

St. Jude the Apostle Parish **Religious Education Parent Handbook**

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Mission Statement

St. Jude is a Christ-centered Roman Catholic community that is dedicated to bringing God's presence to others through prayer, service and friendship. As a community that embraces people of all ages and walks of life, our mission is to reach out to people who cannot always place God and Church first in their busy lives, sometimes due to difficult circumstances. Because of our deep conviction that true happiness can only come from living in God's will, we keep our eye on the prize which is life eternal.

Contact Information

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Introduction:

The goal of St. Jude the Apostle Religious Education Program is to help children and families become life long disciples of Christ. To that end, we ask that students attend weekly faith formation classes at religious education as well as weekly Mass.

The guidelines in this booklet are given to our parents for the smooth functioning of our Religious Education Program as a set of procedures and expectations. Every consideration is given to special circumstances of the families with whom we work.

Faith formation classes are not a substitute for Sunday worship. By attending Mass, we receive the greatest gift that God could have ever given us, the gift of Jesus Himself.

Please come, receive Jesus, know his peace and experience His love.

Basic Rules and Expectations

1. **Be RESPECTFUL** at all times, to your teacher, your classmates, yourself and church property.
Fighting, "play fighting" and general rough housing of any kind are not permitted.
2. Attend Mass during the weekend. Sign the Mass "Sign-In Book" located at the break of the Church on both sides.
3. Running in the classroom area and social hall is not permitted. Do not leave your classroom or the building for any reason, except with the permission of a teacher.
4. Food, drinks or candy are not permitted in the building unless given by a teacher. No gum chewing.
5. **Cell phones are to be turned OFF** upon entering the building. If students are found using cell phones during class to call, text or play games, the phone will be taken by the teacher and returned at the end of class.

Parents: If you need to get a message to your child, please call the office and we will make sure that the message is given to the student.

Electronic equipment such as ipods or mp3s is not permitted.

6. Use a proper tone of voice when speaking. Do not yell or scream in class or in the building.
7. Skate boards, roller blades, heeled shoes and sporting equipment are not permitted in the building.

8. Writing on or defacing parish property, books or other students' or staff belongings is prohibited. Restitution will be required.
9. Hats are not to be worn in class. This is a sign of respect.
10. If a student misses more than three classes at the elementary and high school level, make up work will be required.

You as a PARENT can expect to:

- ❖ Receive regular communications from the office of Religious Education through weekly memos and the parish bulletin.
- ❖ Receive a yearly calendar of classes and events that are scheduled for Religious Education and the parish.
- ❖ Receive Faith Formation Assessments for your children twice a year. This is a simple report card reporting on what your child has learned.
- ❖ Grow in your Catholic faith along with your children.
- ❖ Receive the care and respect of parish staff members in all your dealings with us.
- ❖ Have peace of mind and heart that your child is in good hands, learning his/her faith as you promised they would at his/her Baptism.
- ❖ ***Be reminded often of God's great love for you and your family.***

Attendance

1. A student must be registered in order to attend religious education classes.
2. Registered students are expected to be on time for class and attend weekly during their designated sessions.
3. If you are going to be absent for class and know ahead of time, please inform the religious education office by phone or e-mail.
4. In order to avoid an absence, students may make up a class during a session other than which they are registered. Parents must call the office in order to arrange make up classes.
5. Written excuses need to be given to your child's teacher for the following:
 - a. early dismissal from a class
 - b. any absence from a religious education class

Student Obligations

- Use appropriate language at all times. Profanity in word or action as well as suggestive speech will not be tolerated.
- Attend Mass weekly and get a bulletin.

- Sign the Mass attendance booklet
- If you attend a church other than St. Jude bring in a bulletin and sign your name at the top to indicate that you attended Mass.
- Any object which can be viewed or used as a weapon and can be dangerous is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to the following: pocket knives, firearms, large pins, laser pointers and the like. Such objects will be confiscated and proper authorities will be notified.

Discipline

During Religious Education, we seek to foster respect for one another in the context of a loving, Christian community.

Discipline is viewed as important in that it teaches the children self-respect, self-control and responsibility.

Suspensions

A student can be suspended from Religious Education classes for a **grave matter**. When a student is suspended they may be given the option to attend class upon completing a meeting with their parents, the director, the pastor and their teacher, if necessary.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings will be scheduled during the year to provide parents with an opportunity to know the policies, expectations and important information about the parish religious education program.

During Sacramental years, Grades 2, 3 & 10, Parent Meetings are a prerequisite for children receiving their Sacraments. Generally, the following Sacraments are received at the following grade levels:

- ✓ Grade 2 – First Reconciliation
- ✓ Grade 3 – First Eucharist
- ✓ Grade 11 – Confirmation

Students are generally confirmed at the beginning of the 11th Grade Year.

Students may receive Sacraments at grade levels other than those listed. They will be asked to enroll in their grade level class as well as attend extra classes in preparation for the reception of each Sacrament.

Change of Address/Phone Number

Please notify the Religious Education Office if there are any changes in your mailing address or phone number. It is important for emergency purposes that we have your correct phone number.

Transportation

Students should be dropped off at the double doors of the parish center. Please enter by Melody Lane and exit through Lyric Avenue. Please observe this traffic pattern so that all children and drivers will be kept safe.

Parents must accompany children in Grades Kindergarten through 5 upon leaving the center. If someone other than a parent is picking up a child, a note must be sent in to the child's teacher and the director must be notified. Students in Grades 6 through 8 are allowed to exit the building with the supervision of a teacher, helper or the director.

Visitors

Visitors such as friends and relatives are allowed in class only with the express permission of the director. St. Jude the Apostle Parish is responsible only for the students whose names are listed on the official class roster.

Inclement Weather

If the weather is inclement due to snow, rain, wind or other natural causes, please tune in to the following stations to find out whether or not religious education classes are cancelled:

Television Stations:

- WGRZ – Channel 2
- WIVB – Channel 4
- WKBW – Channel 7

Radio Station:

- WBEN – 930 AM

If afternoon and evening activities are cancelled in any one of the following school districts, St. Jude the Apostle Parish will not conduct religion classes:

- Niagara-Wheatfield Central School District
- North Tonawanda Central School District
- Starpoint Central School District