

St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Religious Education Program

Parent Handbook 2018 – 2019

Welcome to the Religious Education Program of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish. We believe that faith development begins in infancy and must be nourished throughout life. Educators agree that parents are the first and most important religious educators for their children. Teaching by good example, by praying together as a family and regularly attending Sunday Mass will show your child that religion is truly an important part of your life. Enrolling your child in this program is a very important part of their faith formation, but we need your cooperation. Please read through the policies in this handbook, and sign and return the bottom of the last page. If a situation arises that is not addressed in this handbook, please feel free to call the office at 732-254-5819.

*Rev. Kenneth Murphy
Pastor*

*Mrs. Irene Foret
Director of Religious Education*

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

*Religious Education classes for all grades, one through eight, are held on Wednesdays, from **4:30 until 5:45 PM**. Please do not have children arrive earlier than 4:15, as there is no adult supervision until that time. Students will enter the front doors of the school (facing MacArthur Ave.), and proceed directly to the cafeteria for prayers and announcements. Then the children will go to their respective classrooms with their teachers. Dismissal will be from the side door (closest to Main Street). Parents are asked to park in the designated parking spaces only (not along the curb) and use extreme caution when entering/exiting that area during dismissal time.*

Calendar

*A calendar is given to all children on the first day of class. As a rule, classes are held every Monday unless it is a **legal** holiday closing the Sayreville Public Schools or if St. Stanislaus Kostka School is closed. Special notices will be sent out for Sacrament classes as necessary.*

Office Hours/School Closings

*The director may be reached from 3:45 until 5:45 on Mondays, at the school office, (732-254-5819). For business outside these hours, please call the school office and leave a message. In case of inclement weather, emergency closings will be announced on radio station WCTC-1450 AM. As a rule, if Sayreville Public Schools and/or St. Stanislaus Kostka School are closed for inclement weather, there will be no Religious Education classes. **If there is an early dismissal or delayed opening because of inclement weather, there will be NO Religious Education Classes.***

Emergency Numbers

Please make sure that the office has a current phone number as well as an emergency phone number where you can be reached during Religious Education time in the event of a child's illness during class.

Behavior

The students of St. Stanislaus Kostka Religious Education Program are expected to show courtesy and respect for the teachers and one another. Students are expected to follow the "Student Code of Behavior" listed below. In some cases, the parent will be notified, and the child may be removed from the program.

Student Code of Behavior

- *Students are expected to show respect for all persons in words and actions.*
- *Students must conform to the attendance policy stated in the handbook.*
- *Students should comply with the classroom rules set out by their Catechist in the interest of providing a good learning environment.*
- *Students must do nothing that could cause physical harm to themselves or to another.*
- *Students must not destroy, deface or remove property from the school building.*
- *Students are responsible for completing all in – class and homework assignments to the best of their ability and according to the time schedule provided.*

Homework

Written homework may be assigned on a weekly basis. It is the student's responsibility to see that all assignments are done on time. The progress report will reflect this.

Weekly Mass Attendance

*All students are expected to attend Sunday (or Saturday evening) Mass. This is an extremely important part of faith formation. Since the teacher will use examples from weekly Masses in their lessons, it is an essential part of coming prepared to class. The Confirmation classes will be given notebooks to be brought with them to Mass, to take notes for their weekly Mass summaries. **In order to re-register for the Religious Education program, a student and their family must be active in Church attendance. A family's Church attendance is tracked by their participation in our envelope program.***

Announcements

Important announcements concerning the Religious Education Program will be in the Parish Bulletin, distributed at each Mass on Sundays and Saturday evenings. Please check the Bulletin regularly for announcements concerning Religious Education.

Textbooks

With the exception of the eighth grade, which uses a version of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, students will use the "Blest Are We Faith and Word" series of textbooks. All students are to bring their book, a notebook, and a pen/pencil to every class. This is extremely important, as an unprepared student causes disruption to the class.

Fees

There is a fee for re-registration and new registration for the Religious Education Program. There is an additional fee of \$40.00 for classes receiving First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Child Abuse Policy

If a teacher or the director suspects a child has been abused, New Jersey State Statutes require that the Division of Youth and Family Services be notified immediately.

Drug Abuse Policy

Students are prohibited from bringing illegal drugs, including alcohol and cigarettes, to class. If a student is found to be in possession of an illegal substance, the student will be detained until the police and parents are notified.

Parent Meetings

Meetings are held for parents of second grade students for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, as well as parents of eighth grade students for Confirmation. At least one parent from each family must attend these meetings, which will be announced in the parish bulletin, as well as in class. If a parent cannot attend a parent meeting, it is the responsibility of the parent to get the pertinent meeting information from the teacher.

Progress Reports

*Student progress reports will be distributed two times during the school year. These are very important tools used to keep the family informed of the student's progress as far as testing, knowledge of content, and completion of assignments. Dates for progress report distribution will be on the calendar. **An interim report will be sent home in December to parents of those students in danger of failing so that ample time is given to raise their grades before the year ends. Those failing at the end of the year will repeat the grade.***

Attendance

*Students are expected to attend all classes, except in case of illness. **Parents should call the office (732) 254-5819 prior to the beginning of class to report a child absent for that day. Parents should ensure that the child completes any make-up work that the absent child missed. No more than 3 unexcused absences will be permitted or the grade may be repeated. This is a continuous eight year program; therefore, if a child leaves the program, he or she will be admitted to the grade following the year which they left. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE 3 ABSENCE ATTENDANCE POLICY WILL BE ENFORCED.***

Sacramental Policies

*Sacramental programs at St. Stanislaus are considered parish programs, since all children of the parish are included, including those children attending the parish school. Two years of immediate preparation are required before receiving a sacrament, therefore new students will not be admitted to grades two and eight without proof of completion of a first or seventh grade program at another parish. First Holy Communion will always be the first Saturday in May. The dates for the other sacraments (Reconciliation and Confirmation) are announced as soon as they are confirmed. Rehearsals for sacraments are normally held in the afternoons. These are extremely important, and therefore, **mandatory** for each sacramental recipient. For Confirmation, one of the rehearsals must also be attended by their child's sponsor.*

Guidelines for specific requirements for each sacrament are given to the parents at their respective parent meetings; however, here are some general guidelines for sacraments:

First Reconciliation

*This sacrament is received by the second grade, a few months prior to First Holy Communion. It is generally held on a weeknight during January; the specific date will be communicated to the parents as soon as it is confirmed. There will be approximately two **mandatory rehearsals** for the students receiving this sacrament.*

First Holy Communion

*This sacrament is received by the second grade on the **first Saturday in May, in the morning**. There are mandatory rehearsals and a retreat for the children during the week prior to First Communion. The First Communion class also participates in the May Crowning in church on the following day at the 9:00 Mass. Please keep these dates and times in mind before planning parties. A \$35.00 fee is charged of all communicants. This covers the expenses for the church including booklets, flowers, etc., as well as Rosaries, scapulars, and prayer books for each child. **The parish will provide the girls with veils and the boys with ties and arm bows; please do NOT purchase these items.** Girls are required to wear a white dress (as there are many steps in and outside of the Church, we **STRONGLY DISCOURAGE** girls wearing floor length gowns) with white socks or stockings, **FLAT** shoes, and the veil provided by the parish. No excessive jewelry or make-up is permitted. **NO gloves, purses, flowers, etc.,** may be carried into church. Boys must wear a **navy blue suit**, white shirt with black **DRESS** shoes, and the arm band and tie provided by the parish. No flash photography is permitted during the Mass. For your convenience, the parish hires a professional videographer and photographer. Videos may be ordered in advance; order forms will be sent home. The photographer will take individual and group photos after the Mass. **PLEASE direct all questions involving this important sacrament to the Director well before First Holy Communion Day.***

Confirmation

Beginning in the fall of eighth grade, students are required to complete a weekly journal, summarizing and reflecting on the gospel and homily of the Mass they attend. They must also sign an attendance book at Mass (in the bell room at the rear of the church). If a student cannot attend Mass at St. Stan's on any given weekend, they must obtain the Parish Bulletin from the church they attended, with the signature of the priest presiding at that Mass. Candidates must provide a CURRENT COPY of their Baptismal and First Holy Communion Certificates (these can be obtained in the parish office where these sacraments were received). Each confirmation candidate must choose a sponsor well in advance of the sacrament, to help them in their faith formation and preparation for the sacrament. The sponsor must be a practicing Catholic, at least 14 years of age. It may be a relative, but not a parent of the student. The sponsor must have an official (raised seal) document from their parish, testifying to the fact that they meet the requirements of being a sponsor. Each candidate must also research and write a report on a saint whose name they will take during Confirmation. The specific requirements and dates of completion for these and other projects will be given by the eighth grade teacher. There are MANDATORY rehearsals before Confirmation, and all sponsors are required to attend one of these rehearsals.

*St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish
Religious Education
Program*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT
PARENT HANDBOOK
2018 – 2019

(To be signed and returned)

I acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook containing the policies, rules, and regulations for the St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Religious Education Program. I understand and agree that the

Handbook is binding on the students and parents during the current academic year. I understand the administration of the program will have the authority set forth in the Handbook and retains all rights to abridge, amend, and add to these policies as needed or necessary.

I understand the policies, rules, and regulations contained in the Handbook are established for the welfare and benefit of all Religious Education students. I accept my responsibility to support the Office of Religious Education in the policies it has established, and to see that my child adheres to the rules and regulations set forth in the Handbook.

Name of Student _____ *Grade* ____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____