

LNMV RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM
2011-2012 CATECHIST HAND BOOK

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Volunteer Positions

Catechist: Prepare weekly lessons. Teach, engage and evangelize while teaching. Help each child to build a loving and lasting relationship with Jesus.

Co-Catechist: Team teaches with another adult by either rotating weeks or share teaching each week.

Classroom Aide: Be present in the classroom to aide the Catechist in keeping students on task and other classroom tasks.

Class Start Time

Classes begin at 6:15 and continue until 7:30pm on Wednesday evenings. We ask all our Catechists and aides to be here 10 minutes before class begins. Please instruct your students that they should not be in the room without their aide or catechist in the room. Opening prayer over the all school speaker system will be prompt at 6:15pm. Please have your class stop what they are doing, listen to any announcements and/or teaching and to participate in the prayer when prompted.

Class Release Time

Class release time is at 7:30, please keep your students in the room until 7:30pm, if some classes are let out early it can make it difficult for the some catechists to finish their lessons when the halls are busy. Please close your class with prayer before sending them home.

For Catechists in grades 1-4:

Parents are instructed that they must pick up their child from your room or make arrangements for an older sibling to pick them up. Carpools are common; parents have been instructed to arrange that ahead of time with you so you know who you are releasing the child to. This is for the child's safety. If you have a late parent, please feel free to walk to the office area to wait for them.

Mail Folders – Communication

Communication is always a trick when everyone is dropping off children and picking them all up at the same time. We are asking all Catechists to check their grade’s mail folder which will be located on the front desk in the main office each week BEFORE class. Notices of absences, handouts and communication letters will be placed in them each week. There will also be a folder for Lisa Lehman, the program coordinator and Kathy Chlan, DRE. Please place anything you need to return to them, this assures that it does not get set aside in the business of the evening. Communication is important if you have questions or need to call one of us the contact information will be posted on the last page of this booklet.

Volunteer Training Requirements

Protecting God’s Children Safety program is a requirement by the diocese for any volunteer who is has a regular presence with minors must complete what is known as The Essential 3. All parishes need to comply with the program. Before regular contact with children or within 30 days of helping in any program, volunteers must complete three requirements.

First requirement: Attend a Virtus training class. Virtus training classes are held all over the twin city area several times a month. To register at one of the classes please follow the log information posted here:

To **pre-register** for a VIRTUS session, please follow these steps:

1. Go to www.virtus.org
2. Click on the “Registration” link in the left-hand column
3. Select “Saint Paul and Minneapolis (Archdiocese)” from the drop down box
4. Create your own “User ID” and “Password”

Follow the screen prompts to continue the on-line registration.

Second Requirement: Read and sign a Code of Conduct Form, this will be provided at the in-service training.

Third Requirement: Complete and sign a background check form, this will be sent to you or provided at the in-service training.

Contact Information

Kathy Chlan

Director of LNMV Religious Education

kchlan@holycrossschool.net

Phone: 952-652-6100 ext 507 – wed. pm and message checked daily

952-461-2403 – Tuesday and Wed. AM

952-652-2286 – after hours emergencies

Lisa Lehman

Coordinator of LNMV Religious Education

lisal@churchofstnicholas.com

Phone: 952-461-2403

Mailing Address:

PO Box 9

Elko-New Market, MN 55020

Immaculate Conception Parish office

Monday & Wednesday

lcparish@means.net

507-744-2829

Most Holy Trinity Parish Office

Friday mornings

Phone: 507-744-2823

Weather cancellations

The children and teachers in our program come from multiple districts and because every district often has different closing policies and close while others remain open, etc. We will NOT be cancelling class based on one school district decision made in the early morning hours due to the fact that severe weather changes during the day or bad weather can develop late in the day which may cause the cancellation of evening classes. While some districts may have closed in the early morning, if the weather improved classes **will be** held in the evening.

We will be using a calling tree to notify teachers that classes have been cancelled as well as weather announcements will be added to KARE 11 School Alert. Teachers can then call and notify their students, please divide the list between the aide or co-catechist in the room. We have also asked parents to please check the Communications section of the LNMV Religious Ed web page at http://www.churchofstnicholas.com/religious_education.php to verify if classes have been cancelled. If weather develops late we will post the cancelation by 4:30pm.

Protecting God's Children

Archbishop Nienstedt is committed to fully meeting the expectations of the US Bishops because protecting children is part of our rich and long Roman Catholic tradition as summarized in the "Principles for Child Protection Catechesis" In keeping with the requirements of the US Bishops, every parish is to provide safety formation annually at each grade level. Because archdiocese expects full participation from every student registered in our programs we need to take extra care to take attendance on the evening designated as the week we do the safety teaching as noted on the calendar. These classes are taught by our catechists and the lesson materials will be given to each catechist one month prior to the class. Children in Grades 1- 4 will use **NetSmartz** lessons in the FEP classroom. Grade 5-8 will be the same, using **Out of Harm's Way**. Grades 9 & 10 will use **Safe & Sacred Spaces** and **Breaking the Silence** for the basis of their safety education in the FEP classroom.

If your class absences are too high (9-10%) please talk with the DRE and to possibly rescheduled for another evening or if a make-up sessions should be offered for those who were absent.

Web Page

We are currently working on the web page for Religious Ed. It has taken a little longer than anticipated but things should be in full swing with updates by mid September. To avoid extra costs of hosting a website just for religious education, we are using a page off the Church of St. Nicholas Web site. We have posted the actual link to the page for LNMV Religious Education of http://www.churchofstnicholas.com/religious_education.php or you can access directly from the church website. We have a separate menu and working on having pictures from all three parishes on this page. We will be able to post recent news, weather updates, copies of forms, calendar, etc. If you have any requests for information on the website please let us know. There will be a page for Catechists where we will have some common forms as well as other information.

Student Text Books

Grades 1-8

We use the Faith and Life Series by Ignatius Press for grades 1-8. We have ordered NEW text books, Third Edition, for the students this year to reflect the changes in the third Roman Missal. The Text Books are NOT to be written as we re-use them each year to save costs. We order activity books for students to write in and to be used in the classroom or as homework assignments, these activity books the students can bring home with them at the end of the year. Please take time to understand the Teacher's manuals they give well laid out lesson plans and suggestions for weekly teaching. The Ignatius website also provides well laid out lesson plans along with quiz and unit test files. The quiz and unit test files require a parish password which is: EKX83LF . The website is: <http://www.ignatius.com/promotions/FaithAndLife/downloads.htm> If you do not have access to the website, we have folders of the information printed out.

Grades 9 and 10

Both grades will be using the text book "The Catholic Faith Handbook" for youth by Saint Mary's Press, The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Holy Bible. The 9th grade class will also be in the T3 "The Teen Timeline Bible Study" T3 is a resource of The Great Adventure Bible Study System. The students will begin to understand the basic "story" of the Bible and how the 73 books go together as well as the importance of different people in the Bible and their role in the journey to know and love God. The Handbook for youth is a study guide that follows the same structure as the Catechism of the Catholic Church and presents the essential teachings of the CCC by using language and examples that will be easier for students to understand. The 10th grade class will also focus on the Sacrament of Confirmation, understanding their roles in the Church after confirmation and defending the faith.

intercom system to help with congestion. Once in the Gym we ask that the younger students please sit as a class on the floor as a group. Please sit on two sides facing the front of the event and form an aisle. Grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 please sit in the bleachers, and fill the bleachers from the top down. We will have chairs along the outside on the floor area for the teachers to sit on. Events scheduled this year will be a teaching on Adoration in November, Our Lady of Guadalupe in December, Confessions and Stations of the Cross in March.

Prayer Testing

Prayer testing for all grade levels is scheduled for the same evening in March during regular class time. How this is done will be left up to each catechist. You can test each child individually in a quiet corner of your classroom or hallway, as a group, if you have a classroom aide they can help you with individual testing as well as group testing to make sure each student has knowledge of their prayers. You can also use fill in the blank written tests. Some catechists are creative and come up with a different way to do testing in the classroom. The result of prayer testing is to help identify those students who need extra help and encouragement in the memorization of those prayers. If you need help in your classroom, don't hesitate to ask the parents of your students to help or check with us about additional volunteers. Children memorizing prayers is an important piece as they form their relationship with God.

There is a prayer testing grid for your classroom in the teacher's folder, please turn this in before the end of the year or when you feel testing is finished in your classroom. Also provided in your folder is a copy of a parent letter with the testing results for them. It is important to maintain communication with our parents, as the primary educators of their children. If their child needs help with memorizing a few prayers this helps the parents to know what to concentrate on at home. Please send the letter home with the child or if you feel it should be mailed please drop off in the communication envelope in the office.

continued education of the student will be completed with the help of the parents.

Student Expectations

- **Respect school and student property.** Wipe muddy feet before entering the building, use garbage cans for garbage, do not sit or stand on desks or tables. Keep hands out of day-students' desks and off of day-class items, if this is not observed it could lead to disciplinary action.
- **Respect yourself, your peers and all the teachers.** Listen quietly when someone is talking and speak with good manners. Keep hands and feet to yourself. Do not run in the hallways. The Gym is only used with permission.
- **Arrive prepared to learn and to contribute positively to the class.** (Read chapters, complete assignments, and practice prayers regularly.)
- Students are not to bring I-pods, cell phones, headphones, food, drink, gum, weapons, toys, or anything else to class that will cause distractions. Any items brought to class that does NOT have to do with Religion should be confiscated. You may return at the end of class time but for multiple offenses you can turn it in to the office.
- Appropriate dress: Students should dress respectfully for class; **NO** hats, caps, tank tops, t-shirts with inappropriate sayings, or short shorts are allowed.
- Students that make a threat of any kind to their teacher, peers, helpers or parents, will immediately result with dismissal from the program

Special Events

Throughout the year there will be special events in the Gym for the whole student body. A list of the scheduled events will be provided for you. Most events will take place at 6:45 unless otherwise noted. This leaves time in your classrooms to take attendance and work on a partial lesson or prepare students for the special event for the evening. Students will be dismissed by grade levels over the

Resources

There is a list in the three ring binders for each grade level that has a list of resources, books, games and DVD's. Because of storage, making arrangements at least three days in advance will assure that they will be available for you. On site resources available every Wednesday night include: Markers, glue sticks, children scissors, 40 rosaries, and crayons. If you have a suggestion for a resource that would be of value for the curriculum please submit the request in writing to the DRE for a budget and resource review.

Making Copies

The copy machine at the School is available for our use. To keep track of paper and copy costs, our program has its own code for the copy machine. That code is 6434. Please do not share this code with anyone except catechists. When you are able to plan ahead it is always helpful. If you have something in a word document or scanned please feel free to e-mail or drop off your papers to Lisa Lehman at lisal@churchofstnicholas.com by Monday noon with how many copies you need. They will be in your communications folder on Wednesday evening. If you need to make copies the night of religion class I would like to suggest that you come in 20 minutes earlier to relieve the stress of making copies and getting into the classroom on time. Often times several people are waiting for the copy machine at the same time. If you do not need the copies until 20 minutes after class starts check to see if a volunteer or Coordinator is in the office and available to make the copies and take them to your classroom that evening. The best plan is to be prepared.

Attendance Policy

Each room is to take attendance each week. We will be asking for these records to be turned in. Students whose parents reported an absence to the office prior to class beginning, you will find a notice in your mail box folder and can be marked as and excused absence. Occasionally you will have an unexcused absence, but a parent

called in a left a message after class time began, we will put the notice and date of absence in your mail folder so you are able to adjust and keep accurate records. Copies of attendance records are in your in-service folder and will be available on the website in the future.

Welcome your Students

Parents when calling in absences sometimes do not know the name of their child's teacher. It is nice if they have something in writing from their child's teacher. Introduce yourself to your student's parents by sending a note or letter home with your name and number for any concerns. This helps open up conversation or if we are ever in the need of a volunteer. If you would prefer we have a sample letter in your folder.

Classroom

Those teaching in regular classroom have the chance to get to know the teacher in the room during the day as well as the students. We would like to foster a stronger connection between the day and evening students. Please make a letter of introduction from you, as the Catechist, using the room for religious education in the evening (you can use the sample provided). Some suggestions would be: say a prayer together with the class for the daytime class room; let the daytime class know on a note you said a prayer for them; each week let them know what you are studying and ask one or two questions of the daytime class on how their day was. Building a bridge between daytime and evening classes makes it more personal for the students and a stronger respect for the space they are sharing. Please leave your classroom in the same order you found it. If extra chairs or tables have been set up for your class, please have the students help at the end of the class time by stacking the chairs and folding the table up before they leave.

A map of the building is in the Catechist folder.

Discipline Policy

Some students after being in school all day, come to class unprepared to sit and learn. This can be a challenge for Catechists who are come to teach and pass on the faith. One of the things a Catechist can do is to set the tone by being setting high and clear expectations. Disorderly and disrespectful conduct to catechists- teachers or peers is not acceptable. Resolution will depend upon the severity of the problem and frequency. General guidelines are listed below.

- The classroom aide or catechist will verbally correct the erring student by directing the student to stop the unacceptable behavior and conform to the expected behavior.
- A verbal correction may be followed up with a letter from the student letting the parent know there was an issue. A copy of this letter is provided for the Catechist. The Catechist and aide can determine if the letter should be mailed or set home with the child. If it needs to be mailed, Catechist can drop in the office with the coordinator of the program to mail off the next day. If the behavior continues we move to step 2.
- Step two involves the student being sent to the DRE in the office to discuss the behavior and come up with a plan for the rest of evening.
- Student may return to the classroom upon Catechist and DRE approval. There will be follow up with a notification of parents. If behavior problems continue we move to step 3.
- Step three involves the student doing seat work in the office the remainder of class time. The DRE will contact the parents about the issue and together determine the proper resolution of the problem which could result in the dismissal of the student from the program. A plan for