

# Our Lady of Hope Parish

## Religious Education Program



## Parent Handbook 2016—2017



Religious Education  
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(Important Information on changes Sacramental Preparation)

## **Our Lady of Hope Parish**

Welcome to Our Lady of Hope Parish Religious Education Program. Thank you for enrolling your child in our catechetical program. We are grateful for the opportunity to assist you in your commitment of passing on the Catholic Faith to your child.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Our mission is to complete a child's education with religious instruction. The Catechists and Assistants are here to help our Parish children grow in their journey of faith by deepening their understanding and awareness of God; telling the story of Jesus; and teaching them the truths of our faith.

At your child's baptism you promised to make it your commitment to bring up your child in the practice of your faith. With the Baptismal Candle, the light of Christ was given to you to keep it burning brightly. Participation in the Religious Education Program is just one way for you to keep this promise.

Our goal is to offer our parish children a living example of the faith and spirituality that is reflective of their baptismal call to become disciples of Jesus Christ. We encourage and teach the children how to develop a personal relationship with God through prayer and worship.

Parents are the primary educators of the faith for their children. The Religious Education staff and catechists are here to support and encourage the development not only of your child but your entire family's growth in the Catholic faith. Attendance at Mass every Sunday and prayer at home helps achieve a "Catholic Way of Life" for your whole family. We recognize that families today are faced with many challenges and that great strains are placed on us. Many times these struggles prevent us from celebrating Mass on weekends or getting our child to Religious Education classes. As we pray for all of our families we ask that you take time to pray and discuss the commitment to Christ with your entire family. Work toward making Sunday Mass and Religious Education a priority in your family.

### **PARENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents/guardians are the primary religious educators of their child. Parents/guardians have an obligation to educate their child in an atmosphere of love and respect for God and others. Active cooperation of parents/guardians is expected and required as follows:

- Attend Mass each weekend with your child
- Meet your child's catechist; parents/guardians have a responsibility to know the catechist and assistant and support them in the religious education of your child.
- Send your child to Religious Education class prepared to learn and properly dressed.
- Review Religious Education class materials with your child.  
Talk to your child about what went on in class.
- Set a good example by personally refraining from any activity that would violate Catholic teachings or the law.
- Take an active role in your child's Religious Education program whenever possible.

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Remember oftentimes children do as they see / not as they are told. Know that your continued interest, involvement and prayers do influence your child's perception of what the "Christian Catholic Life" is all about.

### **REGISTRATION AND FEES**

Parents are asked to register their child before classes begin. Families registered in the program are required to re-register annually. Registrations usually occur in late August and early September after the weekend Masses. Registration dates and times will be announced in Our Lady of Hope Bulletin and on our website. Early registrations are accepted during the summer months as well. Registration fees are determined for the instructional year. Fee information will be posted on the website and in Our Lady of Hope Bulletin. Fees for the instructional year are due at the time of registration. Registration fees defray costs of materials purchased for the program. No child shall be turned away from attending Religious Education classes for inability to pay.

### **CLASSTIME**

K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes are held on Sunday mornings at 8:55 AM to 9:55 AM; these classes are held in St. Brigid's School.

### **CLASSROOM SPACE**

It is important that the children respect the property of others. The Religious Education Program uses classrooms in St. Brigid's School. The Religious Education students who use the space must respect it and the St. Brigid students who use it during the week. While the Religious Education students are in the classrooms they will be using the desks of St. Brigid students. Nothing in the desks is to be touched. Religious Education students are supplied with all materials they will need during classes, i.e. pencils, crayons, markers, paints, etc., so there is no need to borrow or use anything that does not belong to them.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular class attendance is expected. Regular attendance impacts positively on a child's religious development. A child who misses two or more classes must make up the work that has been missed. The Catechist will notify the Director of Religious Education when a child is absent from class. The Director of Religious Education will make a call to the absent child's parent to check on the child; and let him/her know that he/she was missed in class.

### **ABSENCES**

If a child is going to be absent from class it is appreciated if the parent/guardian calls the Religious Education Office and leaves a message.

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## **ARRIVAL**

So that we may provide adequate supervision for the health and safety of your child, we ask that you do not drop off your child earlier than ten minutes prior to the start of class. Until there is an adult present in the classroom, the students are not allowed in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to bring their child to the respective classroom. The main door at St. Brigid's is the only entrance that will be used. Classes start at 8:55 AM and the main door will be opened at 8:40 AM. The Co-Director will be present at the entrance and is always available for questions / concerns.

## **STUDENT ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS**

Illnesses and accidents occurring during class time are reported immediately to the DRE. When a student becomes ill or has an accident, the parent/guardian is contacted. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. In case of a minor accident, basic first aid will be administered. If the accident is of a serious nature, Emergency 911 will be called.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Students are expected to behave in a manner that is respectful and considerate of our volunteer teachers, assistants, and their classmates. Occasionally there is a student who disrupts a class by his/her behavior. None of our teachers should have to cope with disruptive behavior. It is not fair to them or to the rest of the class who are there to learn. Students who become disruptive or disrespectful in class will be given fair warning by their teachers; if the disruptive and disrespectful behavior continues, the student will be sent to the Director's office. Such behavior will be addressed through the cooperative efforts of the DRE, teacher and parents. Together, hopefully, we will be able to work out any problems that may arise.

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## **INCLEMENTWEATHER**

In the case of inclement weather, classes may be cancelled. The determination of class cancellation is up to the discretion of the DRE and the Pastor. If classes are cancelled, announcements will be placed with the local television, WCSH Storm Cancellation program. In addition, a phone tree may be established by the teacher, who will notify each of their students.

## **THINK FIRST, STAY SAFE**

This personal safety program is a curriculum that focuses on assisting children in learning how to be safe against sexual abuse. The program is mandated by the Diocese of Portland and is presented in age appropriate lessons.

## **IN CASE OF A FIRE**

If the fire alarm goes off during class time, all classes will exit their classroom in an orderly manner. Teachers and Assistants will make sure all their children are with them and will proceed out of the building. All classes will meet at the designated location for reporting. The designated location is at the entrance area in front of the Church.

## **RCIC (Rite of Christian Initiation For Children)**

Sometimes children miss receiving the Sacraments according to the usual schedule. When this occurs, the Director of Religious Education shall develop a schedule of classes (catch-up-classes). The children are instructed in the basic principles of our Catholic faith and are prepared to receive the Sacraments.

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Our Diocese will be starting a two (2) year sacramental preparation program and booklets explaining each level will be available for you soon.

There will be a level one sacramental preparation class which will have students in Grade One (1) and any Second (2) Grade student who have not had Grade One (1) previously. A new component to this program will be several parent/guardian meetings. Year One (1) will be the initial formation of the faith

Sacramental preparation Year Two (2) is the immediate preparation for the sacraments. This will be for children who have completed Sacramental Preparation Year One (1). Several parent/guardian meetings with their children will also take place.

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### **TEXTBOOKS**

Books, workbooks and Gospel Weeklies by Pflaum are provided to our Parish children as part of the curriculum. Our textbook series is "WE BELIEVE" by Sadlier. This

program gives our Parish children the knowledge and skills they need to apply and practice their faith in daily life. The content is based upon Scripture, the Liturgical ,year and Catholic doctrine. We supplement our texts by using the Bible and other Catholic publications.

### **PRAYER SUPPORT**

In today's world it may seem extremely difficult to inspire our children to know and practice their Catholic Faith; so we recognize the importance of entreating to Our Lord that our endeavors may be successful. Therefore, we seek your continued prayerful support. In particular, we pray that the efforts of our volunteers may bear spiritual fruits in the lives of our young people and their families. Although there are many powerful forces in the world working against us, we know "that with God all things are possible" .

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### PICK UP AUTHORIZATION FORM

School Year 2016—2017

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child / Children Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your child / children will only be released to the individuals named on this form. If any information changes during the Religious Education instructional year, please notify the Religious Education Office. Not all lines need to be completed. Please be sure to include your spouse or any other family member, over the age of 18, authorized to pick up your child / children. Children will not be released to any person whose name does not appear on this form. Complete one form per family. I, \_\_\_\_\_, give permission for my child / children to go home by car with the people whose names are listed on this form. My child / children may not be released to any other person without my consent.

Name: _____	Phone#: _____

This form needs to be returned to the Religious Education Office on the first day of class.



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### RELEASE FORM

We would like to share what we do in Religious Education classes with our Parish Community. In order to share, we need parental permission to publish photographs of your child in a printed brochure or on our website. For safety, only the first name and the grade of the child will be provided with the photograph.

I hereby give Our Lady of Hope Parish Religious Education Program the right and permission to:

1. Use photographs of my child in media including illustrations, promotions, advertising and public relations in regard to Our Lady of Hope Parish Religious Education Program;  Yes  No
2. Post photographs of my child on the Parish Website.  Yes  No

I have read the above and I understand that this release will be in effect for the 2016- 2017 Our Lady of Hope Parish Religious Education instructional year.

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Child's Name (please print)

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Parent Signature

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Date

