



Sacred Heart

RE

Handbook

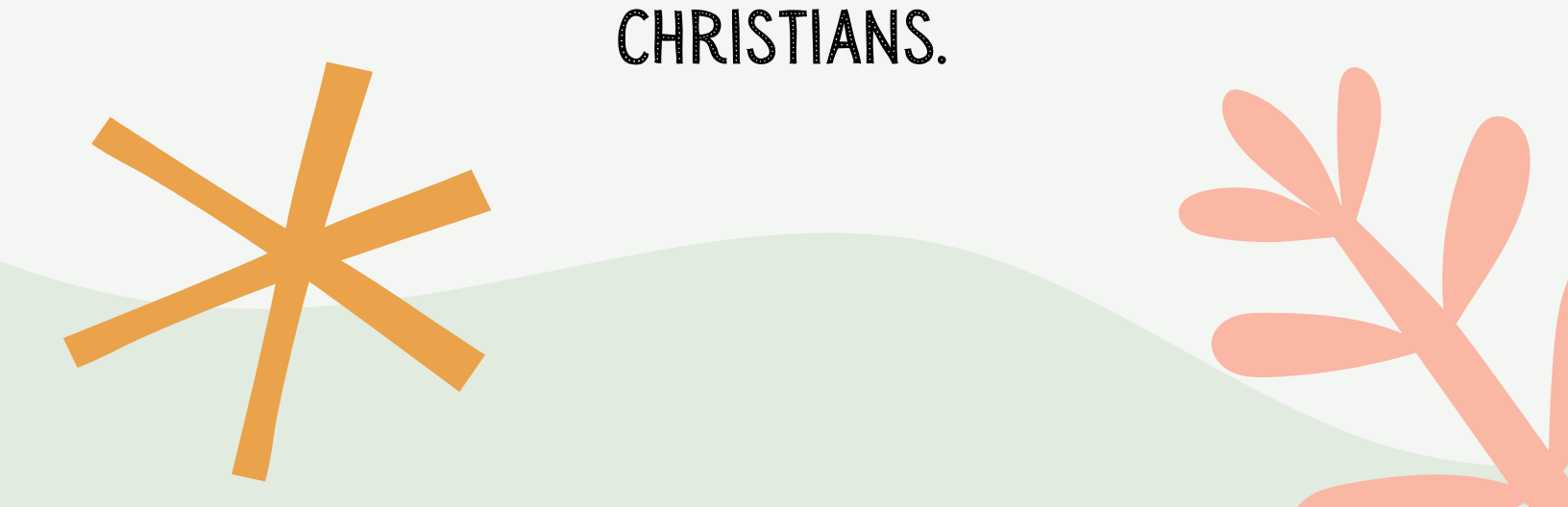
2026-2027





Mission

THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE EFFORT OF OUR PARISH FAMILY, PARENTS, CATECHISTS AND STUDENTS, OUR CHILDREN WILL GROW IN THEIR LOVE FOR GOD ACKNOWLEDGE OF THEIR CATHOLIC FAITH, DEVELOP THEIR GOD-GIVEN GIFTS AND TALENTS AND LIVE AS CONTRIBUTING, RESPECTABLE CITIZENS THROUGH THEIR COMMITMENT TO SERVICE AS CATHOLIC CHRISTIANS.



RE STAFF

Jennifer Eastes - Director of Religious Education
785-691-9204 , mrseastesfh@gmail.com

Nancy Lanza - Director of Religious Education
914-646-9120, cfoureb@mgn.com

Preschool - Abigail Blanka, Adlen Johnson & Audrey Wengel

Kindergarten - Jessica Zulauf

1st Grade - Cathy Glassman

2nd Grade - Bailey Shirley

3rd Grade - Carolyn Gould

4th Grade - Rachel Cole

5th Grade - Mia Gardner

6th Grade - Carla Jung

Confirmation Small Group Leaders - Jennifer Eastes,
Melissa Fox, Cora Lanza, Molly McKeithen & Teresa
Mugstain

4th TEENS - Nancy Lanza

REGISTRATION

Registration forms can be found on the youth bulletin board or they're available to print on the parish website. New families will need to submit a Certificate of Baptism for each child registering. Returning families do NOT need to fill out a registration form each year. There is no registration fee for religious education.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Classes will begin the Sunday following Labor Day and will end the last week of April. No classes will be held during May.

Preschool (3 & 4 year olds) - Father Mark or Deacon Ron will dismiss after the Gospel reading during the 10:30 Mass.

Kindergarten - 5th grade - Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15

6th-12th grade - Wednesday evenings from 6-7:30

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

It is important that students arrive on time for religious education classes. Please do not drop students off any earlier than 10 minutes prior to class start time and be prompt when picking your child up at the end of class. Please be sure your child is able to get into the building before you leave.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The students' regular attendance is indispensable. Do your best to schedule events around Religious Education classes and Mass on Sundays and holy days. If Mass and RE classes are not made to be a priority, then the children may get the idea that other things are more important than their Catholic faith.

If your child has to miss class for an extended period, please let the RE office know, so that arrangements can be made.

Having regular attendance in Religious Education (RE) classes is an important component to your child's religious formation. Each class session builds onto the previous to emphasize a central focus for the year. Faith formation is lifelong. Children need to participate in the religious education program every year and not be removed after the celebration of a sacrament.

SACRAMENT SCHEDULE

First Communion is celebrated each year, usually the last weekend of April. Be sure and look at the year-at-a-glance calendar each year for the exact date. This sacrament is typically celebrated by 2nd graders who have met all requirements. Confirmation is celebrated in the fall of even years. Students must be entering the 7th or 8th grade in the fall of even years to begin this two-year program.

4:THIRTEENS (YOUTH GROUP)

Youth of the parish in grades 9th - 12th are part of this group. Registration forms must be filled out even if the youth isn't involved in other religious education classes. Each month the youth group will participate in a service project and one fellowship activity. Always check the youth bulletin board, Sacred Heart Religious Education Facebook page or the parish website for information.

CLASS CANCELLATIONS

If Tonganoxie schools are cancelled for inclement weather, Religious Education classes will also be cancelled. If Tonganoxie schools are in session, but weather conditions have worsened or are predicted to worsen, classes may be cancelled. Families should check the website (www.shcct.com). Please 'like' our Facebook page - Sacred Heart Religious Education. Cancellations will also be posted there. Also, a Flocknote will be sent to the RE group. In the event we have not cancelled classes and you feel like the roads are not safe, please keep your child home.

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

The Archdiocese requires that any employee or volunteer who may have contact with children must submit to a criminal history background check before beginning their volunteer assignment and attend a 'Protecting God's Children Workshop.'

COMMUNICATION

We are here to serve the religious education needs of our children, youth and adults. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to share them with your child's catechist or call the Religious Ed office. We will use Flocknote to make any announcements regarding all religious education. There are separate messaging groups set up for each grade level and one for the general Religious Education group.

FLOCKNOTE

Registered families will be placed in the proper groups. You don't need to do anything to receive messages. If you'd like to reach your child's teacher, either reply to a message they've sent you or you can log into Flocknote and send a message.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

At least one service activity is planned each month for students in 6th-12th grades. Youth are not required to volunteer at all service activities, but participation is encouraged. Volunteering at the service activity is one of the determining factors when awarding scholarships for summer camps. There are also activities planned for K-5th grade students monthly as well.

CURRICULUM

Sacred Heart Religious Education uses Gospel Weeklies as the main curriculum.

The format for the Sunday session is as follows:

8:55 a.m. - Whole group gathering
(praise & worship music, saint mini-lesson, opening prayer & announcements)

9:15 a.m. - Students are dismissed to individual classrooms to begin individual instruction. (Gospel Weekly Lesson)

All students will bring home the Gospel Weekly leaflet and one take home activity in a folder. This gives families an opportunity to discuss the content throughout the week. We ask that the folders be brought back to class EVERY WEEK!

10:15 a.m. - Dismissal, parents please come to the Religious Ed hallway to greet your child. We don't want to send them out to a busy parking lot.

The format for the Wednesday session is as follows:

6:00 p.m. - Dinner

6:30 p.m. - Break into individual class sessions.

6th grade - Individual Gospel Weekly Lesson

Confirmation Small Groups - Chosen Curriculum

4:thirTEENs - faith in action discussions, service/fellowship activities, team-building activities, Catholic Social Teachings

7:30 p.m. - Dismissal

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline in the Sacred Heart Parish Religious Education Program is the training and strengthening of the child's character in accordance with Christian principles and the promotion of order within the learning environment. All disciplinary action is administered only as a deterrent from non-Christian behavior and to provide an atmosphere where learning and religious virtue may prevail.

In order to function properly, Sacred Heart youth programs must provide equal learning opportunity for all students. Conduct from any student that causes disruption in or an interference with the learning process or atmosphere within the religious education program is prohibited. Inappropriate behavior will NOT be tolerated.

Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- *disrespect to catechists, assistant and/or other students whether verbal or by gesture
- *unnecessary talking or making inappropriate noises
- *any behavior or attitude which distracts from a Christian learning environment or indicates that the student does not wish to be in the program.

If a student continues his/her disruptive behavior or attitude after the catechists have asked the student to stop the distractions or interruptions, the student will be asked to leave the classroom and report to the Religious Education Director for a short period of time. At the director's discretion, it may be necessary to call his/her parents.

DISCIPLINE

The second time a student is excused from the classroom for disciplinary reasons, the student will report to the director and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately of their child's behavior. The child will remain with the director until the end of class or until the parent comes to pick up their child.

The third time a student is required to leave the classroom because of inappropriate behavior, the student reports to the director and the parents are called; the student remains with the director. At the close of class the catechist, student, parent and director will meet to discuss possible solutions or consequences. If the parents are unable to meet at this time, the student will be asked to withdraw from the Religious Education program until a parent conference is held.

The following procedures may be recommended by the director:

- *having a parent present in the classroom with their child
- *conference with the pastor
- *removal of the student from the program from the remainder of the year

RECONCILIATION

Students are provided the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent & Lent.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Our program is only possible through the help of many volunteers. Here are the areas for you to consider helping out:

- *Catechist (teacher) - introduce students to Jesus and our wonderful Catholic traditions by allowing them to witness your love for Christ and the teachings of the Church.

- *Substitute catechist - lesson plans are provided

- *Catechist assistant - help the primary catechist

- *Drivers - be available to drive youth to various activities

- *Weekly Meal Prep - provide a meal on a Wednesday for 6th - 12th graders

If you are interested in any of these volunteer positions or have other gifts you'd like to share, please contact the Religious Ed. Office.

Please be aware that all volunteers who have contact with children must:

- *Submit to a criminal history background check before beginning their volunteer assignment

- *attend a "Protecting God's Children Workshop"

- *Review, monthly, the Safe Environments Policy set by the Archdiocese of Kansas City

PARENT'S ROLE IN RE

"Parents are the first and foremost catechist of their children.

They catechize informally but powerfully by example and instructions. They communicate values and attitudes by showing love for Christ and his Church and for each other, by reverently receiving the Eucharist and living in its spirit, by fostering justice and love in all their relationships. Their active involvement in the parish, their readiness to seek opportunities to serve others and their practice of frequent prayer, all make meaningful their profession of belief. Parents nurture faith in their children by showing them the richness and beauty of the lived faith."

(Sharing the Light of Faith – National Catechetical Directory for the United States)

You must be your child's primary example in matters of faith.

Church authorities have helped us by developing positive laws called Precepts of the Church (listed below) to ensure our growth in our love of God and neighbor. We are obliged as Catholics to meet these minimum requirements of our faith (CCC 2041-2043).

As parents, we need to pass these precepts on to our children.

This can make a big difference in their spiritual journey.

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and on Holy Days of Obligation and rest from those work and activities, which would keep us from going to Mass on these days.
2. Confess our sins at least once a year.

PARENT'S ROLE IN RE

3. Receive Holy Communion at least during the Easter Season. (If you have committed any mortal sins you should not receive Holy Communion until you go to confession.)
4. Observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. Provide the needs of the Church according to your ability.

Prayer is also a tremendous gift from God that will aid in our children's spiritual journey. God hears and answers our prayers. When we are faced with difficult decisions we often pray the prayers we memorized as children. We need to pass on these traditional prayers so our children have them to fall back on as well. Parents are responsible for helping their children memorize these prayers. Catechists will periodically test the children on their prayers. Please work with them on memorizing their prayers.



REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Sacrament preparation for First Communion begins as children are entering 2nd grade. There are circumstances in which older students are requesting this sacrament prep. Accommodations will be made to ensure students are prepared to receive the sacrament. This may look different for the older students. Please visit with a RE director to discuss the situation and come up with a plan.

First Reconciliation occurs on the first Saturday in December. First Communion Mass is the last Sunday in April and practice is the Friday prior.

Class Attendance - Students are expected to attend at least 80% of the class sessions in order to receive this sacrament. If any student has excessive absences without a valid reason, it is possible they will be asked to receive this sacrament the following year.

Mass Attendance - The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "On Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass..." "Since a 'grave cause' is needed to excuse one from this obligation it would be a serious or mortal sin to willfully skip Mass on Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation, as the Church has always taught. Reasons such as the necessity to work to support one's family, child care, personal sickness or the care of the sick, necessary travel, etc. would excuse a person on a particular occasion. Those who have continuing reason to be excused should consult the pastor."

REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Students are expected to attend Mass at least 80% in order to receive this sacrament. If any student has excessive absences, it is possible they will be asked to receive this sacrament the following year.

'Mass slips' are located on the youth bulletin board. Students should take one, write their name on it and hand it to Father Mark or Deacon Ron following Mass. This gives the students a chance to build a relationship with the priest/deacon. If families attend Mass at another parish, they are asked to turn in a bulletin from that parish to the classroom teacher or the RE office (be sure to write the child's name on it!).

First Communion Attire - First Communion is a special significant event in your child's faith formation, as a result we recommend their attire reflect that. No jeans or t-shirts should be worn. If needed, the parish has resources to help with attire.

Girls: Traditionally, girls wear white dresses with white shoes. The dress should be modest. If the dress is strapless, a white sweater should be worn with it. A veil is not required, but traditionally girls have worn either a veil, flowers or a tiara. White gloves are ok for pictures, but cannot be worn during Mass

Boys: We recommend dark dress pants, white collared shirt with a tie or bow tie. The tie should be traditional (no characters). Boys are also allowed to wear all white.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONFIRMATION

Sacrament preparation for Confirmation begins in the fall of odd years for children who are entering 7th or 8th grades. There are circumstances in which older students are requesting the sacrament prep. Accommodation will be made to ensure students are prepared to receive the sacrament. This may look different for the older students. Please visit with a RE director to discuss the situation and come up with a plan.

Class Attendance - Students are expected to attend at least 80% of class sessions in order to receive this sacrament. If any student has excessive absences without a valid reason, it is possible they will be asked to participate in additional course study or receive this sacrament at a later time.

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Candidates will work in small groups (4-5 youth) with an adult leader. These groups typically remain the same throughout the program. This is intended to encourage more intentional discussions and hopefully build genuine relationships.

At least one service activity is planned each month for students in 6th - 12th grades. Youth are not required to volunteer at all service activities, but participation is encouraged. Students in the confirmation program are required to complete six (6) parish sponsored service activities per year (12 total).

Candidates entering the confirmation prep program will receive an additional handbook specific to their program.