress (Girls no tank tops, bare midriffs, cutoffs, short shorts, or flip flops) (Boys no hats in school) attentiveness (No gum chewing/snacking) responsibility: care for property of other students who use the same classroom: care for school property.
- understand that repeated and/ or severe disciplinary infractions cause your temporary or permanent dismissal

Parent Responsibilities

God, our Father, revealed Himself to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Since the day Our Blessed Mother Mary heard and accepted the Good news of Jesus, the Church, His

Body, has followed His command: “ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”(Mt.28:19)

With this understanding, Mary and Joseph taught Jesus. “The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute.” (GE) The most important responsibility of the parents is the education and spiritual faith formation of the child and with God’s help, all these things can be achieved. With this understanding, the Religious Education Program at Saint John Cantius parish will aid parents in meeting the responsibility given to them by God Himself by teaching the basic truths and traditions of the Catholic Church, developing a sense of prayer and worship and encouraging a sense of responsibility to themselves, their families and community.

Since example is more powerful than words, parents are urged to:

- provide regular prayer opportunities in the home.
- attend Sunday Mass as a family.
- encourage frequent reception of Holy Eucharist and Penance.
- model Catholic ethics and Gospel charity within and outside the family
- attendance at religion class
- attend Sacramental Program Workshops.
- support the religious education of your child throughout all the school years (K - 12)
- reinforce the catechist’s work by
 - seeing that your child is ON TIME for class
 - supervising study and written assignments
 - participating in family liturgies
 - providing the catechist with health and medical information as pertinent; absence notes
 - promptly returning signed report cards
 - supporting the code for acceptable student behavior and dress.
 - observing the dismissal routine
 - notifying the program director regarding:
 - special learning needs of your child

- absences, emergency lateness
- change of address, telephone or other family information.

REPORT CARDS AND ASSESSMENT

Students will be tested on the materials studied in class. Weekly assignments may be given as review or preparation for upcoming classes. Evaluations of students' classroom performance are based on test grades, homework assignments and classroom participation. Reports on student progress will be distributed two times a year in January and May. The reports will be sent home with the student. Parents acknowledge receipt of the mid-year report card by signing and returning it to the classroom catechist. Both mid-year and final reports may be retained by the family at the end of the school year.

LOST AND FOUND Items found in the classroom and identified as possibly belonging to religious education students are usually given to the Religious Education Office. They will be placed in the general "lost and found", which is found on the second floor of the school. Students who need to inquire about lost items should call the Religious Education Office ([215-535-6667](tel:215-535-6667))

CATECHETICAL AIDE We welcome and encourage any parent who would like to act as a volunteer aide in our classrooms. Their basic role would be to take attendance, help the catechist with activities, and see to the needs of the children. Archdiocesan compliance guidelines state that no volunteer should begin work with children without Pennsylvania State Criminal Record Check, Child Abuse Clearance and Safe Environment instruction. These requirements are further explained by the Office of Child Youth Protection which you can view at <http://childyouthprotection.org/>. Click the link for staff and volunteers

20 Ways to Foster Faith in the Home

1. Give blessings to one another.
2. Celebrate name days and baptismal anniversaries.
3. Pray spontaneously at special times: first driver's license, first allowance, first date, tenth birthday, first day of school, or new job....
4. Pray grace before and after meals.

5. Celebrate the Eucharist as a family. Discuss the readings.
 6. Set up a prayer corner in your home with religious images, a Bible, candles, and floral arrangements.
 7. Pray the rosary together, at least a decade a day, especially in May and October.
 8. Attend a parish mission, retreat or prayer service together.
 9. Play Christian songs in the car and sing along with them.
 10. Talk about prayer: the way you like to pray best, your favorite prayer and when you pray.
 11. Pray for situations in the news or your neighborhood and for friends and relatives.
 12. Use religious images in the house to stay mindful of God and your faith: a crucifix on the bedroom walls, pictures, statues of Jesus, Mary and the saints.
 13. Choose a patron saint for your family.
 14. Have a blessed candle and display it on your dining room table for special occasions.
 15. Be creative in forming a habit of praying at certain times such as while driving to school.
 16. Memorize Scripture passages or short prayers together.
 17. Begin building prayer traditions such as reading the nativity story together on Christmas.
 18. Pray a novena as a preparation for a special feast or event as First Communion, a wedding, Father's Day.
 19. Write a family prayer or a family creed.
 20. Decide what to do as a family during Advent and Lent to observe the season.
- Parents may schedule a personal meeting with catechists and /or the Director by contacting the Religious Education Office.