

Religious Education Handbook

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Religious Education Philosophy

Religious Education Partnership With Parents

St. Raymond Religious Education Program is a ministry that is an integral part of the mission of the faith community of St. Raymond de Penafort in the Archdiocese of Chicago. As members of the family of Christ, we respect and nurture, encourage and model our faith in the religious formation of our children and young people. We live in the hope, that with our values imprinted on their young hearts, they will serve the Mission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the world they will inherit one day. We seek to accomplish this by focusing on the child, the family and the Church community.

We (the Religious Education Department) believe that each person is a unique child of God. The child is therefore offered an engaging, solid and practical curriculum, utilizing new practices in learning theory, age-appropriate prayer experiences, and numerous opportunities to express faith through service activities. We also provide the child with creative experiences so she/he has the knowledge, language, and skills necessary to live as a faith-filled and active disciple of Jesus.

We believe that, as the children experience the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of our Church, they will come to be aware of the very real ways that the risen Christ is living and acting in them and through others. While participating in the sacramental life of the church, especially the Eucharist, the children will experience the support of the whole faith community.

Our challenge and goal is to creatively and conscientiously try to balance the pillars of Christian formation: content, community, prayer, service and fun.

- The Religious Education Department will also support parents by:
offering suggestions on how the ordinary activities & interactions of daily family living are *sacramental moments that point to God*,
- providing family-friendly activities in the textbook, in the parish bulletin and on the internet,
- suggesting family-based prayer and activities during Advent, Christmas, Lent & Easter,
- offering opportunities for family fun (parish and Religious Education Advisory Commission social events).





Parents Partnership With St. Raymond

The family, the domestic church, is *essential* to the spiritual formation of the child. If it doesn't happen in the family, it is much more difficult for it to happen elsewhere.

The parent's role in their child's faith development is to

- Make regular Sunday worship a family priority and commitment in family life,
- Pray with their child each day, especially at meals and bed-time,
- Grow in their own faith by attending parish adult formation sessions,
- Be personally involved in Religious Education through volunteering
- R.E. Advisory Commission, or volunteer when needed. There are several opportunities throughout the year to join in the many social parish activities that are offered .

Whole Parish Responsibilities

The Religious Education Program is an integral part of the larger parish. St. Raymond's responsibility is to provide a warm and nurturing environment in which children continue to grow spiritually as they share in the liturgical and sacramental life of this faith community. The R.E. Department invites faith-filled parishioners, who are living out of their deepening love of God and their understanding of the Catholic faith, to answer the call to become a catechist. As catechists, parishioners share their experiences and model to the child so he/she becomes confident to participate in the Church's mission to proclaim, celebrate, and serve the coming of God's reign in the world.

We are dedicated to create a safe environment from which the children emerge with a positive image of God, themselves, and the world. We want all children to experience that God loves them deeply and truly. We are firmly committed to protecting God's children. Therefore, every adult working with the children will submit to a criminal background check and subsequent training by a diocesan program called VIRTUS.

God's grace propels and strengthens us as we answer God's call to raise faith-filled children. We need to support and sustain each other in this world. This is both a blessing and a challenge for each of us. Let us embrace the opportunity!



Aims of Catechesis

Catechesis is the process of transmitting the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, as the Christian community has received it, understands it, celebrates it, lives it and communicates it in numerous ways. Catechesis or religious education and formation passes on the living message of Jesus Christ in His Church in the living faith of the parents, catechists and the community. The main goal of faith formation is, in essence, a Person...Jesus of Nazareth. (General Directory for Catechesis).

The religious education and formation of young people takes into consideration a holistic view of the person (physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual). It is necessarily linked with their life situation and conditions.

Effective child-centered catechesis embraces specific aims.

Catechesis:

- **Takes place in and through the family.** The role of parents as the first and foremost teachers of their children is respected and reinforced.
- **Puts the child in touch with and in communion with Jesus Christ** by presenting religious concepts in accord with a child's age and capacity for understanding and growth.
- **Encourages the use of imagination, critical reflection and memory** in age appropriate ways.
- **Takes place through consciously planned learning experiences.**
- **Approaches children with reverence for their God given gifts** and assists them in making an increasingly personal response to God.
- **Fosters a sense of a faith community** in the classroom and in the parish.
- **Lays the foundation for developing Christian attitudes, values and behavior** in a child's early years.
- **Assists children in the growth of their personal prayer life and spirituality.**
- **Takes place in and through the liturgical and sacramental life of the parish faith community.**
- **Adapts the process for conscience formation** according to age, understanding and circumstances of life (National Catechetical Directory #190).
- **Provides an environment** for young people to grow in faith, especially through the witness of adults.
- **Instills a sense of the mission of Christ and service to the poor.**

Catechetical Staff
Main Phone Number (847-253-8600)

Pastor.....	Father Edward Panek x 135
Associate Pastor.....	Father Gilbert Marshurano x
Director of Worship.....	Deacon John Lorbach x 160
Director of Religious Education.....	
Administrative Assistant.....	Mrs. Michelle Tuchner x 134
Administrative Assistant.....	Mrs. Paula St. Louis x 134



Religious Education Advisory Commission

The Religious Education Advisory Commission sets the direction of the Religious Education Program. It is the role of the Advisory Commission to advise and support the Director of the program in order to foster and secure excellence in this parish ministry.

This shared responsibility infers a collaborative ministry under the leadership of the pastor and the Parish Council. Members of the Commission work together to learn, pray, and discern God's call to serve the needs of the parish. The Commission will also have representation on the Youth Formation Commission and the Pastoral Council. Several sub-committees are involved with this commission to support the various needs of the religious education families.

Responsibilities of a Catechetical Advisory Commission

1. To promote awareness of catechesis in the parish.
2. To support the formulation of policy in accordance with the Archdiocesan Religious Education Policies and Procedures.
3. To monitor programs, and implementation of policy.
4. To keep the parish advised of the Commission's activities.
5. To bring representation of Religious Education families to the whole parish Community through Youth Formation Commission and Parish Council.
6. To work for better communication between parents, catechists, and staff.
7. To seek opportunities for family involvement in the parish
8. To unify religious education families and strengthen the relationships within our parish community
9. To orient new Commission members.
10. To periodically evaluate the Commission's performance .
11. To serve on a search committee for hiring catechetical personnel if requested.



Parent Connection

REminders, the R.E. newsletter, is distributed on line to parents weekly. *REminders* contains important information, sacramental meetings, and parish news and programs. This is our primary way of communicating to you. Our expectation is that you will read this newsletter weekly.

Catechists are encouraged to introduce themselves to you through a letter at the beginning of the year. Parents can meet their child's catechist at the Opening Liturgy in September. Parents are always invited to speak with the catechist after class or by appointment about concerns or questions. Also, parents are always invited to come into their child's classroom to observe, participate, or assist. Please note: Because we adhere to the Protecting God's Children (Virtus) guidelines, a parent *frequenting* a classroom would need to attend a Protecting God's Children Workshop. The religious education office also needs to be informed concerning any additional adults in the classroom.

General Information

Policy on Non-discrimination

St. Raymond Parish Religious Education Program is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago. St. Raymond Religious Education Program admits participants of any sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin and persons with disabilities to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to participants of this catechetical program.

General Expectations

Each family becomes actively involved in St. Raymond Religious Education Program and Parish in order to model a living, conscious and active Christian faith.

The family reinforces the values and beliefs of the Catholic faith by regular attendance at a weekend Mass.

The parent agrees to actively do all they can to encourage their children to act in accordance with Gospel values.

Appropriate behavior and common respect are presumed and expected from each child.

The REminders newsletter contains time sensitive information regarding classes, meetings, upcoming events, etc. It is your responsibility to read it each week.

We will accept students in classes until the end of July.

Registration on & after August 1st results in your child being placed in our Home Study program.

Admission Policies

In the admission of students to religious education programs in the Archdiocese of Chicago the order of priority shall ordinarily be as follows:

1. Children of registered and participating parishioners
 - a. children from families with children already enrolled
 - b. children transferring from the parish school
 - c. children now reaching school age
 - d. children from families newly moved into the parish
2. Children of non-registered parishioners
 - a. children from families with children already enrolled
 - b. children now reaching school age
 - c. other children seeking to enroll in a formal religious education program

*Parish staff is authorized to make discretionary exceptions to these policies.

Financial Obligations

Participating in a parish community takes on a variety of concrete and necessary involvements. To commit ourselves to a parish family, “a place where we go to church”, also involves a personal participation in the lives of a diverse group of people gathered around the person of Christ. Sharing in parish and religious education activities creates a sense of belonging. Being a parishioner calls each of us to contribute our time, talent and treasure so God’s love reaches all. For some families, the degree and intensity of contributing and participating may understandably vary.

As a parish ministry, religious formation is a high priority. In keeping with the purpose of religious formation of all members of a parish, no family will be refused religious education for financial reasons. No quality program, however, can exist without income. The tuition charged for a child’s religious education does not cover the entire cost of the program. The parish offers a sizeable subsidy to cover staff, materials and resources for a quality formation program. The catechetical leaders are full time salaried professionals. A small stipend is also given to each catechist.

If financial need arises, we encourage families, if possible, to make monthly payments from July to January. If you are unable to pay any of the tuition and fees, because of financial need, a letter of explanation to the program director is necessary. We encourage families to contact your program director (Mary Catherine Nelson) to make other arrangements. All requests are completely confidential.

Please refer to the tuition information (p.12) for specific information on your choice of payment plan. Tuition rates are based on two plans. Plan A: Participating Parishioners & Plan B: Non-Contributing Parishioners or Non-Parishioners. These “plans” indicate methods of payment, not quality of parish involvement.

Payment options

-SMART Tuition is our payment portal for Religious Education Tuition.

-All families participating in religious education at St. Raymond are asked to volunteer. All of our programs are already subsidized by the parish. The home study program is part of the entire religious education program at St. Raymond. We cannot offer these opportunities without the help of all of our families either by volunteering or off setting some of the costs due to insufficient volunteers. We appreciate the commitment you make to the success of religious education at St. Raymond.

2017-2018 Tuition Information
Payments made at GiveCentral.org

Plan A—Participating Parishioner

	Tuition A	Book Fee	Total
1 Student	\$160.00	\$ 35.00	\$195.00
2 Students	\$320.00	\$ 70.00	\$390.00
3 Students	\$480.00	\$105.00	\$585.00
4 Students	\$480.00	\$140.00	\$620.00

Plan B—Non-Participating Parishioner

	Tuition B	Book Fee	Total
1 Student	\$ 380.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 415.00
2 Students	\$ 760.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 830.00
3 Students	\$ 1,140.00	\$105.00	\$1,245.00
4 Students	\$ 1,140.00	\$140.00	\$1,280.00

Catechist Tuition

	Tuition	Total (with Book Fee)
1 Student	\$ 50.00	\$ 85.00
2 Students	\$100.00	\$170.00
3 Students	\$150.00	\$255.00
4 Students	\$150.00	\$290.00

Fees:

Non-Volunteer Fee \$35.00 per family

Sacramental Fees:

 First Eucharist \$35.00 per child

 Confirmation \$40.00 per child

Late Fee (after July30) \$50.00 per family



Class Schedule and Entrances

All sessions are held in St. Raymond School, 300 S. Elmhurst Rd.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE- Grades 1-5

All children should enter and leave through Door 31 of the school.

- Wednesdays from 4:30pm-5:45pm
- Grades 1st and 2nd Exit at door #31 and 3rd 4th and 5th Exit at Door #30 **on Elmhurst Ave.** Parents are strongly encouraged to park in the church lot and walk their children to the school.
- Children will go directly to their classrooms at 4:25pm, waiting outside in the corridor until the catechist is ready. Children are not permitted in an unsupervised classroom.
- **Catechists are not responsible for children until 4:25pm.**
- Dismissal will be at the bell in an orderly fashion from Door 30, except for Grades 1 & 2 who dismiss at 5:40pm through Door 31.
- Parents may meet their children outside the entrance.

JR. HIGH SCHEDULE- Grades 6-8

All children should enter and leave through Door 30, 31 or Door 1 of the school.

- Wednesday evenings from 7:15pm- 8:30 pm.
- Students are to go directly to their classrooms upon arrival. They should wait in the corridor outside the room until the catechist is ready. Students are not permitted in an unsupervised classroom.
- Students are to leave the school *quietly* & promptly at dismissal.
- No skateboards, roller blades or personal hand-held electronic devices are permitted in the classroom.
- Cell phones must be turned off and left on top of the desk so the catechist can see it.
- **Catechists are not responsible for students until 7:10pm.**
- Students will enter the school at Door 30, 31 or Door 1 on Elmhurst Ave.

Safety, Health and Custody Issues

Our goal is to assure the safe transfer of children from parent to the Religious Education Staff. When time is of the essence it is better to be safe rather than sorry.

Arrival and Dismissal Safety

This is an extremely busy time! CARE & CAUTION need to be used for the safety of ALL children.

To provide a safe arrival and dismissal for ALL children, please adhere to these specific safety rules. **BE COURTEOUS & PATIENT** during this drop-off & pickup time.

Arrival Time

- NEVER pull into or block a resident's driveway or leave your car unattended.
- Parents may use the drop off lane on the West side of Elmhurst Ave. at Door #31. If you chose to park in the lot and walk your child up, please be sure to cross the street at the crosswalk at Lincoln and Elmhurst Ave.
- Parents may drop children off in front of school but ONLY on the WEST side of Elmhurst.
- Be sure to wait & see that your child enters the building.
- **NO CHILD SHOULD CROSS IN THE MIDDLE OF ELMHURST AT THE PARKWAY ISLAND! This is very dangerous. Children must cross at the corner crosswalks -- no matter how late they are.**
- Encourage your child to walk-don't run-while crossing.
- If your child is late, they must enter at Door #1 - the Main office of the school, and sign in with the volunteer in the office, for attendance purposes.

Dismissal Time

- Generally parents wait outside the school – or at designated meeting site – to retrieve their child.
- Everyone should stay on the sidewalk at the school and stay off the grassy areas and off the Church steps and handrails.
- Children are not permitted to roll or run down the hilly area outside the classroom windows.
- If a parent is running late, no child will be unattended. We will wait with your child until you arrive. We will try to call the home or cell if a child is concerned or fearful.

Early Dismissal: If it becomes necessary to remove your young person from a session early, please observe the following:

- If you need to pick up your child early, please go to door #1 the Main Office of the school, to sign out your child. Your child will be called down to the office over the PA system. A note to the catechist ahead of time would be a courtesy.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

In case of stormy or severely cold weather, cancellation of classes will be broadcasted on radio stations WGN-AM (720), WAIT-AM (850), and WLS-TV. An email will also be sent to all families. Emergency contact information for each child needs to be on file in the Religious Education Office.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

- **Regular class attendance (unless sickness or extraordinary circumstances warrant) is expected.**
- **Parents are expected to call in their child's absence at 847-253-8600 x134.**
- We are no longer calling home if the child is not reported absent.
- After three absences, the catechist will call home to check with the parent to encourage home study of missed work.
- Children are required to make up the class work missed during absences. Parent/child contacts the catechist for specific information.
- Please do not place sports/practices ahead of religious education.

Safe Child Policy

It is the objective of Saint Raymond's Religious Education to provide an environment safe from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse for those participating in, receiving and providing this ministry.

The Safe Child and Youth Policy is:

1. Volunteers and catechetical staff must abide by "Code of Conduct for Church Personnel" St. Raymond catechetical personnel are required by law to conform to the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (P.A. 81-1007). All staff have a responsibility to study and understand the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services reporting services.
2. All program staff 18 years of age and above - in both teaching and non-teaching positions have undergone a criminal background check. In addition, all program staff 18 years of age and above - in both teaching and non-teaching positions have completed the required Archdiocesan training in the awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse.
3. Adults who have been convicted of a felony regarding physical, sexual, or emotional abuse will not be permitted to volunteer their services in any ministry sponsored activity or program for children or youth.
4. Adults who themselves have been violated physically, sexually or emotionally need the love and respect of the church. It is our expectation that these adults, who are considering working with children or youth have resolved any issues in their past that might negatively impact their work as a volunteer. If these issues are not resolved, we ask that this person seek professional help before volunteering with youth and children.
5. Volunteers and staff should immediately report any suspected or inappropriate behaviors to DCFS, and their supervisor or to the Pastor.
6. In most cases in ministry, volunteers are with groups of children. If an occasion arises when a single volunteer and a single child/youth are in the same room at the same time, the door will remain open and they need to be in clear view.

Student Records and Custody Requirements

- A registration form and a baptismal certificate must be submitted (if child was baptized at a different parish).
- A child must have one year of formal classes before beginning sacrament preparation.
- If parents are divorced or separated, the Religious Education Department presumes that both parents have access to the child's records unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right. **This office must have legal documentation on file for other custody arrangements.**

The catechetical program abides by the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act with regard to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the administrator of the program will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the catechetical records and other program related information regarding the young person. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent (or guardian) to provide an official copy of the court order.

MEDICATIONS

Except in extraordinary circumstances, which must be approved by the **catechetical leader, religious education personnel will not maintain** or administer medication to a child.

HEALTH AND LEARNING ISSUES

In order to minister to each child more efficiently, parents are asked to inform the director through the registration information of any health, learning or behavior issues of their child. A separate written explanation from the parent to the director can provide specific issues and suggestions for helping the child feel successful.

MOVING

- If, during the school year a student moves to another parish or transfers to St. Raymond parish school, please notify the Religious Education Office.
- Upon request, your child's records will be sent to the new Religious Education Office.
- Notify the office of change of address, telephone number or emergency contact as soon as possible.

Religious Education Home Study Option

What Is Home Study?

There is a great similarity between the family and the Church. In fact, since Vatican II, the family has been called the “domestic church.” Both communities share similar visions, tasks and responsibilities. Both family and Church nurture, support, educate and challenge their members to grow to their full potential.

Long before your child was old enough for any formal religious education program, she/he was already introduced to our loving God through you. Indeed, you are uniquely able to teach your child about the faith into which he/she was baptized. As parent, you are actually mandated by the Church to ensure your child’s deepening faith formation by enrolling them in a parish Religious Education Program (Catechesis Tradendae #37).

In some situations, parents may choose to provide formal and systematic catechesis for their children at home. As part of the St. Raymond Parish Religious Education Program Home Study option, parents can focus on providing solid intellectual and moral information as well as nurturing their child’s spiritual life in the context of the home environment and personal schedule.

If you decide to choose the home study option, your family remains an integral part of the RE Program in every way. You are always welcome to call on the director or the grade level coordinator for any help or materials. You will receive the REminders newsletter, invitations to meetings, parish events or service projects, opportunities to volunteer, etc. through website or email newsletter. These offerings support our home religious education parish connection.

Home Study Guidelines

St. Raymond De Penafort Parish, in keeping with all the applicable Archdiocesan policies and procedures, has basic expectations that need to be met if you choose the home study program.

1. The parent and the program director will begin the process with a conversation regarding mutual responsibilities and expectations.
2. The parent agrees to follow the curriculum set forth by the parish using the texts and resources provided for his/her child only. There are no group home study programs.
3. The parent accepts the responsibility to have their child complete review pages and online chapter reviews www.bemydisciples.com have the scores emailed to m.tuchner@st-raymond.org
4. The parent accepts responsibility to provide their child with the community dimension of catechesis. Sharing faith with peers, Sunday worship and interaction with the whole parish community at parish and RE events is essential.
5. When the child is preparing for the celebration of a sacrament, the parent agrees to participate in the sacramental adult formation meetings, liturgical experiences and events.
6. Parents are expected to continue their own faith development as they model faith in

- action for their child demonstrating the importance of their faith
7. The parent agrees to pay the required home study tuition fee (based on parishioner/non-parishioner rate), plus book and sacramental fees.
 8. As part of the RE program, the volunteer commitment applies.

The Church supports parents to provide their children with formal religious education. The Church invites each parent to be confident that they possess a fundamental competence because they bring the tenderness and respect as parents to this privilege. The Church also encourages parents to continue their own faith formation by attending talks, retreats, or through spiritual reading.

Discipline

Meaning of the Word Discipline

It is no mere coincidence that the words *disciple* and *discipline* share the same root meaning: “to learn. Good discipline is guidance toward right behavior. Christian religious education’s goal is to teach the child to internalize the values and principles of Jesus and to grow in his/her relationship with God. Discipline is an ongoing process in which the external rules give way to self-control.

The goal of external boundaries and rules is self-discipline not punishment.

Discipline allows all the energy of the learner to be focused on learning. Discipline sets the stage for success in life. Self-discipline enables children to grow both spiritually and psychologically. **Appropriate behavior and courtesy are presumed and expected at every level** of a child’s maturity. Sowing the message of salvation in the hearts of today’s children is especially challenging and frequently frustrating because of the impact of family and culture.

Starting Off Right

The Religious Education Program’s approach to discipline in the class session is based on positive, respectful procedures.

At the beginning of the year, the catechist will present clear behavior expectations for class management. The catechist will:

- discuss with children appropriate rules for class behavior
- inform children of the consequences of inappropriate behavior
- post rules in class so children see and are reminded
- use positive reinforcements to remind children of appropriate Christian behavior
- inform parent of continued misconduct

Unacceptable Behaviors

In order to maintain an environment to learn and foster Catholic values, certain behaviors, are deemed unacceptable. These unacceptable behaviors include (but are not limited to) the following:

- disrespect for the rights of self and others
- disrespectful behavior towards catechists, substitutes or aides
- talking in class at inappropriate times
- passing notes, texting, emailing and distracting others
- gum chewing or eating candy in class without permission
- continual tardiness, non-participation and inattentiveness
- dishonesty in any form (lying, cheating, plagiarism)
- inappropriate language
- fighting
- intimidation in all forms (includes bullying, threats, slander)
- continued disruption in class
- physical abuse of property, including textbooks
- non-compliance with program policies

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

Repeated failure to show respect or to observe policies, procedures or regulations of the program will result in disciplinary action.

1. The catechist will first attempt to work for change with the young person.
2. In the event that Step 1 is not successful the catechist will contact the Level Coordinator.
3. In the event that the situation is not remedied, the parent/guardian and young person will meet with the program director and the catechist.
4. If all of the above fails, a recommendation for withdrawal from the program will be made.

“Emotionally, children are healthiest when they have clear boundaries and evidence of unconditional love when they cross those boundaries.”

The Discipline Guide for Children’s Ministry by Jody Capehart, Gordon West and Becki West.

Curriculum

Grades 1-6— Be My Disciples

RCL - Resources for Christian Living; Allen, Texas; 2006

Doctrine: Each year four units correlating to the Catechism of the Catholic Church are developed according to the particular grade level.

- We Believe—Creed
- We Worship — Liturgy and Sacraments
- We Live —Morality
- We Pray — Prayer and Spirituality.

Sacred Scripture: is in each lesson with special Scripture chapters in each unit to deepen the child's understanding and challenge them to live the biblical message.

Liturgy: Children are introduced to the rich and varied tradition of the Church's prayer and worship including seasonal lessons to help children and families explore and celebrate these feasts of the Church year.

Prayer and Learning: In addition to the texts mentioned, each grade level has specific prayers or topics regarding our Church doctrine to be learned. Our expectation is that these prayers and topics are reinforced regularly at home.

Grade 1: Children at this age are learning to talk to God from their heart and learning formal prayers of the Church, such as The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, and Hail Mary. The Rosary is introduced. Activity: Advent Adventure.

Grade 2: Children in second grade are preparing for the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. Prayers: Act of Sorrow (Act of Contrition), Prayer responses of the Mass, an introduction to the 10 Commandments. Activity: Eucharist Enrichment Day.

Grade 3: Apostles Creed, Glory Be, and development of the 10 Commandments, in addition to all previously listed prayers, Activity: Christmas Story.

Grade 4 Beatitudes, mastering 10 Commandments, Prayer of St. Francis, all previously listed prayers.

Grade 5: Stations of the Cross, Seven Sacraments, all previously listed prayers. Activity: Living Stations.

Grade 6: Blessings, Psalms of praise, Prayer of Peace from St. Francis, all previously listed prayers. Activity: Retreat experience.

Grade 7 and Grade 8

Young adolescents' lives are both complex and challenging. There is something special about the way young people embrace their faith; once they trust, they readily bring themselves to a point where they allow their lives to be touched more deeply.



These moments are experiences of light and hope. To provide young people with a genuine opportunity to share their stories and listen to others in faith, the Junior High religion curriculum utilizes discussion, choice of topics, prayer and service to others.

Grade 7: Students will choose to do two of the three courses offered.

- Christ in the New Testament
- Christ Reveals God's Mystery
- Christ in the Liturgy

These utilize a balanced approach in the catechumenal model that invites, teaches and challenges young people to a deeper conversion to Jesus. Faithful to the teachings of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and achieves the goals of catechesis from the National Directory of Catechesis. Incorporates a learner-centered catechesis that applies the latest educational best practices, brain research and faith development. Nurtures Catholic identity by addressing the Six Tasks of Catechesis. Integrates Church History into every lesson. Supports Catholic Schools in meeting the National Standards and Benchmarks.

Grade 8: the students will do one 6 week mini-course on Church History, (everyone will do the same mini-course) and the rest of the year will be spent on Confirmation preparation.

Church History

- Make disciples of All Nations
- The Holy Spirit: A Scripture Story
- Reformation & Renewal
- Exploration & Evangelization
- The Missionary Church: A Scripture Story
- The Second Vatican Council...and Beyond

Young people and their parents of St. Raymond Parish discern if they will receive the sacrament of Confirmation. All sacraments are a gift from God. But like any other gift, it must be willingly accepted. The acceptance and confirming of the gift of faith at Baptism is a life-long process, which is supported by a community of believers.

Participation in **Sunday Liturgy is expected.**

Sacramental Catechesis

Preparation for the Sacrament of the Eucharist

Parent's Responsibility and Blessing

- “Children’s preparation for the first reception of the Eucharist begins in the home.”
- **Weekly family participation at the celebration of the Eucharist is one of the necessary times for parents to role model to their children.** “Children who participate with their family in the Mass experience the mystery of the Eucharist in an initial way and will gradually learn to join with the assembly in prayer.”
- Parents own attitude toward the Eucharist each weekend significantly influences the attitude of the child and teaches its value more profoundly than any teacher could ever do.
- Between the ages of six and eight, the child becomes intellectually, psychologically, and spiritually ready to meet Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist.
(Quotations taken from the National Directory for Catechesis, 2005, pgs.126-127)
- **Preparation for the Sacrament of Eucharist is a two year process, beginning with the first grade, or first level of learning about the church, traditions, God, life of Jesus, prayers and sacraments.**
- Emphasis on the second year of religious education classes prepares the child to come to the Lord’s Table and to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Family, catechists, priests and the parish community are involved in this preparation through prayer, support, and instruction.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Second Grade Preparation

Parent's Responsibility and Blessing

- “Catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation first depends on the person’s acknowledgement of God’s faithful love, of the existence of sin, of the capacity to commit sin, and of God’s power to forgive sin and reconcile the sinner with himself and with the Church.”
- The experience of forgiveness and love in the family prepares the child to learn about the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- “Catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation helps the child to acknowledge God’s unconditional love for all of us.”
- “Catechesis helps children to recognize the presence of good and evil in the world and their personal capacity for both.”
- “Catechesis helps children explore the meaning of the symbols, gestures, prayers, and scripture of the Rite of Reconciliation.”
- The formation of a child’s conscience is the primary responsibility of the parent.

“Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children.” (Quotation taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2223)

(All other quotations taken from the National Directory for Catechesis, 2005, pgs.135-136)



Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Parent's Blessings & Challenges

- Suddenly (or so it seems) a child becomes a young adolescent. At this exciting and often challenging stage, parental love and support are especially necessary. The focus in the teen's self-discovery process is the **recommitment to the call to live more deeply as a Christian disciple.**
- Through the sacrament of Confirmation, the young person affirms that, with the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, **they want to live a Christian life as a Catholic, bearing witness to Christ in the world.**
- The reception of the sacrament presupposes **a developing understanding** of the responsibility to bring good news to the poor and oppressed, bring comfort to the sick, uphold the sacredness of life and work for justice and peace in society.
- "In the United States the age of Confirmation in the Latin Church for children and young people varies from diocese to diocese; it can be designated between the age of discretion through around age sixteen years."
- At St. Raymond, the sacrament is currently celebrated in the fall of Freshman year. Parents and young people are encouraged to make this decision together in prayer, honest reflection and discernment. The young person, with parental guidance, needs to freely choose to confirm the promises of belief made at their Baptism.

(Quotations taken from the National Directory for Catechesis, 2005 pg.122)

Components of 7th grade Preparation:

- Families begin the discussion and choice of a sponsor for Confirmation.
- Young person participates in an afternoon of reflection.
- Service to others is part of a Christian life. Service projects are expected. 20 hrs/yr.

Components of 8th grade Preparation:

- Mandatory parent formation meeting.
- Attendance and active participation in Confirmation Retreat.
- Young person writes a letter to the pastor expressing their desire to be confirmed.





Sacramental Calendar 2017-18

Eucharist

Wednesday, October 4, 2017 **Parent Meeting #1 @ 7:30PM** in Community Room
Sunday, October 15, 2017, **Candidacy Mass @ 9:30AM** in Church
Wednesday, February 7, 2018, **Parent Meeting #2 @ 7:30PM** in Community Room
Sunday, February 25, 2018, **Demonstration Liturgy @11:15AM** in Church

Practice for First Eucharist (Practices all start at 6:30pm in the Gym)

- April 24th for the April 28th celebration
- April 26th for the April 29th 11:15am Mass Celebration
- May 1st for the May 5th celebration
- May 3rd for the May 6th 11:15am Mass Celebration

Reconciliation

Wednesday, Nov. 29th, 2017 **Parent Meeting @ 7:30PM** in Community Room
Sacrament of Individual Reconciliation (2nd Grade)
Saturday, February 24th, 2018, 11:00AM **OR** 1:00PM in Church **OR**
Saturday, March 3rd, 2017, 11:00AM in Church

Confirmation

Wednesday, April 18, 2018, **Confirmation Parent Meeting** in Community Room @ 7:30PM
Sunday, April 22, 2018, **Confirmation Candidacy Mass** 11:15AM in Church

Thursday night prior to Confirmation, **Student & Sponsor Practice** (Nov 8th, 6:30pm)

Saturday, November 10, 2018 at 11am, **Sacrament of Confirmation**