

Guidelines for Parents

Religious Education

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

120 Kings Highway

Tappan, New York 10983

(845) 365-2141 Fax: (845) 359-1410

Email: re@olshtappan.com

Pastor: Reverend George J. Torok, C.O.

Religious Education Team:

Ms. Anna Vero, Director

Mrs. Kathy Lavery, Assistant Director

Mrs. Anne Swann, Assistant Director

Parish Mass Schedule:

Saturday 5 pm

Sunday 8 am, 10:30 am and 12 pm

Confessions:

Saturday 4:30 pm



Dear Parents:

The most precious gift you will give your child is the gift of faith in God. This gift will not only prepare your child for whatever life has in store, but will be a source of constant strength. That is quite a gift...and there is no other like it.

The mission of the Religious Education Program at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart is to develop your child's relationship with God. But humans cannot develop relationships without spending time together; learning about each other, helping each other, building trust and commitment to each other. The same is true with God. This is why attendance at Mass each Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligations is so important. Our children need the constancy of daily prayer, weekly Mass and weekly religious education class to develop their relationship with God and strengthen their faith.

We recognize that you, as parents, are the primary educators of your children. You prepare them for receiving the sacraments and are the role model of Christian life for your child. We are here to help you in this most important of all tasks. You are most welcome to call for appointments or stop by the Religious Education Office located in the Pastoral Center during office hours or email us at re@olshtappan.com.

This book is a resource for you, containing important information about the running of our school. We ask that you please observe the guidelines it contains. Also, you may visit the parish web-site at www.olshtappan.com and refer to the School Calendar for additional information.

May God bless you and your family.

RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILY

Our Religious Education Program requires the active participation of families. It is important that you attend the scheduled Mandatory Parents Meetings and the Mandatory Teaching Masses as scheduled on the religious education calendar. Also, help your children with their religion homework, review lessons and most especially, pray together.

CANCELLATIONS

You may log onto www.olshtappan.com and click Annoucements and Emergency Board link. Also, a message will be left on the Religious Education answering machine (845-365-2141) for your convenience.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Our Parish's religious education program prepares children for life and as such students are expected to attend religion classes each year from grade 1 through grade 8. Any child who wishes to enter our religious education program and has not had consistent religious studies must meet with the Director to determine school placement. Some extra assistance may be needed (especially during a year in which a sacrament is received) to prepare the child.

HOMEWORK AND TESTING

Homework and testing will assure the knowledge and understanding of our Catholic faith and practices. Please inform the Director of any special needs so that each child may be developed according to their learning ability.

Homework assignments are to be completed as part of the requirements for passing to the next grade. Progress reports will be sent home twice in the school year.

REGISTRATION

Registration dates and times are published in the parish bulletin and in the religious education calendar. Your family must be registered in our parish prior to your children attending religious education classes.

Initial Registration: The first time a child is registered in our school, a parent must provide a copy of the child's baptismal certificate, a complete registration form and tuition.

Re-registration: Re-registration is accomplished by completing a "Re-Registration Form", and mailing or personally delivering it to parish office along with the appropriate tuition. Desired class days are given on a first-come-first-served basis.

Transfer: Any child who is transferring from another parish must have their Permanent Record Card forwarded to the Religious Education office.

Registration Fees for the 2011-2012 School Year

- \$70 for one child, \$90 for a family, \$10 for Kindergarten
- \$20 book fee for grades 1-7, \$30 book fee for grade 8.
- Additional \$20 if register after the registration period ends.



ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

As Catholics it is our responsibility to teach our children about God. For this reason you send your child to religious education classes. Consistent attendance ensures that children get the most from their religious education. It is important that you give God and your child's religious education their rightful place amongst all the priorities in your child's life.

In order for children to receive an adequate level of religious education they should not be absent from class and/or Mandatory Mass more than **4 times during any school year**. Excessive absences will be dealt with on an individual basis and may require completion of additional assignments in order to progress to the next grade level.

We offer two **ADDITIONAL classes** per year. These additional classes teach general topics on our religion (Mass, Prayer, Easter, etc.) All children are welcome to attend. We reserve the right to request that any child who has excessive absences attend these additional sessions. The schedule for these extra classes will be in the school calendar.

Attendance will be recorded both for scheduled classes and for any Mass during the Mandatory Mass Weekend. If a child does not attend their regular scheduled class or a Mandatory Mass it will be recorded as an absence.

HOME STUDY

A home study program is one in which children are instructed at home by their own parents. A parent must make an appointment with the Director to discuss this option.



VISITORS

No unauthorized persons are allowed in the school while classes are in session. Parents and other visitors must go directly to the Religious Education Office.

FIELD TRIPS

If a field trip is planned, the Parish-Sponsored Trip Form must be completed by the parent of every student who will participate. Phone calls will not be accepted in lieu of written permission forms.

CARPOOLING

If a volunteer has agreed to use their own automobile to transport children to various catechetical program activities, a special permission form must be signed by the parents. The school will not be liable for accidents, injuries, or other tragedies occurring in such authorized or unauthorized predicaments.

FIRE DRILLS

For the safety of the children, fire drills are scheduled periodically.

DISMISSAL FROM BUILDING

No unauthorized persons are allowed in the school while classes are taking place. After classes start all doors will be locked, however for safety reasons, they can be opened from the inside.

- Any child arriving late must ring the bell and a staff person will open the door and escort the child to class.
- If any child needs to be dismissed early, a written request must be given to the Director at the beginning of class. Then the parent who picks up the child must ring the bell and come to the office to sign the child out early.
- Children will be dismissed into the care of the parent. If a parent needs to entrust another individual with their child, the Director must be notified in writing by the parent beforehand. The Director should be informed in writing by the custodial parent of the rights of the non-custodial parent as far as these pertain to the child's participation in our program.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Religious education classes take place in an atmosphere of learning and Christian respect. All students are expected to be respectful to the catechist, fellow students and parish property. Normal discipline problems will be handled by the catechist in the classroom and if necessary by the Director/Assistant Director in the office. Repetition of such behavior will require a conference with the parents and possible removal from the program.

All students are expected to:

- attend class on their scheduled day/time
- be on time and prepared for class (with pencil/folder/textbook)
- miss no more than 4 classes and/or Mandatory Masses
- dress appropriately
- NOT use cell phones, video games, text messaging, etc. during class time
- wait in the hall before class until the catechist arrives

SACRAMENTS

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Religious Education Program prepares children for a life-long relationship with Jesus.

Baptism

We expect all children to be baptized prior to enrolling in our school for the first time. A copy of the **baptismal certificate** must be provided at initial registration. If your child has not been baptized please see the Director as soon as possible so arrangements can be made.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Prior to receiving Jesus in the Holy Eucharist for the first time our **second graders** prepare and receive God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our First Confession (or Reconciliation) celebration takes place during class time in the Church as announced in the school calendar.

First Holy Communion

In the **second grade** we prepare our children to receive Jesus for the first time in the Holy Eucharist. This is the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus and is the cornerstone of a lifelong and ongoing relationship with God. At least two years of formal religious education are necessary before receiving this sacrament.



Parental participation is vital for the children's understanding of this sacrament. In order to enable parents to help their children prepare it is important that they attend the **First Holy Communion Mandatory Parents Meeting** as scheduled in the school calendar. Our pastor will provide valuable insights on explaining this sacrament to your young child. In addition, details on preparation and dress requirements will be provided.

Bread Ceremony:

In preparation for receiving their First Holy Communion, each child will create a little quilt depicting their understanding of God's love. Then, during a ceremony held a few weeks prior to the First Holy Communion Ceremony, they will add their quilt to those of all the other children and create a giant quilt symbolizing the unity of the Church and the People of God. After, all the families will gather in the hall for a "bread party" and fellowship. The date is announced in the school calendar.

Rehearsals:

First Holy Communion will be celebrated on a Saturday in May, as announced in the school calendar. It is very important that all children attend the scheduled rehearsals which are held during the week just prior to the ceremony. Tickets for entrance into the Church for the Saturday ceremony will be distributed during the last rehearsal.

**Dress:**

Details on the appropriate dress for the First Holy Communion ceremony will be provided at the Mandatory Parents Meeting. In general, girls should wear a white dress, white shoes and white tights or socks. Boys should wear a dark suit, white dress shirt, white tie and dark dress shoes.

Confirmation

Confirmation is the sacrament in which those who have been baptized become adults in the Church and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Students receive their Confirmation in the spring of the **8th grade**. Preparation for this sacrament is a family obligation and is very comprehensive.



Parental participation is vital in preparing our young adults to become adults in the Church. **Two Mandatory Confirmation Meetings**, one in the fall and one in the winter, will help parents lead their children through the spiritual, as well as the educational, preparation necessary for receiving this sacrament. These meetings will be announced in the school calendar.

To assist parents in the spiritual preparation of their children, each child will choose a sponsor who will act as a spiritual guide and support system and help him/her on this spiritual journey to adulthood. This person should be someone who has a strong spiritual life and is willing to share their faith with the candidate for Confirmation.

To be eligible **to be a sponsor** the person must:

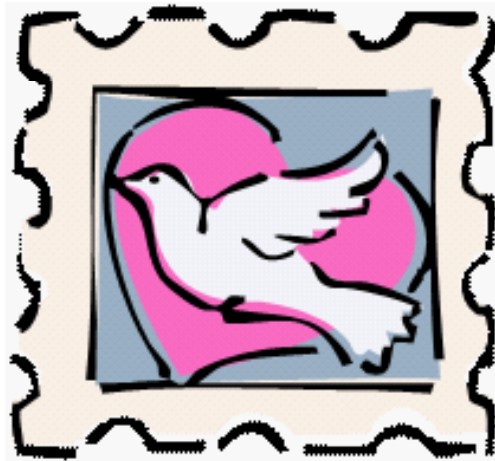
- be at least 16 years old
- be a Catholic who has been baptized and has received First Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- not be the candidate's biological parents
- obtain a written statement from the pastor of his/her parish affirming that he/she is qualified to be a Confirmation sponsor.

The Confirmation Program at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church includes the following:

- regular participation in Sunday Mass
- attendance and participation in weekly religion class
- 15 hours of community service (service to one's family does not count)
- participation at the Confirmation retreat
- a report on the saint chosen for the confirmation name
- a report on their chosen sponsor
- a letter to Father George requesting candidacy for Confirmation
- passing the Confirmation Test

Rehearsals:

Confirmation is generally celebrated during Easter time and is announced in the school calendar. It is very important that all candidates attend the scheduled rehearsals which are held during the week just prior to the ceremony. **Tickets** for entrance into the Church for the Saturday ceremony will be distributed during the last rehearsal.



Religious Education Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9 am - 1 pm
Pastoral Center
(Closed July and August)

Class Schedule

- Sunday:** 9:00 - 10:15 am - Grades K - 8
Monday: 5:45 - 7:00 pm - Grades 4 - 8
Tuesday: 4:30 - 5:45 pm - Grades 1 - 6
Tuesday: 7:00 - 8:15 pm - Grades 7 - 8
Wednesday: 4:30 - 5:45 pm - Grades 1 - 8

