

Parent/Student Policies Acknowledgement

We have received and reviewed the Faith Formation (Religious Education) Handbook and understand the policies, procedures, and expectations outlined within it.

By signing the enrollment form, we acknowledge that we have read and agree to abide by the policies and guidelines of the Faith Formation program.

Please return the signed acknowledgment page at the time of registration.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date _____

Avon – Holbrook Catholic Collaborative

87 North Main Street

Avon, MA 02322

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Religious Education Office

(508) 586-7210 x119

Email: stmichaelsavonreled@comcast.net

www.stjosephholbrook.org

Pastor

Rev. Robert J. Cullen

Director of Religious Education

Grades 1 - 8

Elaine Flanigan, DRE

(508) 586-7210 x119

Religious Education office is open on a part-time basis

“It is within the Christian family that members are awakened to the presence of God and learn to pray and to form their consciences in light of the teachings of Christ and of the Church. Children learn by the selfless witness of their parents and other family members.”

National Directory of Catechesis

MISSION STATEMENT

The Religious Education Program for the collaborative supports parents in their obligation to form their children in the faith and practice of the Christian life.

ATTENDANCE

Children are expected to attend every class. No more than four (4) absences are allowed each school year.

Families are asked to call/ email the religious education office if your child will be absent.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Every child must be brought into the hall for class by their parent/guardian. If someone different is in this role at any time, a written note from a parent/guardian must be presented to Mrs. Flanigan before this child can be released.

No child at any time should leave the hall or Mass without an adult.

CANCELLATIONS

Parents/guardians will receive notification via email.

CATECHISTS TRAINING

We encourage parents to be involved by volunteering as Catechists (teachers), or aids. We offer training. Catechists with children in the program along with weekly classroom aids will have their registration fee waived for their child.

OUR PROGRAM

Grades 1-8 Sunday's: 8:00 – 8:45 AM (followed by the 9:00AM Mass). Our program encompasses both class time and Family Mass as one. **Children and Families are strongly encouraged to attend Mass.**

CODE OF BEHAVIOR

- *Respect will be shown for school and church property
- *Students will not use inappropriate language
- *Students will not eat or drink during class, special circumstances allowed
- *Cell phones are not allowed to be used during class time. If necessary, they will be placed in a box during class time.
- *Touching such as pushing, shoving or slapping is never tolerated

CUSTODY ISSUES

If parents are divorced or separated, the religious education program presumes that both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide evidence that he/she has the sole right. If there are other custody arrangements, a written note must be on file.

DISCIPLINE

Following Jesus' command, "Love one another as I have loved you," the staff members for this program and students treat one another with mutual respect. Disrespect toward a catechist or another child, will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior, lack of effort, or poor attitude on the part of a student will result in:

- * The child will be spoken to privately by catechist
- * Catechist will inform Director of Religious Education of any particular difficulties with a child

- * Catechist will telephone parent/guardian

- * If necessary, conference with catechist, parent and Director of Religious Education will be scheduled

Note: Children with disabilities or medical conditions, including ADHD, autism, or those taking medication, may exhibit behaviors that affect their participation or performance. These individual needs will be taken into consideration, and we will work closely with parents or guardians to understand the best ways to support each child and help ensure a positive experience.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL

Drugs & alcohol are never allowed on premises. If a student is found to be in possession of drugs/alcohol, the student will be detained while police are notified. Catechists are asked not to dismiss a student to a parent/guardian who is visibly impaired. The catechist should contact the Director of Religious Education, who reserves the right to call an emergency number.

REGISTRATION

Parents are asked to register their child in the summer for the fall school year. Any registration received after date posted on registration form is subject to a late fee. All children **must** be registered before class starts in September. Check the bulletin, website, and email for dates and times.

TUITION

Although tuition fees are used towards books, payroll, and supplies each year, no child will be denied their religious education due to finances. Please talk to the Director of Religious Education concerning this matter.

MASS ATTENDANCE

The Mass and the Sacraments are a vital part of our identity as Catholics. To bring your child to class and not bring them to Mass on the weekends is to give a mixed message. In class we tell the students they are required to attend Mass. Parents who do not see that their children attend Sunday Mass defeat the purpose of faith formation since the children are being told one thing and are practicing another. We are expected to participate at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. It is our hope that as we make efforts to teach the truths of our faith, parents support us by teaching the same things.

Children learn from the example set by their parents. You are your child's first teacher.

MEDICATION POLICY

Catechists do not administer any medication. A first aid kit is located in the religious education office. If a child is on medication or has a medical condition, parent will be required to stay in the hall during every class time.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The success of our Faith Formation program depends on the active involvement of parents and guardians. As the primary educators of your children in the Catholic faith, you play the most important role in their spiritual growth. Our catechists are honored to partner with you by supporting and reinforcing the teachings of our faith during class sessions.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Regularly review their child's classwork and help them learn and practice their prayers.
- Talk with their child about what they are learning in class and encourage them to live their faith each day.
- Support their child in completing any assignments and meeting program expectations.

- Lead by example through active participation in the life of the Church and by living the values of our Catholic Christian faith at home and in the community.
- Read and respond to all program communications, including emails, handouts, and flyers, to stay informed throughout the year.

Together, by working in partnership, we can help our children develop a strong and lasting relationship with Jesus Christ and a deeper understanding of our Catholic faith.

POLICY FOR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

The Archdiocese directs that if a catechist/director suspects a child has been abused, the guidelines of the Archdiocese and Massachusetts for reporting will be followed. Any information which leads a catechist to believe that a student intends to harm himself/herself requires the catechist to notify authority. The policies are posted in the Religious Education office.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Every Sacrament has a foundation. A child who has not received the Sacraments and is in Grade four (4) or higher, a special preparation will be arranged for your child.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

The Archdiocese mandated that all adult staff and volunteers who are entrusted with the care or supervision of children, must attend the VIRTUS training, Protecting God's Children workshop. All adults working with children are background checked. Each year children are taught practical ways to establish safe environments and relationships. Further information regarding this policy is available in the Religious Education office.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Any child that is not able to attend class, the parent is encouraged to discuss their situation with the DRE.

****Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The religious education program will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as possible; however, some changes might be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.****