

St. Joseph Catholic Church  
1695 Wallenberg Blvd.  
Charleston, SC 29407  
Telephone: 556-4611  
Fax: 556-4612  
Website: [www.saintjosephchas.com](http://www.saintjosephchas.com)

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday - 9 AM - 4:00 PM  
Friday - 9 AM - 12:00 noon  
Summer Office Hours: Wednesdays & Fridays close at noon

Class Time  
Wednesday Evening  
6:15 - 7:30 PM

Staff  
Rev. Gabriel J. Smith, Pastor

Director of Religious Education  
Linda M. Baranoski

Youth Ministry Coordinators  
Greg and Tanessa Fisher

Parish Secretary  
Regina Plichta

Financial Secretary  
Candy Pucino

Family Life Center Director  
Al Katko

St. Joseph Parish, a family oriented parish within the Diocese of Charleston, offers opportunities for parish membership to grow in faith through the various religious formational, educational and sacramental preparation programs.

Please read the parish bulletin for updated programs and information.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

The Ministry of Religious Education flows from the mandate of Jesus to go into the whole world and teach the Good News. The Religious Education Program of Saint Joseph Parish is rooted in this decree and nourishes a community of faith. This community is dedicated to sharing, nurturing, and strengthening the faith of its students, thus enabling them to manifest the gospel message through worship in community and in service.

### **GOALS**

The Religious Education program accepts its responsibility as co-educators with the family and the Church to provide a solid catechetical experience for children. We commit ourselves to:

Presenting our Catholic faith accurately, authentically, and completely, consistent with the age and readiness of the students.

Providing an atmosphere where children can develop their faith.

Fostering a clear sense of Catholic identity and an appreciation of Catholic beliefs, values, prayers, practices and sacramental celebrations.

Encouraging the development of attitudes, behavior, and courageous living that identify them as followers of Jesus.

Nurturing a deep respect and appreciation for all that is good, true, and beautiful in human experience.

Developing a greater sense of responsibility towards outreach and justice for the greater good in our homes, throughout our communities, and into the world.

Creating a sense of interdependence between administration, faculty, parents, and students that promotes mutual respect, concern and preserves the integrity of the Catholic faith.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF**

Our catechists are generous volunteers who devote time to spreading the message of Jesus and building up our faith community. They work as teachers, teacher trainees and teacher aides.

All catechists are required to:

Be in good standing with the Catholic Church by living their Catholic faith in their daily lives.

Conform to all the Diocesan requirements, including a Background Screening and participation in a Virtus Training Workshop.

These teachers deserve respect and appreciation from all students and parents for their sacrifice of time and service that they offer to the families of the parish.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**REGISTRATION** - Registration of **new** students usually takes place during the summer months. Requirements are:

Presentation of a copy of a baptismal certificate for each child baptized at other churches. Need date of Baptism if baptized here at Saint Joseph's Church.

RE-REGISTRATION -. Registration is ongoing throughout the summer. The forms may be downloaded from the parish website. We offer a discount for early registration. We encourage timely registration as this permits us to maintain current records and order our materials.

## **TUITION**

Tuition is charged to each family for the cost of operating the Religious Education Program. The fees are:

|                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Grades 1 through 8: | \$35.00 - per child   |
| Maximum:            | \$70.00 - per family. |

Early and late registration fees are applied annually.

A student text is included in the tuition charge. If lost or misplaced, a fee will be charged for a new book.

No child will be refused admission to the Religious Education Program because of inability to pay tuition. Parents for whom tuition would cause a severe financial burden should contact the Pastor or the Director of Religious Education.

## **TRANSFERS: IN AND OUT**

Students in grades 1 through 8 who are transferring into the program from another parish or program are required to present the following records:

Verification of completed levels of religious education  
A copy of child's baptismal certificate

These records need to be presented as soon as possible as they are necessary for appropriate placement and enrollment into the program.

When a student is transferring out of the program, it is the parent's responsibility to request a letter from the director or the coordinator of the program. This letter will transfer with the student and verify his/her completed level of religious education.

## **TRANSITION CLASSES**

Any child enrolled in grades 2-8 who has had no previous religious education or has missed a year of religious education will be required to complete a remedial program before entering the classroom. Upon completion of the program the Director of Religious Education will place the student in his/her grade level. This program will be designed by the Director of Religious Education to fit the needs of the individual student. The purpose of this program is to relieve the students of undue embarrassment as they enter the classroom for the first time.

## **ACCIDENTS/EMERGENCY FORM**

The Religious Education Office must have on file an emergency form with a telephone number and all information that may be vital to the safety and welfare of your child. In case of minor accidents, first aid will be given at school. A medical form is included as part of the registration process.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Students are frequently given flyers containing information pertinent to the program. This information refers to scheduling changes, attendance at church, or for any other special event. Please check with your child weekly for this material. Special announcements, changes in the calendar, etc., will also appear in the parish bulletin.

## ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

All students should be in the building at least 10 minutes before the beginning of class (6:05 p.m.). Because of the limited amount of time for instruction, it is important that students be on time for religious education classes. Scheduling and transportation problems that unavoidably result in regular tardiness should be discussed with the Director of Religious Education. Each week the students will meet in the mall of the Family Life Center for communal prayer. They will then proceed to their classrooms for their catechesis. Dismissal will be at 7:30 p.m.

Children must be dropped off in the front of the Family Life Center and enter through the front of the building only. Children have to be picked up at the same location. Parents of young children must come into the building to claim their children.

**NOTE:** Be extremely careful in the parking lot area because other activities may be going on in the building. Please observe the **Enter** and **Exit** signs posted on the property. This allows for the safe flow of traffic.

**\*\*\*\*NO CHILD SHOULD LEAVE THE BUILDING WITHOUT A PARENT/GUARDIAN OR CAR POOL DRIVER. \*\*\*\*PLEASE BE PROMPT for arrival and dismissal!!!!**

## ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE

Because our Religious Education Program has a very limited teaching time frame in which to provide a consistency of instruction, it is required that children attend regularly.

Our program is sequential, therefore, it is expected that children will attend at **all** grade levels. Each grade level builds on the previous year.

All absences are considered as un-excused except for the following:

Illness of the student

Exceptionally urgent reasons that affect the child

SPORTS, OR OTHER EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES are **NOT** acceptable excuses for absence or early dismissal from religion classes.

For every absence a written statement signed by the parent or guardian is required on the day the student returns to class. Instead of a written excuse, you may send an email to the DRE before class with the appropriate information.

([Linda@saintjosephchas.com](mailto:Linda@saintjosephchas.com)).

No student is permitted to leave the building after arrival for class, except in case of sickness or similar emergency. In such cases, the student will wait at the office until the parent arrives. **NO STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO WAIT OUTSIDE THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER.** If a student needs to be dismissed early, a written statement from the parent must be sent on the day of the early dismissal and parents must meet the

student inside the building. Parents should notify the office if someone other than the parent will transport the child.

A student who arrives after the beginning of class will be marked tardy.

When **three** un-excused absences and/or an excessive number of excused absences occur, and there has been no effort to make up classes, the child may have to repeat the grade.

## HOMWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Students may have homework throughout the year. Check with your child each week for homework assignments. Parents will be notified of incomplete assignments and asked to see that all assignments are completed.

## DISCIPLINE

Discipline in behavior and good habits are an important aspect of moral formation. The purpose of all discipline is to foster personal development and promote self-respect for others and for duly constituted authority. Saint Joseph Religious Education Program embraces the philosophy that discipline should be positive and constructive. It is our aim to cultivate our students' goodness as children of God by fostering within them a sense of right and justice, respect, and love for everyone. When our students do misbehave, they will be dealt with immediately and with action taken according to the seriousness of the offense. Corporal punishment is **never** administered.

We feel that problems of discipline should not arise in a religion class setting in a period of one hour and fifteen minutes. But, if the occasion does arise, the following procedures will be followed:

First offense - The teacher will take the initial action to correct the problem reminding the student of his/her responsibility to himself/herself as well as to the class.

Second offense - The teacher will send the student to the Director of Religious Education who in turn will speak to the student and if necessary call the parents so they may be made aware of the infraction and become involved in a solution to the problem.

Third Offense- The teacher will send the student to the Director of Religious Education. Parents will be called and informed that the student has an in-school suspension. The student will work independently under supervision at the school until parents/student meet with the Director of Religious Education.

We trust this is as far as we have to go. However, if serious breaches of discipline occur, matters will be referred to the Pastor.

## **SUSPENSION**

Students may be suspended from religious education classes/activities for serious breaches of discipline; these may include but are not limited to any or all of the following:

Conduct endangering fellow students, teachers, or school personnel

Fighting

Damaging or destroying school property

Insubordination

Leaving the school building or school grounds without permission

Smoking or possession of cigarettes

Possessing, using, or selling controlled substances

Possessing or drinking alcoholic beverages

Violence of any type

Bringing weapons of any sort into the Family Life Center (knives, guns, cutting tools, anything that could cause serious damage). Any infraction of this rule will result in an immediate call to the Charleston City Police Department

(This includes toy look-alikes)

Whenever an incident occurs that may lead to suspension, the Director of Religious Education and/or pastor shall investigate the alleged offense. This investigation shall include a discussion with the involved student and the student will be given an opportunity to be heard with regard to the alleged offense.

## **DRESS CODE**

We believe that children's attitudes are affected by what they wear. Therefore, we ask that all students dress appropriately for religious education classes. Tank tops or halter-tops of any sort (including blouses with spaghetti straps) are not permitted. No midriff should be showing. Skirts and shorts must be a decent length. Hats must be removed when entering the building. Clothing that is torn, bears obscene or inappropriate messages, or carries a logo for alcoholic beverages or cigarettes may not be worn. Good taste and proper judgment should be utilized.

All electronic equipment is prohibited by students on the premises. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, I-pods, disc players, or any device that requires headphones, etc. These items are distracting and need to be left behind for this period of time. The DRE will collect any such items and keep them until the end of class and return them only at that time. The office telephone is available for calls if necessary.

## **HARASSMENT**

Our parish affirms the inherent value of every individual and upholds the respect due to each because of his or her uniqueness as a child of God. Therefore, we are committed to providing a safe working and educational environment which is free from physical, psychological, sexual or verbal harassment for its staff, students, and volunteers,

## **MEDICATION**

The guidelines of the Diocese of Charleston will be followed regarding the procedures for distribution of medication during religious education. Parents are asked to administer medication before or after any religious education class or activity. Parents are permitted to come to school to administer medication to their children. If it is essential that a student receive prescription medication during a religious education class or activity, parents must first meet with the Director of Religious Education to go over the guidelines that will be followed. This will be done on an individual basis.

## SACRAMENTS

### RECONCILIATION/EUCHARIST PROGRAM

Preparation for the Sacraments is an integral and important part of the Religious Education Program. These celebrations mark important phases in the faith journey of the children. They are special moments for reflection and renewal for the immediate family and the faith community. At Saint Joseph's there is a two-year preparation period. The child's baptismal record is required upon registration into the program.

Remote preparation begins in first grade. Immediate preparation begins in the course of the second year of formal religious education.

Candidates for the Reconciliation and Eucharist program are required to attend a retreat at Saint Joseph's. This takes place on a Saturday.

Children who come to the program from other parishes are required to present a written record of the previously completed levels of formation to the DRE.

Children who for any reason enter the Sacramental Program at an older age will be grouped and instructed according to age level.

Parental involvement in the sacramental preparation of children is of the greatest importance. Parents are expected to take an active role in the faith journey of their child. It is the responsibility of the parents to:

- I. Nurture the spiritual life of the child. Attend Mass weekly.
- II. Encourage an active family prayer life.
- III. Participate in all parent meetings. Timely completion of necessary forms.
- IV. Help in the classroom, with retreat or special activities that may be scheduled.
- V. Assist student with any required homework.

## CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

### SEVENTH GRADE

The seventh grade year is the first of a two-year program in preparation for the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation. The candidate's baptismal record is required upon registration into the program. The seventh grade curriculum summarizes Catholic beliefs about God, Jesus, Church, Sacraments, Scripture, and Commandments. It emphasizes the importance of living the Gospel. It is formed in the Catholic tradition to help adolescents come to a fuller and deeper understanding of the essential beliefs and practices of Catholic Christianity.

### EIGHTH GRADE / CONFIRMATION CURRICULUM

Eighth grade students begin their final year of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. We teach Morality during the first semester. During the second half of the year, the focus of the curriculum is designed to help the students come to a fuller and deeper understanding of the sacrament of Confirmation, as a sacrament of initiation, as they grow in Christian maturity.

Under the sacramental guidelines at St. Joseph's, the Confirmation Program is a two-year program beginning with grade seven and concluding in eighth grade with the celebration of Confirmation. Since Confirmation is a sacrament of initiation, it calls for priority and active participation by parents, candidates, sponsors, and the local faith community. The following guidelines are observed.

1. Participation in religious formation throughout the elementary and junior high school years by regular attendance in either a parish religious education program (CCD) or a parochial school.
2. Parent/guardian participation in the "Requirements Workshop" is necessary in assisting your son/daughter in their preparation for the sacrament.
3. Timely completion of necessary forms.
4. Participation in Confirmation Rite of Enrollment.
5. All candidates are expected to contribute service hours to their parish community and family.
6. A Saint report, based on the candidate's choice of confirmation name is required.
7. It is important for the candidates to lead a sacramental life and attend Mass weekly.
8. Attendance and full participation in the Confirmation Retreat.

Parents are expected to take an active role in supporting their son/daughter for the celebration of the sacrament. Parents are encouraged to share their own faith experience, participate in all workshops, and attend liturgical celebrations of the Confirmation Program. The parents are invited to assist in the program whenever possible (i.e., classroom, retreat). It is also important to nurture the candidate in

his/her spiritual development by sharing conversations about Church, faith and morality. Please pray together as a family and keep everything associated with Confirmation a positive experience for your candidate as well as for your entire family. Of course, it goes without saying that the families attend Mass together each week.

A sponsor is required for each candidate. The requirements are:

- ❖ Roman Catholic who is a registered and participating member of the Catholic Church. (Documentation from sponsor's parish is required)
- ❖ Received the sacrament of Confirmation.
- ❖ Attained the required minimum age of sixteen years.
- ❖ Not the father or mother of the one to be confirmed.