



Religious Education Department 732- 741-1714 ext. 3

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GUIDELINES

OUR MISSION

The goal of The Church of the Nativity's Religious Education Department is to lead our children to the knowledge and appreciation of the Good News of Jesus as taught by the Catholic Church. All members of our Parish Family are encouraged to help the RE Department instruct each child in our Christian community in the ways and truths of our Catholic faith.

YOUR ROLE AS PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

- *Help your child(ren) to grow and to mature in the Christian community by sharing your knowledge of your Catholic faith.
- *Be registered with The Church of the Nativity parish (this is separate from your RE Parish Giving account), and teach by example by being an active member of the parish.
- *Attend mass regularly with your child(ren) on Sundays and Holy Days and receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist frequently.
- *Teach your child(ren) prayers and how to participate fully during Mass. Mass participation is an integral part of Religious Education.
- *Ensure your child(ren) are prepared for RE class and spend time reviewing what your child(ren) are learning.
- *Parents of a child preparing to receive a sacrament are **required** to participate actively in the preparation process through information meetings, RE classwork and liturgical celebrations.
- ***The learning process is on-going.** Continuing studies are vital to a child's understanding of the Catholic faith and growth in our parish family. Enroll your child(ren) every year to avoid gaps in your child(ren)'s enrichment as a Catholic.

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

- *We require a copy of each child's baptism certificate at registration.
- *Tuition is charged for every student. If a student loses a workbook, a replacement fee of \$25.00 will be charged. There are additional fees for sacrament years. **TUITION MUST BE PAID IN FULL BEFORE YOU CAN REGISTER YOUR CHILD(REN).** Please call the RE Office if you need to discuss tuition issues.
- *If you wish to volunteer as a catechist, please contact the RE office. Catechists who have children in the program receive a discount on tuition.
- *In-person classes are generally held in the Fall/Spring session on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons/evenings, depending on the grade and availability. Please try to

have your child attend **all** classes and related activities. Classes are held in the Parish Center.

*Children preparing for a sacrament are required to attend additional masses or events as outlined in the syllabus provided at the start of the Fall/Spring session.

*If a student will be absent, please call the RE office before the start of class or provide a written note at the next class.

*Make-up assignments are required. Excessive absences will be addressed by the RE Department. Excessive absences or missed assignments may result in a child having to repeat a grade.

*All students are expected to timely complete their lessons as per the syllabus provided. Incomplete lessons, assignments and other RE Department requirements may result in the postponement of the student's grade promotion and sacrament reception.

***Due to the number of children participating in the RE program, the RE Department CANNOT accommodate requests that children be placed together. The goal of the RE program is for children to further their religious education while meeting new people and making new friends in their parish community. "Social groupings" have become disruptive and problematic for the catechists who are trying to teach and for the students who are trying to learn. The RE Department will take certain extreme situations into consideration when placing students in classes, but logistics prevents the department from guaranteeing placement with a certain teacher or with friends. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.**

*Respect is a core value of Nativity's RE program. Improper treatment (touching, offensive language or tone, excessive talking, disobedience, etc.) of or to peers, parish staff, catechists and other volunteers will not be tolerated. Vandalism and/or destruction to parish buildings, grounds or property will result in disciplinary action.

*The middle school students will sign a code of conduct at the start of the school year. The middle school students will be held to a higher standard as they are expected to demonstrate proper behavior to the younger students. Violation of the disciplinary code will be addressed accordingly.

*Regardless of age, all students will be held accountable for their behavior. If a catechist or staff member deems a student's behavior unacceptable, the student will be sent to the RE office and a written warning will be issued. A second offense will result in the student's parent being called, and the student will remain in the office until picked up by a parent. A third offense will result in the student being removed from the RE program with no tuition refund.

*Cellphones will be collected at the start of class and returned at dismissal. The Church of the Nativity and the RE Department are not liable for any damaged or lost phone. If you need to get in touch with a student during class, please contact the RE office.

*You must sign a Self-Dismissal form, acknowledging whether you allow your child to "self-dismiss" (i.e., leave the classroom at dismissal unaccompanied), or you wish to have yourself or a designated person pick up your child from class. The RE Department requires one form per child. No child, regardless of age, will be allowed to leave a classroom alone at dismissal unless a signed Self-Dismissal is on file in the RE office.

*If you have any questions or concerns about these guidelines, please contact the RE office.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION

*Detailed requirements and calendars will be provided for preparation of Reconciliation/First Eucharist (2nd grade) and Confirmation (8th grade).

*During this preparation time, students must attend class and participate in masses and events.

***If a student is determined to be insufficiently prepared, the reception of the sacrament may be postponed.**

SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

The Church of the Nativity is mandated by the Diocese of Trenton under Article 12 of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People to teach a child safety program in the Religious Education Department. Nativity uses Growing with God; this program contains seven short lessons.

Summer and Fall/Spring In-Person Students

Summer: Grades 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7: Distributed at the start of the summer program

Fall/Spring: Grades 1, 2, 7, 8: Distributed as per grade curriculum

*Catechists will teach Lesson 2: Abuse Prevention to all students. The remaining six lessons will be sent home for parents to review with their child(ren).

G.I.F.T. and Home Study Students

Fall G.I.F.T./Home: Grades 3, 4, 5, 6: Distributed to parents at the start of the Fall session when picking up RE workbooks.

The Religious Education Department strongly recommends parents review this important material with their child(ren).

A FINAL NOTE

The Nativity RE Department is dedicated to helping our parish parents in bringing the teachings of the Catholic Church to your children. We understand in today's world, with school, sports and social obligations, religious education may not be prioritized. Therefore, we ask you to re-evaluate the place the Catholic Church holds in your life, the importance of teaching your faith to your children, and what kind of person you wish your child to be. The RE Department will always be available to help you and to work with you to ensure your child becomes a vital member of our parish family.