

## St. Ann Catholic Church

### Mass Times:

Saturday/Sunday: 4:30pm, 8:00am, 9:45am, 11:30am

Weekdays: 6:45pm Monday, 8:30am Tuesday-Friday

8:30am 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays

### Reconciliation:

Monday: 5:30-6:30pm, Thursday: 5:30-6:30pm and

Saturday 3:30-4:00pm

### Eucharistic Exposition:

Thursdays following 8:30am Mass until 7:00pm,

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays following 8:30am Mass until 10:00am

### Sacramental Preparation:

Call the parish office for questions regarding Sacramental preparation. Sacramental preparation is a two-year process.

*Religious Education is a  
life-long journey.  
What are you doing to  
educate yourself on our  
Catholic faith?*

St. Ann Catholic Church [www.saintannparish.org](http://www.saintannparish.org)

Parish Office/Father McCarthy – 521-8440

### Religious Education Department:

Mary Clare Smith – [mcmclaughlin@saintannparish.org](mailto:mcmclaughlin@saintannparish.org)

Danielle Hart – [dhart@saintannparish.org](mailto:dhart@saintannparish.org)



# Saint Ann

## CATHOLIC CHURCH

2900 West Galbraith Road Cincinnati, Ohio 45239

521-8440 | [www.saintannparish.org](http://www.saintannparish.org)

## Parent/Student Religious Education Handbook 2017-2018

Father Thomas H. McCarthy – Pastor

Mary Clare Smith – Director of Faith Formation

Danielle Hart – Sacramental Coordinator

## Philosophy

"Full authority has been given to me both in heaven and on earth; go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you." **Matthew 28:18-20**

Catechesis, or Religious Education, is the process of communicating the beliefs, values and practices of the Catholic Church that one must accept to be a faithfully practicing Catholic. Each generation is given the responsibility and privilege of handing on, to the next generation, the authentic teachings of the Catholic Church that first came to Her through the Apostles. Without this knowledge and guidance of the Church, we would be unable to live our lives today or gain eternal life.

**CCC 2223** "Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children... Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them."

Parents are the first and primary teachers of their children in the ways of the Faith; the Church refers to the family as the domestic church. Instructing your children on how to pray, read the bible, general teachings, devotional practices, etc., are very important for your child's development and commitment to remain a faithfully practicing Catholic. What's even more important is living out the faith yourselves. Children will model their beliefs and actions based on what they see at home.

## Monday Evening Attendance Policy

Our program is designed to run over the course of 32 weeks each school year and we expect the students to make every effort to be present for class in order to get the most out of their religious education learning experience.

If a child has 3 or more unexcused absences in a year, the student may be asked to repeat that grade the following year. If parents choose to keep their child out for a specific amount of time for whatever reason, they should continue the religious education process through home schooling, materials will be provided. If the child does not comprehend the necessary material; the student will be asked to repeat that grade the following year.

If your child is ill, please do not send them to class until they are better, we do not want their illness to linger nor have other children get sick. If a student will be absent, please call the religious education office to let us know and make arrangements to pick-up their weekly lesson from the Church office between Tuesday and Friday during office hours or have it e-mailed to you. Religious Education Office: 513-521-8440  
Parish Office Hours: Monday 9am-8pm, Tuesday 9am-5pm, Wednesday 9am-5pm, Thursday 9am-5pm, Friday 9am-12pm

Parents can help their child work on the lesson at home, so they can be prepared for the following class.

If you as parents communicate and place Religious Education as the highest priority to your children, then they in turn will place their Catholic education as a high priority. If this is not modeled at home, the battle to instill the importance of the Catholic education is already lost. Thank you for your support!

## Behavior Policy

It is the policy of the Religious Education Department to enforce a code of conduct that ensures a pleasant learning experience for all children and a productive teaching experience for all catechists. All catechists are to be treated with respect. It is the job of each student to be attentive in class and to avoid disruptive behavior. Failure to do so will result in the following:

In one class period:

- First offense: a verbal warning will be given
- Second Offense: a "time out" at least 10 minutes will be given with the student being sent to the DRE's office
- Third Offense: student will be removed from class and parent/guardian will be notified to pick their child up

If disruptive behavior continues, the DRE will confer with parents to devise a plan to make religious education possible.

The plan may include:

- A parent attending class with his/her child to handle classroom discipline
- A student/parent conference/meeting with the catechist, DRE, and/or pastor
- Parents being provided with religious education materials in order to homeschool their child

Disruptive behavior includes the following: Persistent talking during class time when the catechist has required quiet, discourteous attitude to the catechists or other students, destruction of materials or property, unwillingness to cooperate with the catechist's instructions, disregard for classroom rules, or inappropriate language.

## Introduction

The information contained in this handbook is designed to help parents/guardians be informed of the importance of their participation in their child's faith formation. This is not only intended for children attending the Religious Education program at St. Ann's, but for all parents who have children under the age of 18.

### The goals of Catechesis in Religious Education:

1. To teach students what a Catholic is to believe; helping them to know, love, and serve the Lord in this life so they can be happy with Him in the next life.
2. To involve students in the life of the parish: worship, service, and community life.
3. To assist parents in imparting the Catholic Faith to their children, so it can be a living and life-giving faith.
4. To encourage parents to continue with their own religious development and religious education.

### Religious Education Options

The goal is to educate our children in the teachings and practices of the Catholic faith; this can be accomplished several ways. Regardless of which you choose, the involvement of parents is essential, if you home school religion, send your child to a Catholic School or the Religious Education classes at St. Ann's.

The choice of how your child receives his/her religious education is yours. St. Ann's recognizes the following three methods of religious education: Home School, Catholic School, or Parish Religious Education Program.

**Requirements:**

Please inform the Parish Director of Faith Formation, Mary Clare Smith if you have chosen to educate your child at home or at a Catholic School (other than Our Lady of Grace.) Children who are home schooled or go to Catholic Schools do not need to attend the parish religious education program.

Sacraments are received through the parish: school aged children should receive Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation. Children receiving religious education through home schooling or attending a Catholic school, are required to come to additional meetings and retreats in order to assist in preparing them to receive these Sacraments.

**Home School:**

Parents have the right to educate their children at home. There are many children who receive their general education at home already. You may be asked to provide updates to show what your child is learning and how well they comprehend the material. The pastor/administrator is still the overall supervisor and thus he has the responsibility of making sure the children of the parish are receiving proper religious education. At random the pastor/administrator may ask to interview the child or check the work/tests they have taken. If you need materials or suggestions for materials, the parish can provide recommendations or materials at cost.

**Catholic School:**

It has been a long part of our tradition to send children to Catholic Schools. They provide not only a great education on faith and secular disciplines, but provide an environment to promote the Catholic identity, which is an important part of being Catholic.

**Parent Involvement**

It is God's plan for parents to take an active role in their child's religious education. The following are some specific ways which may help parents remain the primary educator of their children. Attend Mass regularly on Sundays as a family. This is the most important thing you can do to form a strong and lasting relationship between your child and God. Parents are most effective when they set good examples. If faith is important to you, your child will embrace his/her faith as well.

If your child attends our religious education program it is your responsibility to ensure they attend class each week. Ask your child what he/she is being taught in Religious Education and do not accept "nothing or "not much" as an answer. Use the car ride home as an opportunity to dialogue with your child about our Catholic Faith. Our teachers follow a comprehensive curriculum for faith formation. Every grade level implements lesson plans and goals in order to cover various aspects and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Read the policies and procedures of the Religious Education Program in this handbook, the weekly parish bulletin and website to keep informed of activities, special events, etc. Talk with your child's catechist before or after class and maintain a dialogue throughout the year with the catechist, in order to follow up on your child's progress and religious education. The teachers appreciate your interest and involvement.

Consider being a parent volunteer in the Religious Education Program or in a different church ministry. Your service is always appreciated.

### Safety Procedures

Catechists are instructed in the procedures for fire and severe weather emergencies. Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of all students and staff in the event of an emergency.

If a student becomes ill or is injured during class time, parents will be notified immediately. Neither the catechist nor the DRE will administer or allow a child to take any form of medication without written permission from the parents.

For safety reasons, when necessary to take a student out of class before regular dismissal time, the student must bring in a written note and present it to the catechist. When the parent or guardian comes to pick up the child, he/she must go to the classroom door and walk out with the student. No student will be released without the catechist seeing the parent/guardian.

Dismissal for the Monday evening program is 8:00pm. Please arrive on time to pick up your child. For safety reasons, parents of all students in grades 1-3 are required to come into the building and escort their child through the parking lot.

Any child not picked up immediately after class must wait inside the building. At this point, the catechist and DRE will call the parent(s). If we are unable to reach the parent(s), we will contact the emergency contact person listed on your registration form.

The DRE is required by the Ohio Revised Code and Archdiocesan Policy on Child Protection to report suspected or actual abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

### **Parish Religious Education Program:**

- Preschool Religious Education: Ages 3-6 (through Kindergarten) meets from 9:45-10:45am on Sundays
- First through Eighth Grade Religious Education meets from 6:30-8:00pm on Mondays

### Parish Religious Education Program

Sunday morning classes begin at 9:45am. No child should be in the building before 9:30am. Monday evening classes begin at 6:30pm. No child should be in the building before 6:15pm.

Students are not to wander throughout the building. Students should report to their classroom upon entering the building. If the teacher is not present, students are to wait in the hallway outside the room. No student is to enter an unsupervised classroom. **Students should take care of bathroom needs prior to the start of classes.** Note: teachers take the younger children as a group.

**Schedule and Inclement Weather:** If Northwest public schools cancel classes due to inclement weather, Religious education classes will also be cancelled. If the weather becomes bad later in the day and classes will be cancelled a notice will be sent out via the parish flock notes program. Be sure to register for these notifications. You may also look on St. Ann's website or call the religious education office.

### Volunteers

We always welcome parent volunteers to assist with our program. Please contact the religious education department to find out more about our volunteer opportunities. Volunteer opportunities range from once a year to once a week. Any time you can give is much appreciated.

## Catechists

We are very blessed to have the involvement of so many dedicated parishioners who volunteer to be teachers and classroom aides. Their service in our Religious Education Program is deeply appreciated. All volunteers who are involved in ministry to children in the church are required to attend a workshop titled “VIRTUS: Protecting God’s Children” and clear a criminal background check. These child protective measures are required and monitored by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Our catechists and aides are offered training classes in order to obtain various levels of catechist certification. Certificates are awarded upon completion of each level of certification.

### Registration and Fees

Parent permission and medical forms must be received in order for your child to participate in our religious education program. The cost for the year for Preschool is \$25/student and no more than \$50/family. The cost for the year for Monday evening religious education is \$40/student and no more than \$80/family. This fee covers text books, activity books, occasional snacks, and ongoing training for the catechists.

Additional fees may be associated with parish religious education events such as retreats, conferences, vacation bible school, and youth ministry events. The cost of these events varies and will be listed on registration and promotional materials for each specific event. **If the fees present a financial difficulty, please contact the pastor in order to arrange for scholarship funds. We do not wish to exclude anyone from the religious education program.**

## Sacramental Preparation

Religious Education is extremely important and we want our students to be well prepared as Catholics. St. Ann’s requires that students attend a full year of religious education before beginning sacramental preparation.

We receive Sacraments as a gift from God, not because we are entitled to them or even deserve them. As Catholics, we embrace the Sacraments of our faith and hold them in high regard.

The norms at St. Ann’s Parish is for second graders to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. The Sacrament of Confirmation is held every year for seventh grade students. If a student did not participate in religious education during first or sixth grade, he/she will be placed with the first or sixth grade class and receive their sacraments the following year. This policy was communicated via mail, parish bulletin, and religious education handbook in 2014-2015 and was implemented in the 2016-2017 religious education year.

A student's faith formation does not end with Confirmation. Our youth ministry program is designed to help students learn to defend and remain actively strong in their Catholic Faith.

### Youth Ministry

Religious education provides us with the basic understanding of our Catholic faith. We encourage middle and high school students to continue to learn about and share their faith by joining the St. Ann Youth Group.

6-8 grade Middle School Youth Group and  
9-12 grade High School Youth Group