

HOLY APOSTLES RE PROGRAM
PreK-5th Grades

PARENT HANDBOOK
2011-2012



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MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the program is to minister to the children by forming them in the faith of the Catholic tradition and by informing them regarding the teachings of the Church so that the students and adults involved in the program will grow in the awareness, knowledge and practice of their faith. (General Directory for Catechesis 87)

PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of Holy Apostles RE Program are:

- To provide a program of formal religious instruction for the children of the parish.
- To support parents in their role as primary catechists of their children.
- To offer sacramental preparation for children as they become ready to receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- To help the children discover the richness and challenges of Scripture and the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.
- To build a strong Catholic Identity among the children of the parish.
- To give the children an experience of the Church as community.
- To deepen the prayer life of the children.
- To motivate the children to live lives rooted in charity and justice based on the moral teachings of the church.
- To expose students to the liturgical and sacramental richness that is part of Catholic Tradition.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents who are enrolling their children in the parish catechetical program must be aware of their responsibilities as parents. It is the role of the parish to *assist* the parents in nurturing the faith of their children. It is essential that the parents agree to follow parish policy and work with those who are the designated leaders of the parish program. In order to promote the faith growth of the children and to insure a smooth-running program, ***parents are expected to fulfill the following expectations:***

- Must be a registered member of the parish.
- Are responsible for providing the parish with information regarding the child's baptism and other sacraments if applicable.
- Attend Mass weekly with his/her child.
- Take responsibility for his/her role as primary catechist.
- Collaborate with the catechists in the program by sharing faith with the child at home and by making sure the child does any required follow up to the lessons taught in class.
- Teach their child the traditional prayers of the Church at home.
- Maintain an open line of communication with their child's catechist.
- Bring their child to class at least 5 minutes before the start of class and pick them up no later than 5 minutes after the end of class.

- Bring his/her child to class dressed appropriately, ready to participate with enough rest and nourishment and make sure the child has gone to the bathroom, if needed, before class.
- Attend parent meetings when requested. *At least 1 parent needs to attend Sacramental Prep meetings that are required by the Diocese before the child can receive his sacraments.*
- Is supportive of the catechist especially in the area of discipline.

CATECHISTS

The catechists that teach the classes in this program are *volunteers*. As parents, you are asked to understand the challenges involved in being a volunteer catechist and to support them in whatever ways are possible. If any problems arise, however, please contact the catechist and discuss the problem. If that is not satisfactory, contact the coordinator.

CURRICULUM

Textbooks and other materials used in the classroom are in conformity with the teachings found in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. They have been chosen because they offer catechists the resources necessary to conduct classes. Presently, the textbooks used in the program are *Christ Our Life* published by **Loyola University Press** for Pre-Kindergarten and *Faith First* published by **RCL** for Kindergarten through 5th Grades. Parents who would like to examine the text material should contact the director/coordinator of the religious education program.

REQUIRED PRAYERS

The catechists are expected to provide the children in their class with an opportunity to experience a variety of prayer forms and learn the traditional prayers of the Catholic Church. In this process, catechists rely on the child's experience of prayer *within their family*. Attached is a list of the traditional prayers that are to be learned **with the cooperation and help of the family** through the early elementary years. It is the responsibility of the parents to pray with their children as they learn their prayers.

CLASSES

Attendance: *Children who are enrolled in the parish catechetical program are expected to be in attendance each week. Children preparing for sacraments are only allowed 2 missed classes.* It is the responsibility of parents to insure their presence. Because classes are held only once a week and each class builds on the material covered in preceding classes, the child who is absent misses a great deal and will have to make up the material that was covered in the missed class. **If it is necessary for a student to be absent, the coordinator of the program must be contacted in advance and notified of that fact.**

If a student is regularly absent without an excuse the coordinator will contact the parents regarding the absences and the child may be withdrawn from the program.

Class Schedule: Classes are held for *one hour*. Pre-K & Kindergarten meet twice a month on Sundays for *16 weeks*. 1-5 grades meet on Mondays/Tuesdays for *26 weeks*. Please see *the appropriate calendar* for your child's schedule.

Arrival and Dismissal: Classes are held in the classrooms. Parents are asked to bring their children at least 5 minutes prior to their class start time. Parents are asked to pick their children up no later than 5 minutes after class has ended. Our catechists are volunteer parents who are also on schedules and need to leave once their classrooms are ready for the next session. ***To ensure their safety, children are to be dropped off and picked up at their classrooms by parents or their designee.*** Parents are to notify the coordinator if someone other than the parent or designee is to pick up their children.

DISCIPLINE

Everyone involved in the program is challenged by the words and example of Jesus to respect each person's right to be treated not only with dignity and respect but also with love. In order to provide for a safe and well-ordered program, in which students and catechists can learn and follow Jesus' call to love, some rules for behavior are necessary. Each catechist will compose some specific rules, which the students in their classroom are expected to follow.

The following rules apply to everyone:

- Respect is to be shown for all catechists and other adults in leadership roles.
- Students are expected to display Christian values in the way they dress, speak and behave.
- Students are to avoid behavior that disturbs the learning environment or that is disrespectful or dangerous to others.

Process for dealing with inappropriate behavior:

- Catechists will handle discipline problems in a positive manner.
- Initially, catechists will handle any discipline problems in their own classroom.
- Students whose behavior becomes a continual problem in the classroom will be sent to the coordinator.
- Anytime a student is sent from class for discipline reasons, his/her parents will be contacted either by phone, in person or in writing.
- If the student's behavior continues to be a problem, the student will be removed from the class and the parent will be contacted again. In order to return to the classroom, the student and parent will meet with the catechist and coordinator to resolve the issues.
- If the student's behavior does not improve, the parish reserves the right to ask the student to withdraw from the program.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES In cases of inclement weather or other conditions, classes may be cancelled. If local schools are cancelled or dismissed early, there will be no religious education classes. Last minute cancellations will be posted to the parish website by 2pm that day.

SICKNESS AND INJURY

Sickness: Should a student become ill while at class, his/her parent will be contacted. If the parent is unavailable, attempts will be made to reach the emergency contact person. The coordinator or other responsible adult will make every effort to keep the child comfortable until he/she is picked up.

Injury: Catechists are asked to report any injury to the coordinator immediately. If an injury occurs, first aid will be administered and the parent will be contacted. If the injury requires immediate medical attention, the coordinator will call the appropriate emergency services.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Parents will be notified regarding any event or field trip for which the children will need their permission to attend. No child will be required to attend such an event. However, if the child does desire to attend a field trip or special event, the parent must fill out the permission slip and return it to the child's teacher prior to the event. Please see *Dates of Special Events* and put these on your calendar!

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

As parents, you have a sacred trust! **You are the primary religious educators of your child.** God calls you to nurture not only the natural life of your child but also your child's grace life received at baptism. This responsibility requires that you grow in faith yourselves and that you share your faith with your family.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

God Made Me (P3) is designed so your child should come to know & love the good God who made and loves them and realize that they are special and respond to their Creator with thanks and praise.

God Made the World (P4) is designed so your child should discover the marvels of God's creation and wonder at them and come to know God better through the gifts of creation.

Required Prayers: How to Genuflect, The Sign of the Cross, Grace Before Meals, Angel of God

KINDERGARTEN

The scope and sequence of **Faith First Kindergarten** has been developed to provide kindergarten children with a readiness for future catechesis.

The Faith First Kindergarten child's book is divided into four units and contains twenty-four chapters. Nineteen chapters focus on core teachings of the Catholic Church that are foundational to Catholic life. Five chapters are devoted entirely to presenting five Bible stories. Finally there are ten lessons that engage the children in the celebration of the seasons and special days of the Church year.

Required Prayers: How to Genuflect, The Sign of the Cross, Angel of God, Grace Before Meals, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

FIRST GRADE THROUGH FIFTH GRADE

The Faith First Scope and Sequence is divided into three parts: **Doctrine**, **Scripture** and the **Liturgical Seasons**. These three important elements of Catholic belief, God's Word and liturgical celebration are interwoven throughout each grade level. They are also taught as separate strands in each grade. This balanced approach ensures that children will come to know, love, and live the rich heritage of the faith we are proud to profess in Christ Jesus.

- **Doctrine:** The doctrines taught in Faith First are drawn from the four pillars of faith as presented in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: *Creed, Worship and Sacraments, Morality and Christian Prayer*. These important teachings are developmentally presented to help the children recognize that what we believe, how we worship, how we live, and how we pray make a difference in our lives.
- **Scripture:** The Sacred Scriptures are the heart of Christian life. Through the Bible, God's Word nourishes and revitalizes our life of faith. For that reason, Scripture is included in every chapter. Scripture is also taught as a separate strand throughout the program. Each unit has core Scripture chapters that include studying the Bible background, reading a complete Scripture story, and deepening the children's understanding of the meaning of the story. Through these core Scripture chapters, the children will grow in their knowledge and love of God's Word.
- **The Liturgical Seasons:** The liturgical seasons are taught to their fullest in a separate strand. Learning about and celebrating the cycle of the liturgical year helps children to enter into the Paschal mystery and to take part in these seasons more fully. The lessons within the liturgical seasons strand also provide the opportunity for children and parents to reflect weekly on God's presence with us throughout time and history.

1st Grade Required Prayers: How to Genuflect, The Sign of the Cross, Angel of God, Grace Before Meals, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

2nd Grade Required Prayers: How to Genuflect, The Sign of the Cross, Angel of God, Grace Before Meals, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Contrition

3rd Grade Required Prayers: How to Genuflect, The Sign of the Cross, Angel of God, Grace Before Meals, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Contrition, Apostles' Creed, Intro to Rosary

4th Grade Required Prayers: How to Genuflect, The Sign of the Cross, Angel of God, Grace Before Meals, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Contrition, Apostles' Creed, Mysteries of the Rosary, Hail Holy Queen, Ten Commandments, Way of the Cross

5th Grade Required Prayers: How to Genuflect, The Sign of the Cross, Angel of God, Grace Before Meals, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Contrition, Apostles' Creed, Mysteries of the Rosary, Hail Holy Queen, Ten Commandments, Way of the Cross

PRAYERS & THINGS EVERY CATHOLIC SHOULD KNOW

We make the **SIGN OF THE CROSS** by touching with the right hand:

- A. The forehead "In the name of the Father"
- B. Then the breast "And of the Son,"
- C. And then from the left shoulder to the right "And of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

The sign of the cross shows that we are Christians because it expresses our belief in the chief mysteries of our Catholic faith: the mystery of the Blessed Trinity and the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption. The words we say show that God is one in Three Divine Persons. The sign of the cross we make reminds us that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for us on the Cross.

HOW TO MAKE A GENUFLECTION

In making a genuflection with one knee, three things are to be observed:

Bend the right knee to the floor alongside the ankle of the left foot;

Hold the head and the upper part of the body erect, not inclined;

Rise again without delay.

In genuflecting with both knees, bend the right knee first and then the left: thereupon make a medium bow of the body and rise.

GRACE BEFORE MEALS

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts
Which we are about to receive
From Thy bounty,
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

ANGEL OF GOD

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love
Entrusts me here;
Ever this day (or night)
Be at my side,
To light and guard,
To rule and guide. Amen.



DOXOLOGY

Glory be to the Father,
And to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
Is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen.

OUR FATHER

Our Father,
Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those
Who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace!
The Lord is with you;
Blessed are you among women,
And blessed is the fruit
Of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God! I am heartily sorry
For having offended You
And I detest all my sins
Because of Your just punishment,
But most of all
Because they offend You, My God,
Who are all good and
Deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve
With the help of Your grace
To sin no more and to avoid
The near occasion of sin. Amen.



THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of
the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell;
On the third day he rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of God the
Father Almighty; From there he will come to
judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy Catholic Church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life,
our sweetness, and our hope! To you do we cry,
poor banished children of Eve; to you do we
send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this
vale of tears. Turn, then, most gracious
advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us; and
after this our exile, show unto us the blessed
fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving,
O sweet Virgin Mary! Pray for us, O holy
Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of
the promises of Christ. Amen.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before me.
You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day.
Honor your father and mother.
You shall not kill.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.



THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

Baptism
Reconciliation
Eucharist
Confirmation
Matrimony
Holy Orders
Anointing of the Sick

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Feed the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Clothe the naked
Visit the sick
Shelter the homeless
Visit the imprisoned
Bury the dead

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

Warn the sinner
Instruct the ignorant
Counsel the doubtful
Comfort the sorrowing
Bear wrongs patiently
Forgive all injuries
Pray for the living and the dead



MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

The mysteries of the Rosary are scenes from the life of Jesus and Mary. We say the prayers of the rosary while meditating on the mysteries.

Joyful Mysteries

The Annunciation- *The angel Gabriel asked Mary to be the mother of Jesus.*

The Visitation- *Mary visited her relative Elizabeth to help her.*

The Nativity- *Jesus was born in Bethlehem.*

The Presentation in the Temple- *Jesus was offered to God.*

The Finding of Jesus in the Temple- *After 3 days Mary & Joseph found Jesus teaching in the Temple.*

Sorrowful Mysteries

The Agony in the Garden- *Jesus suffered at the thought of what would happen to him.*

The Scourging at the pillar- *Jesus suffered as the soldiers whipped him.*

The Crowning with thorns- *The soldiers made fun of Jesus by placing a crown of thorns on his head..*

The Carrying of the Cross- *Jesus carried his cross to Calvary.*

The Crucifixion- *Jesus was nailed to the cross and died.*

Glorious Mysteries

The Resurrection- *Jesus arose from the dead on Easter Sunday.*

The Ascension into Heaven- *Jesus returned to heaven as Lord.*

The Descent of the Holy Spirit- *Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles and Mary.*

The Assumption- *After Mary's life on earth, she was taken, body & soul, to heaven.*

The Crowning of Mary- *Mary is Queen of Heaven and Earth.*

Luminous Mysteries

The Baptism in the Jordan- *Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist.*

The Wedding at Cana- *Jesus performed his first miracle turning water into wine.*

The Proclamation of the Kingdom- *Jesus came to Galilee preaching the gospel of God., "...the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe.."*

The Transfiguration- *As Jesus prays, his appearance changed and his garments become dazzling white...And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"*

The Institution of the Eucharist- *Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat; this is my body."*

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The "Stations of the Cross" is a devotion which consists of following the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ by recalling the fourteen prominent events that took place from the time of the trial under Pontius Pilate until his death and burial on Mount Calvary.

First Station: *Jesus is condemned to death.*

Second Station: *Jesus carries his cross.*

Third Station: *Jesus falls the first time.*

Fourth Station: *Jesus meets his afflicted mother.*

Fifth Station: *Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross.*

Sixth Station: *Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.*

Seventh Station: *Jesus falls the second time.*

Eighth Station: *The daughters of Jerusalem weep over Jesus.*

Ninth Station: *Jesus falls the third time.*

Tenth Station: *Jesus is stripped of his garments.*

Eleventh Station: *Jesus is nailed to the cross.*

Twelfth Station: *Jesus dies on the cross.*

Thirteenth Station: *Jesus is taken down from the cross.*

Fourteenth Station: *Jesus is buried in the tomb.*

Fifteenth Station: *Jesus rises from the dead on the third day, Easter Sunday.*



