

Religious Education



St. Andrew Catholic Church
One Lord, One Eucharist, One Parish.

9950 NW 29th Street, Coral Springs, FL. 33065



To know Him, to love Him and to serve Him

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Parish Religious Education Coordinator

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Welcome! We are so excited to be part of your child's journey of faith this year. Please use this Handbook to reference throughout the year. You will find our policies, contact information, Curriculum information, and more. You can also keep up with what is happening by visiting our parish website at www.standrewparish.org and reading our newsletters from Flocknote.

ADMISSION

It is the goal of Saint Andrew parish to provide religious education for every child in the Church. In rare cases, the parish may not invite a student into the program because it does not have the resources to meet the child's individual needs. In such cases, the parish will assist the parents in providing catechesis for their child, especially in preparation for the sacraments.

In matters of admission to the program or the reception of a sacrament, the final decision belongs to the Pastor. No person on the grounds of race, color, or national origin is excluded or otherwise subject to discrimination in receiving services at the Religious Education Program.

REGISTRATION

Registration for new students is initiated in the spring for the following catechetical year. Hours and dates are announced in the parish bulletin. Registration is conducted on a first-come, first-served basis. It is advised that registration forms be returned as soon as possible to ensure that you get the class, day, and time that is most convenient for your family.

New students transferring from another parish, Catholic School, or Religious Education program must present a letter or report card before accepting and placing in our program.

◆ Bring the Following Items to Registration

- Baptismal Certificate
- Birth Certificate
- Transfer Records
- Emergency Contact Information
- Parish Registration Number or Envelope Number.

◆ Re-Registration Requirements

Students currently enrolled in the program must re-register in the spring for placement for the following year. These re-registration forms are mailed before our opening registration to new students. This gives our currently enrolled students priority in selecting class day and time. Prompt return of the forms will also assist us in planning for the following year.

◆ Registrations Fees

- \$150.00 per family (registered parishioners)
- \$ 250.00 per family (not registered and all others)
- \$25.00 late fee per family (after August 15th)

If you have any questions or problems concerning the payment of fees, you are invited to come and discuss this with the Coordinator of Religious Education. Our ministry is to spread the message of Jesus to young people, do not let finances keep your child from hearing God's Word!

No Child will be refused due to financial hardship.

Payment plans and alternative payment methods are available.

◆ Changing Class Days

At the time of registration, you chose the day and time that your child will attend class. We hope that you made your selection according to your schedule and your child's schedule.

We won't be able to make changes once the placement has been assigned.

CURRICULUM

Our goal is to introduce and re-introduce young people to the person of Jesus and to reveal the person of Christ. The best way to do that is through the Liturgy-based Catechetical Program. We believe that the Mass is our primary form of Catechesis and is also how we hand on the Catholic tradition of the Church and that all other catechesis should flow from it. Also, a Liturgy-based catechetical program accomplishes this goal. The sacramental program will use age-appropriate Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation books.

◆ Sacramental Preparation

A sacrament involves a relationship with Jesus and presumes faith. Readiness, not age or grade, is the criterion for the reception of a sacrament. Before a student can be presented for sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Communion, or Confirmation, a student must attend religious education classes **for a minimum of two consecutive years.** Further information will be given at the start of the year.

◆ Parent Formation Meetings

Parent formation meetings are intended to provide faith formation and faith sharing for all parents in the program. These are scheduled once a month. Parent sacramental meetings for First Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation are only for parents with students in a sacramental year. All requirements regarding the reception of the sacraments will be discussed at these meetings. A schedule of these meetings will be given out on the first day of class. Attendance is required.

◆ Student Evaluations

Homework and assessments are meant to evaluate the student's grasp of the material presented in class. Students are responsible for making up any missed homework assignments and tests. Would you please go over this information with your child?

◆ Required Books

Each student must bring their backpack to each session with the textbook, workbook, folder, etc. If your child should lose or ruin the book, you must buy a replacement for \$50.00.

◆ Identification Card

All students will be provided a lanyard with an ID card at the beginning of the year. It is required that all students wear their ID badges to all classes. If the ID card is lost or misplaced, parents must purchase a replacement card at the office for \$5.00.

Special Needs:

All children are welcome to attend Religious Education classes, learn about their faith, and prepare for the reception of the sacraments. Our Religious Education staff and volunteers are happy to discuss any accommodations for those children with special needs and implement individual religious education plans, focusing on providing the optimal learning environment for all the children in our parish.

ATTENDANCE

◆ Mass Attendance

Going to Mass is a gift and a serious obligation for all Catholics. We ask that you make every effort to attend Mass each Saturday evening or Sunday.

◆ Class Attendance

Religious Education classes for Kindergarten through 12th grade meet weekly for one hour and fifteen minutes. This is a short time to teach our students about our faith; therefore, perfect attendance is our goal.

On the occasion that your child will not be able to attend class, we ask that you abide by the following protocol:

- Contact the Religious Education Office before class. **954-905-6324** mgomez@sacccs.org
- Obtain the child's makeup work upon the student's return to class.
- Return makeup assignments to the student's catechist.

It is the responsibility of parents to be aware of their children's attendance status. **We ask that your child have no more than three absences per year.** A student with more than three absences in a sacramental year Communion I, Communion II, Confirmation I, Confirmation II, and RCIA may be asked to delay the reception of the sacrament until such time that the student in the judgment of the administration is sufficiently prepared. The student may not be ready to move on to the next grade level in all other grades. Parents are strongly encouraged to keep all absences to a minimum.

◆ Cancellation of Classes

If there is inclement weather or some other serious reason for canceling classes, we will observe the same regulations as Broward County Schools. Parents are asked to follow the radio, Internet, and TV announcements.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The safety of children being picked up and dropped off is of paramount concern. To this end, we expect you to review the following rules with your child and for you and your child to observe them at all times.

Please make sure anyone else picking up or dropping off your child is aware of these procedures. All students must wear their ID cards at all times. Parents, guardians, and other persons mentioned in the emergency forms must always be prepared to show an official photo ID.

◆ Arrival and Dismissal

Students should arrive no earlier than five minutes before class begins. We cannot provide supervision of students before this period. **To ensure the safety of our students, parents need to wait with the student until the school's main doors are open. Do not drop off the students.** Arrival and dismissal will be addressed at the parent orientation meeting.

◆ Late Arrival

Every effort should be made so the students arrive on time for class. A student who is not in class when the doors open is considered late. The student must pick up a "late slip" from the front desk and present it to the catechist.

Three late passes will be considered one absence.

A student arriving more than 30 minutes late for a class will be marked absent.

◆ No Early Dismissal

We will not release students early unless they are ill because we have a limited number of sessions and a great deal of material to cover. **Sports and other extracurricular activities are not an excuse for missing class.**

◆ Late Pick Up

After a reasonable amount of time (approximately 10 minutes after class has ended), if a student has not been picked up at the dismissal time, the student will be brought to the Religious Education Office. At that point, parents are called. If parents don't respond, the emergency contact is called and asked to pick up the student. If one hour has passed and there has been no communication with a parent or emergency contact person, the Coral Springs Police Department will be called to intervene.

GENERAL POLICIES

◆ Discipline Policy

Catechists are volunteers who give their time and effort to benefit the students. They have limited time in which to teach their lesson. They are not expected to deal with students who do not plan to cooperate.

The learning environment is sacred. Any student who creates a problem in class will be removed from class and brought to the Religious Education Office. A telephone call will notify the parents or a written conduct referral will be mailed home. A conference with parents may be requested at that time. It is the responsibility of the parents to correct any discipline problem if the child is to remain in the program.

Students using obscene language, physical violence, disrespect to classmates and teachers, theft, or vandalism will be brought to the Religious Education Office. Parents will be notified immediately to come and pick up their students.

Any student found leaving the grounds during their religious education classes or whose behavior or attitude deprives others of religious education may be asked to leave the program.

◆ Visitors

A student may not bring friends to the class who are not enrolled in our program.

◆ Electronics

Students are not allowed to bring electronic games or toys to class. **These items will be taken from students and returned after classes have ended.** If your child must bring a phone to class, it must be turned off during class. If a student has a phone in class and is used for text messaging or rings, it will be confiscated and returned at the end of class.

◆ Dress Code

Students are expected to dress appropriately when attending religious education classes. Clothing that is too short or tight and visible underwear is considered inappropriate.

The dress code is casual; however, be mindful of where we are. Students are taken to the Church at various times during class; therefore, dressing for class should be aware of this.

Shorts may be worn, but they must be up to the knee. No tank tops or half shirts, no t-shirts advertising drugs, alcohol, or cigarette products, or those displaying profanity, offensive or suggestive words will not be allowed. No baseball caps may be worn to class. No sneakers or skates are permitted on the premises. **A parent will be called if your child doesn't comply with the dress code.**

◆ Parental Communication with the Religious Education Program

Persons with concerns about a catechist should first attempt to address the matter with the catechist. The parent should contact the Parish Coordinator of Religious Education only after such failed attempts. If the parent continues to be dissatisfied, the parents should contact the Director of Faith Formation and then the Pastor.

◆ Confidentiality

Catechists and religious education staff will keep confidential information entrusted to us if no one's life, health, or safety is at stake. Parents will be promptly notified of the teacher's concerns in these cases.

◆ Changes of Address or Telephone Number

Our records must be kept up to date. Therefore, the Religious Education Office must be notified immediately of any change of address, email, telephone, or emergency numbers.

◆ Use of Student Information and Pictures

The Religious Education Program reserves the right to use student pictures in publications. Any parent who does not wish their child's photo used must make sure they signed the form at registration time.

◆ Custodial Rights

In the case of divorced parents, the Religious Education Program will interact with the parent who has legal custody of the child in matters of absence, lateness, dismissal, discipline, records, authorizations, etc. Full rights apply to both parents unless a court order expressly revokes these rights. The parents are responsible for providing evidence of such court order.

◆ Public Display of Affection

The Catholic Religious Education Program promotes friendship, charity, kindness, love, and respect for self and others. However, inappropriate displays of affection, such as kissing or embracing, which is more than simple friendship, are not permitted in the Religious Education Program. The administration reserves the right to determine appropriate behavior in a Catholic Religious Education Program.

◆ Harassment

We are committed to providing a religious education program environment free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, our parish will not tolerate harassment of employees, volunteers, or students in the Religious Education Program-sponsored events. Such conduct is immoral and illegal and will not be tolerated.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, and or visual, that is based on a person's protected status, such as sex, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status, or another protected group status. The Religious Education program will not tolerate harassing conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Transgression of this rule may result in dismissal from the Religious Education Program.

If any employee, volunteer, or student feels they have experienced or witnessed harassment, that person must immediately notify the Coordinator of Religious Education. The Archdiocese forbids retaliation against anyone who reported harassment.

◆ Weapons

Any person carrying a weapon onto parish property or off-site event sponsored by Saint Andrew Parish poses a clear and present danger to others. For this policy, a threat is defined to be a gun, knife, or any other article which could be used to cause injury. Any student found with an offensive weapon will be asked to leave the Religious Education Program.

Law enforcement authorities will be notified. Items that simulate a firearm or lethal weapon will be perceived as threatening the student or other's safety and well-being. Parents will be notified immediately. Transgression of this rule may result in dismissal from the Religious Education Program.

◆ Substance Abuse Policy

The use or possession of illegal drugs or illegal mood-altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs by any student on parish property or while attending or participating in any religious education program-sponsored activity is forbidden. Transgression of this rule may result in dismissal from the Religious Education Program. Any student selling drugs on parish property or events will be expelled. All Archdiocesan Religious Education Program is committed to a drug-free environment.

◆ Search and Seizure

The Coordinator of Religious Education or their delegate in our Religious Education Program has access to the handbags, desks, cars, or any object brought onto the campus of the Religious Education Program. It may remove anything illegal or contrary to the program policy.

◆ Reporting Physical/Sexual Abuse

State law requires a teacher or administrator who has reasonable suspicions that sexual abuse has occurred to report this to the Division of Children and Family Services.

◆ Cooperation with Legal Authorities

Our policy is to cooperate with local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers contacting the Religious Education Program during any criminal investigation. The Religious Education Program will attempt to notify the parents of any student seeking to be interviewed in the course of any criminal investigation on the parish premises unless directed by an investigator or law enforcement officer; the contrary, which is usually the case in investigations involving sexual or physical abuse.

◆ Student Withdrawal from Religious Education Program

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the Religious Education Program. The Church considers the parents to be the primary catechists of their children. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the Religious Education Program Administration reserves the right to require a student's withdrawal.

◆ Religious Education Program Policy and Administration of Religious Education Right to Amend

Any student action that is not in keeping with the philosophy/objective of the Saint Andrew Religious Education Program is subject to the administration's review and may lead the parish to dismiss the student from the program. Since situations that were not foreseen when writing this Handbook can arise, the religious education program reserves the right to initiate, change, or modify the policies as needed. Parents and students will be notified of any amendments.

The Coordinator of Religious Education, the Director of Faith Formation, and the Pastor are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rules for cause at their discretion.

◆ **Purpose and use of Handbook**

This Handbook has been prepared to benefit all who participate in the Religious Education Program of Saint Andrew. It exists to help foster the efficient operation of this program by providing pertinent information. The Religious Education Handbook is not intended and should not be considered to create any additional rights for students, parents, or guardians. In appropriate circumstances, the Coordinator of Religious Education has the discretion to take action. This Handbook is subject to change at any time when determined to be necessary by the Coordinator of Religious Education, Director of Faith Formation, and the Pastor.

Would you please pray for the Religious Education program? We thank the Lord for all the volunteers, families, ministers, and the supportive community of Saint Andrew, who helps us and supports us with a prayer to share the message to all entrusted to us. May the Holy Spirit guide us in this great journey of faith!

SCHEDULE

Session	Day	Time	Grades
1	Tuesday Afternoon	4:30 pm to 5:45 pm.	1-2-3-4-5 Communion I & II
2	Tuesday Evening	6:30 pm. to 7:45 pm	7-8-9-10-11-12 Confirmation I & II Communion and Confirmation II
5	Saturday Morning	9:15 am to 10:30 am	K-1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8 Communion I & II Confirmation MS I & II

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." Psalm 118:1

