



Most Precious Blood
— CATHOLIC CHURCH —

Religious Education K3-12th Handbook

Fall 2025 – Spring 2026

Church Information:

Most Precious Blood Church
3502 Saratoga Blvd.
Corpus Christi, TX 78415

Phone: 361-854-3800

Website: www.mpbchurch.org

Priests and Deacons:

Rev. Joseph A. Lopez, J.C.L., Pastor
Rev. Arularasu Mathias, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Carlos De La Rosa, Parochial Vicar
Deacon Ken Bockholt
Deacon Frank Newchurch
Deacon David Castillo
Deacon Mark Cazalas

Parish Faith Formation & Discipleship Office - Phone: 361-854-3800

Tina Villegas, Director - E-mail: tvillegas@mpbchurch.org

Justin De Los Santos, Youth Minister – E-mail: jdelossantos@mpbchurch.org

Stacie Bunting, 7th & 8th grade Coordinator – E-mail: mpbyouthonfire@gmail.com

Curriculum

Our programs for students in grades K-12th follows the guidelines outlined by the policies set forth by the Diocese of Corpus Christi for the Catechesis of Children and Adolescents.

Our chosen curriculums: Grades K3-6th is Catechesis of the Good Shepherd; Grades 7th and 8th is Our Sunday Visitor – Alive in Christ and High School Confirmation Preparation will be using the Catholic Bible, Youcat, and Youcat Confirmation.

Communications

Please be sure that all your phone numbers and emergency contact information listed with us is current and that you or another responsible adult can be reached during class time in the event of an emergency. We do not have the facility to care for a sick child. Please ensure that a 2nd person is listed in case the parent is not available.

Communication to parents from this office and from catechists serve to strengthen our joint efforts to provide quality religious education for the student. The main means of communication will come via text/Flocknote. Information is also posted regularly on our website, weekly parish bulletin (which is also available on-line) and Facebook. Parents are strongly encouraged to be in touch with our office if there is a concern or question. The catechist is also encouraged to text, e-mail or call parents as the need to do so becomes apparent. Parents are welcome to visit classrooms/atriums with advanced notification to the DRE.

- Parents should watch for reminders that are **texted**/e-mailed and/or sent home with the students, as well as look for notices in the bulletin.

****Youth Ministry Communication** – Digital and social media platforms used in Youth Ministry are Groupme, Flocknote, Text messages, Parish bulletin, Parish website, Mass screen announcements, Parish Facebook page, Parish Youth Ministry Instagram, Phone calls. ** Parent Consent form for direct communication with minors is required to be completed.

Admission Policies:

You must be a registered parishioner of Most Precious Blood Church to enroll your child for a K-12th Religious Education classes. Registration fees are \$45.00 per child.

Students from other parishes may be enrolled in our Religious Education program BUT they must submit a written letter of permission from their appropriate pastor.

All students entering the program for the first time must also submit a copy of their Baptismal Certificate and First Holy Communion Certificate during the parent meeting.
If student is in OCIC– Birth certificate is required.

Registration Is available on-line. Please visit our website mpbchurch.org - Religious Education and/or look in the bulletin for more information.

Catechists/Leaders:

Catechist, Leaders, Teachers and assistants will provide a loving Christian atmosphere within the classroom so that children will be able to learn and recognize they are special children of God. Catechists are also positive Christian role models who are prepared to teach and discuss the designated curriculum. All catechists and their assistants have completed the *Creating and Maintaining Safe Environment* (CMSE) program as required by the Diocese of Corpus Christi. • *Creating and Maintaining Safe Environment* Workshops (CMSE) are required for all church personnel, clergy, teachers, **volunteers** and others working with or for the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Corpus Christi.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is an important factor in helping your child deepen their understanding of church teaching, scripture, prayer and community. If there are special circumstances regarding your child's participation in the program, they may be worked **out in advance** with the Director of Faith Formation for students attending Pk3-8th grade and the Youth Minister for students attending 9th-12th grade sessions.

Arrival

Pk3 to Grade 6 students - Students must be **escorted** to and from the atrium/classroom by a parent or guardian and signing in and singing out is required. Side gates (Sunday only) are opened 15 minutes before class time begins. They will remain open until 10 minutes after class time begins. Please be prompt—Students may not enter atriums/classrooms unless a teacher/aide is in the room; if no adult is present in the atrium/room, students along with adult, are expected to wait quietly in the hall outside the classroom until the teacher or teacher's aide arrives. Side Gates are locked 10 minutes after class time begins; after that, main lobby doors must be used. Please try to avoid tardiness—it is very disruptive to the teacher and all the students in your child's class.

7th and 8th grade students are to use the St. Maria Goretti Youth Center Main Lobby entrance for class. Attendance/ "Check-in" will be taken in the lobby area.

9th-12th grade students are to use the St. Maria Goretti Youth Center Main Lobby entrance. Attendance/ "Check-in" will be taken in the lobby area and then they are to "sign- in" at their assigned tables. Sessions start at 5:00p.m. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., students are to arrive **before** 5:00p.m. Students will be marked tardy at 5:15p.m. If student arrives after the lesson has started, student will be counted absent.

Departure

Pk3 to Grade 6 students - Please PARK and escort your child out of the building. Adults will be required to "sign out" their children from the classroom. Side gates will allow access to classrooms 5 minutes before dismissal time. Please exit the building by the side gates. While these protocols may be inconvenient, they are required to ensure the safety of all children entering or leaving the building/accessing parking lots.

7th and 8th grade students are to be picked up from the Saint Maria Goretti Youth Center.

9th-12th grade students are to be picked up from the Saint Maria Goretti Youth Center.

- Early pick-up is discouraged. Frequently missing all or part of weekly classes does affect your child's religious education.

• **Pk3 to Grade 6 students** - If you do need to pick up your child before dismissal, the parent/guardian must send a brief note (stating time, date, catechist's name and room number) to the Office of Faith Formation. Pick up your child at the SMGYC Lobby area. Students will be released only to those persons approved by the parent or other designated adult. Any person(s) picking up the student other than the parent/guardian or other adult will be asked to provide photo identification to staff on site.

The reasons for repetition of grade level are as follows:

1. Excessive absence: 3 absences are allowed. Additional absences may require a parent conference.
2. Poor performance: if the child consistently does poorly when assessed on the content of lessons, repetition of the grade level may be the best solution for the child to grasp the content.
3. Excessive lateness: If the **late arrivals** continue beyond 6 occurrences, this is grounds for repetition of grade level.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

OCIC (Order of Christian Initiation of Children): The OCIC program is a 2 year program for children eight years of age or older who have not been baptized, and wish to become Catholic. Birth certificate required. Parents/guardians may contact the office by email: tvillegas@mpbchurch.org

First Reconciliation and First Communion: The celebration of First Reconciliation and First Communion occurs during the 2nd grade year for most students who have been baptized, and who are in their second **consecutive** year of Religious Education. Older students who have not received either of these sacraments are eligible if they have been baptized, and are in their second **consecutive** year of Religious Education. Baptismal certificate required.

Confirmation: Confirmation preparation begins in the 9th grade. Students are confirmed in the spring of their 10th grade year, or after 2 consecutive years of confirmation preparation. This course is designed to help teens come to a greater understanding of their Catholic faith, grow in their relationship with Christ, and practice living the Christian life. With this foundation, they will be able to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit received at Confirmation to the fullest. Confirmation sessions include prayer, catechesis, small group faith sharing, and required service components. **Confirmation Mass is scheduled by the Bishop's office and rehearsal and Confirmation Mass dates will be provided once our Parish receives the assigned date.** Baptismal and First Holy Communion certificates required.

Confirmation Program Components:

- Weekly Sunday Mass and Holy Day of Obligation Mass attendance.
- Confirmation Retreats-Year Two MUST attend a confirmation retreat.
- Diocesan Special Events: MUST attend either Global Celebration of Young People in the Fall or Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference in the spring
- Parish Service & Ministry Hours.
- Religious Education Sessions-Must attend and participate in Sessions.
- Complete the Saint Poster Project at the end of Year Two

Confirmation Readiness Interview and Test

Towards the end of the second year of Confirmation preparation, each candidate will participate in an informal interview to demonstrate readiness to receive the sacrament. Readiness is determined by the candidate's desire to receive the sacrament and satisfactory completion of the requirements for Confirmation. Before the interview, candidates will need to successfully complete a test, demonstrating understanding of what they have learned. **TBA in Spring.**

Confirmation Saint's Poster Project Presentation

The tradition of taking on a new name to show a new role can be traced back to the Old Testament. When Abram was called to lead his people to believe in the one God, his name was changed from Abram to Abraham, "*Father of many nations*". Again, in the New Testament, we find Simon's name changed to Peter, meaning "*rock*", because he was to become the rock upon which Jesus founded his Church. Now that you are about to be confirmed, it is time to choose the name you will take as a sign of your growth in faith.

****PLEASE NOTE:** If there is any particular reason that your child and you might have difficulty with fulfilling the service hours, saint project, attendance, or any other requirements, please feel free to schedule a meeting with our Youth Minister as soon as possible to discuss options.

Confirmation Sponsor

Individuals seeking Confirmation must also acquire an adult Sponsor. "It is the role of the sponsor to represent the faith community." (Canon 893) The confirmation sponsor is to guide the one confirmed to act as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfill the duties of the sacrament. It is preferable for the godparent from baptism to serve as sponsor. However, another person may serve as sponsor. To become a sponsor, a person:

- Must be a practicing Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- As a practicing Catholic, is expected to receive Communion at the Confirmation Mass.
- If married, the marriage must be in accordance with the laws of the Catholic Church. If single the sponsor cannot be cohabitating (living with a significant other).
- Must be at least 16 years of age.
- Must not be the mother or father of the child or candidate.
- Must have every intention of fulfilling the role as Sponsor.

Rules/Expectations for Religious Education and Youth Ministry Sessions and Events:

Out of respect for oneself and others, children/students are expected to:

- **Behave appropriately and respectfully** at all Parish events and sessions.
- Anything dangerous or illegal is of course prohibited.
- Use upbuilding and kind speech, and no swearing/profanities.
- **Arrive on time.**
- Participate in sessions, and complete assignments/ readings.
- **No cell phone** or electronic devices use during sessions, Youth events, and of course Mass. (High School Students - Unless this is directed by the Catechist/Leader as part of the educational process.)

- **Dress modestly and appropriately:** All undergarments must be covered, no skin-tight clothing, exposed midriffs, no low-cut tops, spaghetti strap tops, strapless or backless tops. No sagging, skintight pants, short shorts or short skirts. No inappropriate language/graphics on clothing. Certain types of attire are not appropriate to wear to RE class or in Church, in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Regular visits to Church throughout the year require that students' dress each week be appropriate to go to Church. Our efforts to teach students reverence for God and each other include guiding them in how to best present themselves modestly and respectfully. All hats must be removed by males before entering the church.

Cell Phones and Electronics

The use of cell phones and other electronic devices by the child is not permitted during the Religious Education session (High School student may have an exception **IF** this is directed by the Catechist/Leader as part of the educational process.) Cell phones brought into the classroom should be turned off. At the discretion of the teacher cell phones may be collected and put in a basket at the beginning of class or placed on the Catechist/Leader's desk. Children in need of contacting a parent must ask the Catechist's permission to go to the Religious Education Office to place the call.

Bullying and Cyber-bullying

Bullying includes but is not limited to: threatening physical harm, verbal abuse, intimidation, cyberbullying. A safe and civil environment is necessary for children to learn and achieve Christian value. Harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying (using technology to bully such as but not limited to: posting an inappropriate picture of a child on the Internet) and other violent behaviors will not be tolerated in a Religious Education Program environment. Any child who engages in this behavior may be asked to leave the religious education environment if this is seen to be in the best interest of the rest of the religious education community.

Vandalism

Children in this program share church property with others. Touching or removing someone else's property will be considered vandalism. Vandalism or willfully damaging or destroying property will not be tolerated. Vandalism must be paid for by the parent of the child who did it. Accidental damage should be immediately reported to the Director.

Unacceptable Behavior

The following types of behavior are NOT allowed during the Religious Education Program. Infractions which call for discipline by the Catechist are:

- acting in a disrespectful manner toward the Catechist/Leader, Assistants, Volunteers, other adults or children in the program
- cheating
- speaking and interacting with other children inappropriately during the session
- abusive or vulgar language
- leaving a session without permission
- using a cell phone during the session when not authorized by the Catechist or Lead
- doing something other than the work of the session
- violating the dress code
- possession of and /or trafficking in alcohol or other drugs
- leaving the Religious Education premises when a child is supposed to be attending the session

- willful defiance of authority
- recording or photographing a catechist or student without permission
- possession of weapons, such as knives, guns, or look-alikes
- physical assault/fighting, threatening bodily harm
- harassment and intimidation of other children
- vandalism, arson, theft
- bullying/cyber-bullying.

Persistence in any of these behaviors after corrective measures have been taken can result in the removal of the child from the Religious Education group sessions, either temporarily or permanently, depending on the recommendation of the Director/Minister/Coordinator and the decision of the Pastor.

Behavior Management

Our Catechists are volunteers and should not be expected to spend class time as disciplinarians. However, when necessary a catechist may use **behavior management** (or “discipline”) appropriate to an educational environment as a necessary means for the Religious Education Program to accomplish its goals. The purpose of behavior management is to help the children develop self-control, self-respect, respect for others, and reverence for the Word of God which is being explained to them in these sessions. Several infractions of rules of conduct will result in a call by the Director/Minister/Coordinator to the child’s parent in which the Director/Minister/Coordinator will describe the situation and work out a solution with the parent. If the infractions continue, the Director/Minister/Coordinator will organize a conference with the parent, the Catechist, and if needed the Pastor. The Religious Education Program reserves to the Director/Youth Minister/Coordinator, under the authority of the Pastor, the right to remove a child from the group session, either temporarily or permanently: - **if the child’s behavior is seriously inhibiting the learning of others in the group; - if the child’s behavior is seriously inhibiting the safety or well-being of others in the group; - temporary removal is used as a disciplinary measure for serious and persistent disruptive behavior.**

2025-2026 Parent/Student Religious Education Handbook Acknowledgement Form

The student's responsibilities include:

Living a moral life that reflects the values and teachings of Jesus Christ
Participating in the Parish Mass each Sunday
After receiving the Sacrament of Penance, you should be confessing at least once a year
Following the teachings, laws, and norms of the Catholic Church
Attending the weekly Religious Education Sessions
Arriving on time each week for the Religious Education Session
Being well-prepared for each Religious Education session by having all assigned home projects completed satisfactorily
Memorizing all required prayers
Participating in class discussions and activities
Being attentive and respectful during sessions
Performing satisfactorily on assessments of the material taught in the sessions
Practicing appropriate and modest dress

Parents' Responsibility

- 1) To accept our responsibility as the primary educators in the faith of our child(ren) and support what they learn in the Religious Education.
- 2) To witness to our child(ren) by the practice of our faith which includes Sunday worship, the celebration of Reconciliation, and other worship opportunities.
- 3) To witness to our child(ren) by collaborating with the parish in their preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation.
- 4) To witness to our child(ren) by being involved in the stewardship of the parish by sharing our Time, Treasure and Talent with the parish and other Church endeavors.

Sacramental I & II Parent Commitment

Sacramental Preparation Year I

I, the parent of the child listed below, promise to help be a guide for my child's spiritual journey through this two year sacramental preparation. Out of love for my child, I will help him/her fulfill our Sunday obligation of attending Mass. I understand that my son/daughter must attend classes each week and that they may NOT have MORE THAN 3 absences. If they fail to meet this, I understand that I am choosing to limit my child's understanding of these sacraments. I understand that my son/daughter is responsible for meeting project deadlines and turning all work in to their catechist/leader. It is my understanding that this is not the end of my child's faith journey, but just a step until they can continue on as adults in our faith. I understand my child should continue with Religious Education through the 12th grade.

Sacramental Preparation Year II

I agree to attend the designated Parent Meetings, Meditations, and retreats to assist my child as he/she grows deeper in the understanding of the sacraments.

I/We hereby acknowledge that I/we have read and understand the contents of this Parent Student Handbook regarding the Religious Education Program at MPB. I/We agree to the directives contained herein.

Student Name(s):

Student Grade(s)

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

_____ Grade _____

Handbook was reviewed at the Parent Meeting. I have been notified that I may view/download a copy from the Parish website: <https://www.mpbchurch.org/religious-education>

Parent/Guardian Name: (please print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: (please sign and date)

_____ Date: _____