



# **St. Patrick Religious Education Program**

## **Parent Handbook 2017/2018**

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## **Parent Letter**

Dear Parents,

Religious education is a life-long process and it is the responsibility of the entire Christian community. It is my firm belief that it takes place within the parish community but nothing will ever replace your authority and your example. Bring your children to the classroom and come as a family to our Sunday Eucharist.

The Religious Education program at St. Patrick Church is part of a bigger ministry called Parents Raising Families of Faith (PRFF). The PRFF ministry reaches all families of St. Patrick's whether they have students in the public school system, Montini, or Homeschool. The goal of this ministry is to help our parish families deepen their parish life through spirituality, engagement, encouragement, and community. To know Him, Love Him and Serve Him.

Thank you for making your Family an important part of St. Patrick Church!

Bonnie Curry, CRE  
St. Patrick Church

### Admission

Our Religious Education Program admits students of registered parents of St. Patrick Parish. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of our education and admission policies.

Parents who choose to place their children in our program make a decision that involves commitment and sacrifice. The religious education of their children is a partnership between the parents and those who they choose to assist in the Catholic education of their children. It is a program requirement that families not only attend RE classes, but also attend Mass on the weekend. Final approval of enrollment will be the responsibility of the Pastor of St. Patrick Parish.

Classroom assignments are made on the basis of the best interest of all children at a grade level. Therefore, **we regret we cannot honor individual parent requests for specific teachers. Enrollment is on a first come, first serve basis. If classes reach capacity, you will be notified.**

### Admission Policy for Students

Tuition must be paid or payments arranged before September 1 of the school year for the student's name to be added to a grade level roster for the subsequent school year.

### Arrival and Dismissal

Students **are not to arrive more than 10 minutes prior to the start of class time.** This must be enforced due to security reasons, as teachers are not in their classrooms before that time. Students should be in their class five minutes before class begins. Students should enter the school through the front doors only.

Grades K – 3rd **must be picked up by an adult (or a sibling over 12) from their classrooms.** NO student will be allowed to leave their classroom without an adult (or sibling) coming into the classroom to pick them up. This is for the safety of our children.

**\* NO CHILD SHOULD BE DROPPED OFF CURBSIDE OR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET.** Please park your car along the street or in the Parish parking lot next to the Parish Center. The lot between church and school is reserved for catechists.

### Asbestos

Montini Primary School is inspected for asbestos according to the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act and the EPA. The building complies with AHERA. The RE office has an asbestos management report on file from the school.

### Attendance

Since even occasional absence constitutes a handicap to the pupil in his/her progress, we expect cooperation in keeping absence at a minimum. Parents are required to report absences by calling the RE Office at 815-385-2959. Since tardiness interferes with a pupil's progress and is a disturbance to the other students and teacher, every effort should be made to be punctual. There will be a lesson assigned for completion at home for the occasional absence. If a student misses 30% or more of the scheduled classes for the year, the Pastor will be notified of their attendance by the CRE. It will be the Pastor's decision on whether or not the student will be able to advance to the next grade level.

**The expectation of this program is for families to not only attend classes but also attend Mass on the weekend (Saturday night or Sunday morning). We also encourage the use of the weekly offering envelopes. This does not have to be a monetary donation. The children can offer special works or prayers for others and write them on the envelope.**

### Books/Workbooks

All books/workbooks are the responsibility of the students. Lost textbooks will be replaced for an **additional** fee. Students in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> grades are issued one book (for two years). At the end of the year, the 6<sup>th</sup> graders turn in their books. The books are handed back to them at the start of the next year.

### Cellular Telephones/Electronics

The possession of cellular telephones is allowed, however, the **phones must be turned off during class time.** Also, no radios, tape recorders, Walkman, CD players, electronic games or toys are to be brought to class. This will be strictly enforced.

### Change of Address/E-mail/Phone Number

Please inform the Religious Education office of any changes in address, email address or telephone number for your family. A majority of our communication is done by email, please make sure we always have proper information.

## Curriculum

Textbooks used by St. Patrick's Religious Education Program are currently on the Bishop's approved list for curriculum. We may choose to supplement these textbooks with other materials under the direction of the Coordinator of Religious Education.

K – 5	We Believe (Catholic Identity)	Sadlier
6 -- 7	The Catholic Connections Handbook	Saint Mary's Press
8	Decision Point, Matthew Kelly	Dynamic Catholic

## Curriculum Focus

Kindergarten	God Made the World
Grade 1	God Loves Us
Grade 2	Jesus Shares God's Life
Grade 3	We Are The Church
Grade 4	God's Law Guides Us
Grade 5	We Meet Jesus in the Sacraments
Grade 6	God, Revelation, & Faith/Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit/The Church
Grade 7	Liturgy and Sacraments/Christian Morality and Justice/Prayer
Grade 8	Finding Your Mission

The textbook series that we use continues to build each year completing all of the fundamentals for a solid Catholic education. **Therefore, it is very important that your child attend Religious Education classes for the entire length of the Program in order to have a comprehensive understanding of their faith.**

## Conferences

Any parent who wishes a conference with a particular teacher or CRE may do so by calling the Religious Education office to arrange an appointment. The number is 815-385-2959.

## Courtesy

Students are expected to be on time, have their assigned duties finished, to be attentive and respectful, to treat other students and teachers with dignity and respect and to assist in keeping the classroom in order. Any student damaging the property of Montini Catholic School and/or any property of a student of Montini Catholic School will receive a phone call home to the parents from the CRE. The parents will become financially responsible for those damages.

## Days Off

There are no Religious Education classes on days the public schools are closed for State and Federal Holidays. Please check the Religious Education Calendar provided for days when Religious Education is not in session.

## Discipline

Because we expect all faculty, students and parents to deal with one another in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation, disciplinary problems should not be a major concern. However, should a problem arise which cannot be dealt with effectively during class time, students will be sent to the CRE. If the problem recurs, parents will be notified. Since this is a Christian environment, every student and teacher should enjoy coming to class. Absolutely no bullying, fighting or disrespect will be tolerated.

## Dress Code

Students are expected to arrive for Religious Education classes dressed in school appropriate attire. No low rider pants, mid-drift bearing clothes, or "skin showing" clothing will be allowed. If a student is dressed inappropriately, they will be sent home. Sunday attire is encouraged for Mass, Reconciliation and Adoration. We ask that boys remove hats when they are in the school building or church.

## Drugs and Alcohol

Students are prohibited from using or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at Religious Education Classes and/or Religious Education functions. The student's parents, the Pastor, and the Police will be notified immediately upon detection of alcohol and/or drugs.

## Emergency Closings

If School Districts 15 or 156 are closed because of snow days, the Religious Education classes scheduled for the day will be canceled. If weather turns treacherous in the middle of the day, an emergency phone tree will be activated to notify families by phone. The Religious Education office will also send an email to all families.

### Gangs

Our schools are a gang free environment. This includes: wearing, possessing or using in any manner any symbol/sign or item commonly associated with membership in/or affiliation with a gang or secret society.

### Inspection Policy

In order to provide the students and volunteers with a safe and healthy environment, the CRE reserves the right, in their discretion, to conduct inspections of school property, and the property of students and visitors on school property.

### Medication

If a student requires prescription medication during class hours, the parents must come to the school office and deliver the dosage to their child. No student is allowed to bring aspirins, cough drops and other over the counter medication to class.

### Parish Membership

All RE families must be REGISTERED members of St. Patrick Church and **are expected to attend weekly Mass and Mass for Holy Days of Obligation.**

### Phone Calls

Teachers are not permitted to receive calls during class time. Parents who wish to contact teachers regarding their child may do so through the RE office. Arrangements will be made to have the teacher return your call. If it is necessary for you to contact your child during class time, please call Bonnie Curry, CRE at 815-307-2398. Please identify yourself if you need to leave a message.

### Registration Fees / Tuition

No child may attend our Religious Education classes until a registration form is filled out and returned to the RE office. Tuition is non-refundable if you withdraw your child from our program after August 16, because we have already purchased the books and materials for the students. Any family needing tuition assistance because of financial hardship should contact the CRE before RE classes start. This information is kept in the strictest confidence between the CRE, her assistant and the Pastor.

**Note: It is your responsibility to notify the RE office of financial hardship and inability to pay. Any family not keeping with the terms of the contract will not be accepted for the next Religious Education year. Any tuition payments received for the next school year will first be applied to any outstanding balances.**

### Sacramental Programs

The Sacramental programs, including First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation, are separate from our regular Religious Education Program and include members of St. Patrick Church whose children attend parochial school as well as our Parish RE Program. We follow diocesan guidelines administering these sacraments.

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are generally received in the second grade, provided the student had been involved in a religious education program or attended a parochial school since the first grade.

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be administered in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students must have the necessary preparation for the reception of this sacrament and must have attended religious education or parochial school for two consecutive years prior to their sacramental year. Please contact the Religious Education office for details.

There is a separate mailing for the fees and registration of the reception of the sacraments. All fees must be paid before your child can make his/her sacrament. No one will be turned away due to financial hardship; however, it is your responsibility to notify the RE Office of such circumstances. In addition to being enrolled in our Sacramental preparation classes, you must also be attending Religious Education classes, or parochial school.

**Note: If your child is in need of a sacrament (out-of-sequence) it is your responsibility to contact the CRE to make special arrangements.**

### Safety

When picking up your child from class, we ask that parents show extra care entering and leaving the parking lots. At the Montini Primary School (St. Patrick's) parents are to use the front door only to enter the building. We do ask that you do not enter the building until five minutes before classes are ending. Standing in the hallways outside the classroom tends to be very disruptive to the students and teachers.

### Service Projects

During Advent we collect items for the less fortunate. During Lent we ask the children to earn money to give to Imabridge Africa. We are living our faith by examples of the Corporal Works of Mercy.

### Sickness or Injury

If a child becomes ill during class times, a parent or designated emergency contact will be notified. If emergency numbers change during the school year, please notify the RE office immediately. A child who is sick or injured cannot remain in class.

### Snacks

All snacks or treats brought to class must be store-bought only. No homemade treats will be passed out to students. This is done at the suggestion of the McHenry County Health Department to reduce the spread of illness. Please make sure you detail any allergy information on the registration form.

### Stewardship

Stewardship is what we do with what God gives us. "How can I repay the Lord for all the good he has done for me? (Ps. 117:12) The St. Patrick RE Program encourages all students to participate in stewardship. In addition to our Program sponsored service projects, we encourage all students to serve the Lord in the many liturgy roles we offer. Students in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade or above can be Altar Servers. Students in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade or above can be Lectors at Mass. Students 12 years of age and older can volunteer to help with VBS. Students may also volunteer to help at parish events and in other ministries within our parish. **Please use the weekly envelope to list your offering to God.** The envelopes can be placed in the collection basket or given to Father at the Offertory when he calls children forward.

### Trips

Whenever a class leaves the parish premises for a special event, community service activity, etc., a form requesting permission and medical form requesting insurance information will be sent to the families in advance. Failure to return the forms will prohibit your child from attending any trips.

### Volunteering

The heart of our Religious Education Program is the volunteers. Our program cannot run without them. Please offer your time and talent when you complete your registration forms or call the RE office at 815-385-2959.

### Withdrawals

Parents should notify the RE office as soon as they know when they are relocating or moving out of the area. If your child misses more than three (3) consecutive weeks of classes the CRE will call you to make sure that your child is still attending our Religious Education Program. It is important that students attend consecutive years of RE in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the Catholic faith.

