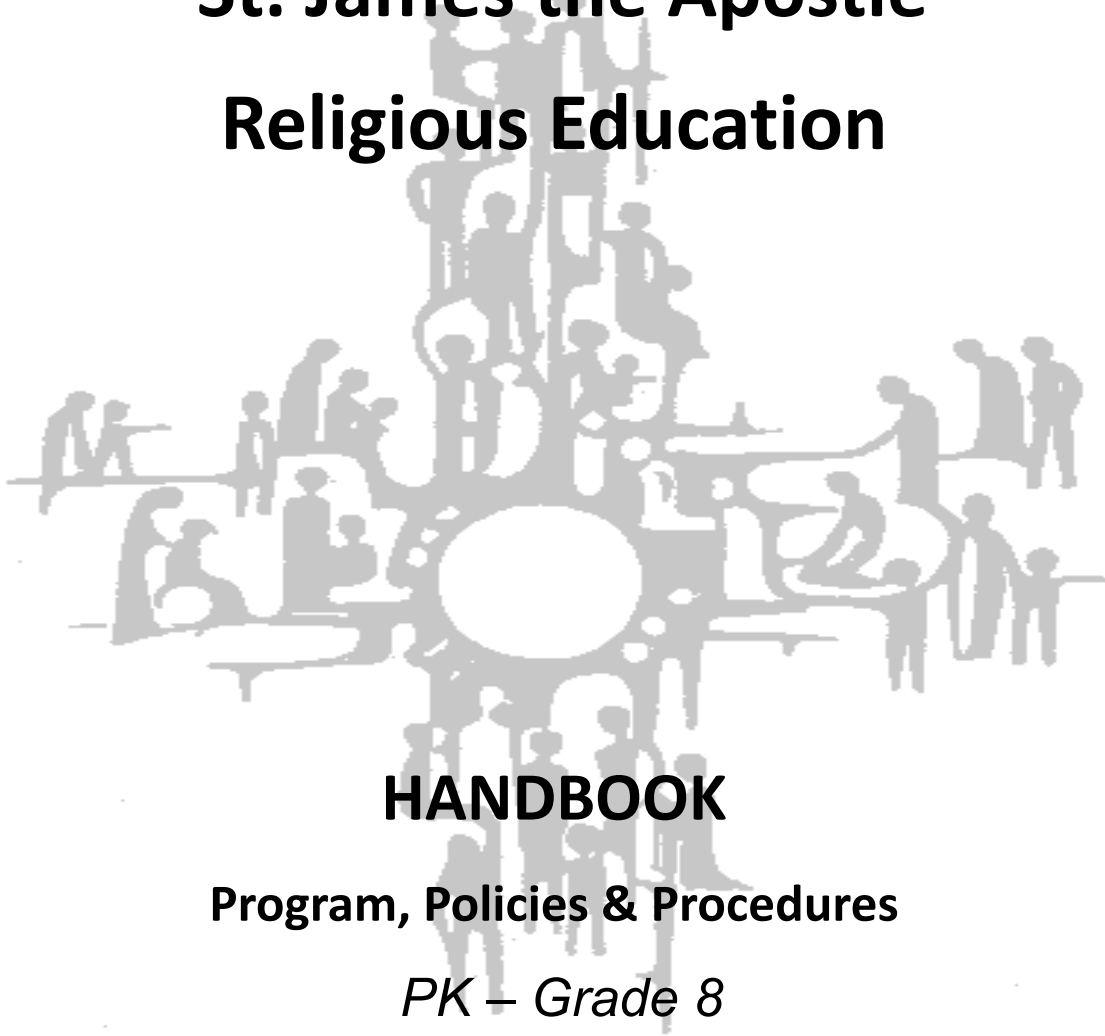


St. James the Apostle Religious Education



HANDBOOK

Program, Policies & Procedures

PK – Grade 8

&

Sacramental Preparation

March 2024

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MISSION & VISION

MISSION STATEMENT

To empower the community of St. James the Apostle Parish through education, service and prayer opportunities to live their faith as disciples of Jesus Christ.

VISION

St. James the Apostle Parish is a blessed and vibrant community. It is a place where ministry flourishes through the commitment of its people and support of the staff. The St. James Religious Education Program is designed to support and nurture the faith life of the children of the parish in accordance with Diocesan policy. In the Blessing of Parents found in the *Rite of Baptism for Children*, it says that “the parents are the first and best teachers in the ways of faith.” In combination with parents, who provide the foremost direction in their child’s faith formation, our program is structured to ensure a quality religious education experience. Opportunities of prayer, scripture, doctrine, service, retreats and liturgical celebrations, appropriate to one’s learning level, are provided to augment the faith passed on to the students by their parents. The goal is to create an atmosphere in which students experience a community of faith: one that prays together, learns together, and comes to care about each other. It is in this sense of community that we believe our program will enhance the traditions of our Catholic heritage into the exuberant faith and selfless service that will be lived in daily life.



COMMUNICATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

RELIGIOUS ED 490 S. Park Blvd, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

OFFICE: (630)858-5646

PARISH WEBSITE www.stjamesge.org

(Click on Religious Education under Faith Formation tab)

(Sacramental Information can be found under the Worship & Sacraments tab)

RELIGIOUS ED STAFF

Coordinator of Religious Education

Lisa Weesner

lweesner@stjamesge.org

Administrative Staff

Jen Guthrie

reo@stjamesge.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BOARD

The Religious Education Board serves as an advisory committee to the Pastor and to the Coordinator of Religious Education on matters of curriculum, finance, and organization of the program. Board members are selected by means of discernment and serve a three-year term. Parishioners interested in serving on the Board should contact the Coordinator of Religious Education.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION

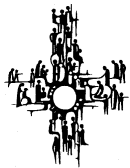
We primarily use email to communicate throughout the year. If your email address changes, please notify us at your earliest convenience.

Ongoing communication is fostered by means of **REminders**. *REminders* is a monthly newsletter emailed throughout the year. Any significant documents, forms or letters are attached to the *REminders* and are also available on the parish website.

CANCELLATIONS & EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Sessions are canceled in the event of dangerous weather conditions or if a problem arises in the building, which makes holding sessions impossible. Notification of cancellations is sent via email. On days of inclement weather, an announcement will also be made at www.emergencyclosing.com. Please check for any announcements prior to dropping your student off.

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

We provide a foundation so that we grow in faith throughout our lives. Our curriculum addresses unit themes in light of one of the four pillars of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The Faith Formation Program for grades 1 - 8 uses texts approved by the Diocese of Joliet and by the USCCB (United States Council of Catholic Bishops). Included in the chapters are the Nicene Creed, the sacramental rites of the church and Church tradition.

Sessions for grades 1-8 take place at St. James the Apostle School. Classes run for 1 ½ hours on Tuesdays or Wednesdays from 4:30-6:00 PM beginning in September through the end of April.

Grade 1: *Finding God by Loyola Press* Concepts include: God, our Father; Who is Jesus?; the Sign of the Cross; Hail Mary; the Church; Foundation for the Preparation of the Sacraments of 1st Reconciliation & Holy Eucharist

Grade 2: *God's Gift of Reconciliation and God's Gift of Eucharist by Loyola Press* Concepts include: Reinforcement of the concepts of Grade 1 to deepen understanding of the Sacraments of Initiation; Sin and forgiveness; the Ten Commandments; the Mass; Preparation for Reception of the Sacraments of 1st Reconciliation & Holy Eucharist

Grades 3-6: *Blest Are We by RCL Benziger* Concepts include: Builds on the concepts of Grades 1 & 2 through study of the Gospels; the Ten Commandments; the Old Testament; the Creed; Jesus' miracles; Mary and how to pray the rosary; Stations of the Cross; Discipleship; the Beatitudes; the Sacraments

Grade 7-8: Called To Be Catholic and Confirmed In The Spirit by Loyola Press Concepts include: Reinforces previous years' concepts; New concepts on how to make life choices grounded in faith; How to develop patterns for life-long spirituality; Moral choices; Using the Gifts of the Holy Spirit; The call to serve others; Preparation for Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation in Grade 8

SPECIAL LESSONS In addition to these concepts, special lessons are provided during the year to familiarize the students with the liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost. During Advent and Lent those that have received the Sacrament will be offered the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. During Lent, the students will attend Stations of the Cross. The celebration of mass, other prayer services, tours of the Church and Sacramental discussions are also held as appropriate.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If a student's Faith Formation is out of sync with their class grade in school, an individual plan will be formulated by the Coordinator of Religious Education, in coordination with the Pastor.

BAPTISM

Students who have never been baptized should contact the Parish office to arrange for the reception of this Sacrament. Following their Baptism, students are required to complete two years of religious education prior to receiving each of the other Sacraments of Initiation: First Holy Communion and Confirmation. During their second year of RE, the student may require additional classes to prepare for reception of these Sacraments based on the discretion of the Coordinator of Religious Education and the pastor.

UNCATECHIZED CATHOLICS

Students who are baptized Catholic but have not received the Sacrament of Holy Communion or the Sacrament of Confirmation are required to complete two (2) years of religious education prior to receiving each of these Sacraments. This may result in being "out of sync" with their class/grade in school. An individual plan will be formulated by the Coordinator of RE and the Pastor. Reconciliation will take place in the 2nd year of formation prior to receiving 1st Holy Communion in the spring of the second year. The student will then continue with religious formation. During their second year of RE, the student may require additional classes to prepare for reception of the Sacraments based on the discretion of the Coordinator of Religious Education and the pastor.

BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS FROM ANOTHER DENOMINATION

Students validly baptized in another faith tradition but who are eager to become a Catholic are required to complete two (2) years of religious education in preparation to receive the Sacraments. This may result in being "out of sync" with their class/grade in school. An individual plan will be formulated by the Coordinator of RE and the Pastor. The student will make a Profession of Faith prior to receiving the Sacrament of 1st Reconciliation. Reconciliation will take place in the 2nd year of formation prior to receiving 1st Holy Communion in the spring of the second year. The student will then continue with religious formation. During their second year of RE, the student may require additional classes to prepare for reception of the Sacraments based on the discretion of the Coordinator of Religious Education and the pastor.

HOME SCHOOLING

The Religious Education Office will assist families in selecting appropriate programs if you opt to teach your student at home. For further information, please contact the Religious Education Office.

EXTRA SUPPORT

If your child needs more support than our program can provide, the Religious Education Office will assist families in selecting appropriate agencies or resources. For further information, please contact the Religious Education Office.



SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are joint efforts on the part of the student, the parents, the catechist and the Religious Education Ministry. Combined with participation in RE class, prayer, retreats and celebration experiences will provide meaningful preparation for the sacraments.

Sacraments are usually celebrated in:

Grade 2: Reconciliation & Holy Eucharist

Grade 8: Confirmation

Candidates must satisfactorily complete at least two consecutive years of preparation prior to the reception of these Sacraments (regardless of the grade the student is attending in school).

Faithful attendance is required for both years of sacramental preparation in order to meet the hours of formation required by the Diocese. A maximum of 3 absences are permitted for illness, extra-curricular activities, and unforeseen circumstances. Please see the Attendance Policy on page 13 to coordinate with your child's schedule accordingly.

FIRST RECONCILIATION & HOLY EUCHARIST

Our students will prepare to receive each of these Sacraments following the curriculum and activities provided in formation classes. Students must complete the **two year** formation program in preparation to receive the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time, which typically begins in 1st grade. Students receive the Sacrament of First Reconciliation prior to their First Eucharist.

In order to receive these Sacraments each student **MUST** meet the following requirements:

- Provide documented Baptism in the Catholic Church
- Satisfactorily complete the two year formation program
- Attend mandatory events that reinforce the Sacrament

CONFIRMATION

Like Baptism, Confirmation confers a sacramental character that transforms us once and for all. Thus it can only be received once. Through Confirmation, we become witnesses to the mission of Christ and receive the obligation to continue his mission to transform the world by word and deed, to serve others in love, and to care for the world given to us in creation.

To receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, each student must *satisfactorily complete the two year formation program*, which typically begins in 7th grade, and provide the following **required** documents:

- Certificate of Baptism in the Catholic Church
- Certificate of the reception of the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist

In 7th Grade

- Students and their parents will receive information to explain the Sacrament of Confirmation, service opportunities and program expectations
- A minimum of 2 Service Projects and the Reflection Report are required. Students complete one project in 7th grade and another in 8th grade. Further explanation can be found on page 7.
- Successfully pass the Confirmation assessment

In 8th Grade

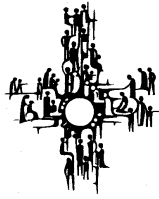
- Choose a Sponsor - this person must be a confirmed Catholic, age 16 or older (***mother and father of Confirmation candidate are excluded***)
- The Sponsor must provide a Confirmation Eligibility Form, signed and sealed from the Church where the sponsor currently attends (form available on the Parish website) AND a copy of the sponsor's Confirmation certificate
- Complete the second Service Project and Reflection Report
- Choose a Confirmation Saint and complete the online Saint Report. (the link to the Saint Name Report can be found on the Parish website) The chosen Saint should be one that inspires the candidate; one that they would like to emulate in their life. The name of this Saint will be used as their Confirmation Name. It is noted that they may use their Christian baptismal name, if desired
- Take part in the Confirmation interview
- Participate in the Confirmation retreat with their chosen Confirmation sponsor
- Attend the Confirmation rehearsal prior to the Confirmation mass

SERVICE PROJECT

An integral part of the student's journey toward Confirmation are *Service Projects*. While we will offer opportunities throughout the year this requirement remains the responsibility of the student and parents, not the catechists, St. James teachers or the RE office. In our vision, the focus is first and foremost on the experience that your son or daughter will receive offering service; not on the amount of time spent. What will they learn about being Christ's disciple in the world? Will they experience the true joy that comes from giving of yourself in the service of another?

As the students travel through their formation toward the reception of Confirmation, we expect to see the degree of service expand from 7th to 8th grade. For example, in 7th grade they might participate in "Service Sundays" at church, but by 8th grade they need to strongly work toward some type of social justice ideal such as going to Feed My Starving Children or helping at PADS. Start locally providing service and then expand to the world.

Each Confirmation candidate will complete a Service Project Reflection Form in 7th and 8th grade. For 7th grade students, the deadline to provide this form is prior to registration for the following year. Registration for the 8th grade formation program will not be permitted without the completion of the 7th grade service project and reflection form. In 8th grade, the service project and reflection form are due approximately 1 month before Confirmation. The link to the service project form can be found on the parish website,



CATECHISTS and AIDES

The teachers in the Religious Education Office are called *Catechists*. A catechist is “one who echoes the Word of God”. As all have received their faith through others, our catechists are all volunteers who freely share their time, talent and faith to form the faith of our children and young people. We strive to have enough volunteers to provide each catechist with an aide. Catechists are responsible for teaching the class. The aide assists the catechist with lessons, attendance, projects etc. Aides may also substitute for the catechists, if necessary.

Catechists and Aides will receive the following: 1) Early Bird tuition rates, 2) parishioner discount, 3) tuition discounts of 50% (Catechist) and 25% (Aide) and 4) will have first choice of class day and time for their child(ren).

All staff and volunteers must complete Diocesan requirements prior to serving in the Parish. Compliance to serve will include creating an account at www.Virtusonline.org. Your “Virtus” account will guide you through the steps to complete the following requirements: complete a Volunteer Application, the Protecting God’s Children training, a name-based background check, training and documents to become a Mandated Reporter and completion of the online ALICE Training which focuses on intruder training. Upon completion, training certificates must be provided to the RE office and will be included in the file of each volunteer and staff member.

Catechists are required to participate in continued education programs. Information necessary to complete this requirement is provided by the RE Office throughout the year.

Please contact the Religious Education Office to learn more about volunteer opportunities or click “yes” when registering your child on the google registration form and the RE Office will contact you to provide more details.



REGISTRATION

Registration for the St. James the Apostle Religious Education Program is available to all families in the spring and is completed through a google form that can be found through the following link: <https://forms.gle/RYFFmPKptPxLmJJGAFACS>. This link can also be found on the parish website, www.stjamesge.org.

Registration for the following year begins April 1st and deadlines for each school year are as follows:

Early Bird Deadline **by May 31st**

Standard Deadline **by July 31st**

*****As of August 1st, an additional \$125 late registration fee will be applied.**

TUITION PAYMENT

Religious Education tuition is paid through an online payment site, FACTS. Registrations will not be considered until a FACTS account and payment plan has been created for your family.

Payment for tuition can either be made in full or in payments. FACTS charges an enrollment fee based on the number of payments chosen. This fee and first tuition payment are due upon finalization of registration. **Payments made in full will not incur the FACTS enrollment fee.**

REFUNDS

Included in the registration fee is a \$50 non-refundable processing fee. With withdrawal or removal from the program prior to October 1, prorated tuition will be refunded, excluding the processing fee. After October 1, no refund of tuition will be provided with withdrawal or removal from the program.

PARISH REGISTRATION

It is encouraged that all families that participate in the Religious Education program be *registered* members of St. James the Apostle Parish. All children are welcome to the formation of their Catholic faith at St. James, however a non-parishioner fee will be added to the tuition balance for families that have not been a registered member of the Parish for at least one (1) year prior to registering for the RE program. Please contact the Parish office (630.469.7540) for Parishioner registration information.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

If you are within the boundaries of St. James the Apostle Parish and you are in need of financial assistance from St. James the Apostle in order for your child (ren) to attend religious education classes, it is necessary for the parent(s)/guardian(s) to complete a **CONFIDENTIAL** application, then contact the RE office to arrange an appointment to discuss handling the financial issue and how you might be able to assist us as a catechist or aide. No child within the Parish boundaries will be denied formation in the Catholic faith due to an inability to pay tuition and fees. Please contact the Coordinator of Religious Education to request a form for financial assistance.

Registrations will not be processed until all required documents and outstanding tuition fee balances have been received. The required documents include: registration form, FACTS account and payment plan, Baptismal certificate, completed service project (7th & 8th grades), completed formation absence summaries (as applicable), letters of transfer (as applicable).

If you complete the online registration process but fail to provide the necessary documents, your registration will be held “in progress”. This could affect your tuition fee rate and your child’s class placement.

CLASS PLACEMENT

While class placements are done on a “first come, first served” basis according to the preference you will indicate during registration, the RE Office takes into account special consideration to the following: registered parishioners of St. James the Apostle Parish, consistency of students in religious education program, facility capacity and catechist availability. Early bird tuition rates and priority class placement is extended to catechists and aides.

Siblings in the same grade level of RE (example, twins etc.) will be assigned to separate classes, if possible, unless the parent/guardian requests them to be in the same classroom.

BOOKS & SUPPLIES

A grade appropriate Bible, textbook and needed supplies are provided to each student. Students in grades 1, 3, and 7 will receive a new Bible to be used for subsequent years in the Religious Ed Program. (Additional or replacement textbooks or Bible are a \$25 fee)

A drawstring bag will be provided to carry the textbook, Bible and supplies which should be brought to every class.



TUITION INFORMATION
St. James the Apostle
2024-2025 Religious Education Classes

	Early Registration (25% reduction)	Standard Registration
	<u>(by5/31)</u>	<u>(6/1 - 7/31) ***</u>
One Child	\$275	\$350
Two Children	\$325	\$400
Three or more Children	\$375	\$450

***As of 8/1, an additional \$125 late registration fee will be applied.

REDUCTIONS & FEES

Volunteer Reductions:

Catechist – tuition reduced 50%

Aide – tuition reduced 25%

Non - St. James Parishioners Fee:

\$150.00 per family

Sacramental Fees:

1st Reconciliation & First Communion \$125.00 per child

Confirmation \$150.00 per child

Tuition Payment

Each family is required to create an account and payment plan using FACTS for on-line tuition payment using the following link: <https://online.factsmtg.com/signin/4LLY6> Registrations will be held and late fees imposed until this FACTS account is created or updated.

Refunds: Included in the registration fee is a \$50 non-refundable processing fee. With withdrawal or removal from the program prior to October 1, prorated tuition will be refunded, excluding the processing fee. After October 1, no refund of tuition will be provided with withdrawal or removal from the program.

Parishioner of St. James the Apostle Parish

It is encouraged that all families with students attending the RE program be registered members of St. James the Apostle Parish. A fee of \$150 per family will be applied to the tuition of families that have not been a registered member of the Parish for at least one year prior to registering for the RE program. Please contact the Parish offices for Parish registration information.

Baptismal Certificates

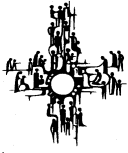
A copy of the student's baptismal certificate is required for all students registering for classes, if it was not provided previously. This can be emailed to reo@stjamesge.org as a scanned document or a picture. Registrations will be held and late fees imposed until a baptismal certificate is received.

Service Project Forms

Incoming 8th grade students must submit a completed service project form for the previous year before their registration can be processed. Registrations will be held and late fees imposed until service project form is received.

Textbooks & Bibles

A grade appropriate Bible, textbook and needed supplies are provided to each student. (Additional or replacement textbook or Bible is a \$25 fee)



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Whether we are together for weekly sessions or attending other parish functions, we expect the children and young people of St. James the Apostle to show respect and consideration for all catechists, aides, volunteers, office personnel and each other.

In addition, all students are expected to:

- Attend weekly
- Arrive on time
- Be prepared for class by bringing all books and materials
- Participate in group discussions and activities
- Be respectful to all staff, volunteers and classmates
- Dress appropriately

The following rules will be enforced:

- No food including chewing gum
 - No toys or games
 - All electronic devices **MUST** be turned off and kept out of sight during class.
- St. James the Apostle Parish is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

In an effort to provide a safe and secure environment, children must use the doorbell located to the right of Door 1 to be “buzzed” into the building. Security cameras provide the RE Staff with a view of who is entering. Please use extreme caution when holding the door open for another person as the RE Staff will lose their ability to monitor who is entering the building.

Children should arrive no earlier than ten (10) minutes before the session begins and should be picked up within ten minutes after the session ends. **SUPERVISION IS NOT PROVIDED BEFORE OR AFTER THIS TIME.**

Upon Arrival: Children should enter the classroom only if their catechist is present. If the catechist has not yet arrived, children should line up in the hallway outside their classroom door.

For Dismissal: Following the final prayer, catechists will dismiss their students. Parents may greet their children in the foyer or on the front sidewalk of the school. We ask that parents remain in the foyer. Parents **MUST NOT** allow their children to walk through the parking lot to meet them.

TRAFFIC/PARKING PLAN

Please exercise caution and courtesy when dropping off or picking up children. If you are dropping off your child please enter the drop-off lane in front of the church from the South and follow the drive North/Northeastward towards the School and Religious Education entrance (Door 1). Please note: the drop-off lane is One-Way. If you park in the lot, **PLEASE** accompany your child to / from the walkway. Parents **MUST NOT** allow their children to walk through the parking lot without an adult when entering or leaving the building.

ATTENDANCE

Contact the RE Office by email or phone as soon as you know that your child will miss a session, arrive late or need to leave early. A twenty-four hour voice mail system is available for your convenience. Please provide your child's full name, grade,time/day of the session they attend and the reason for absence.

Students who have been recently ill, must be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours prior to the start of their RE session to attend class.

ABSENCE

Regular attendance helps your child and family to feel a part of the group, fosters a sense of continuity, and emphasizes the importance you place on faith formation. Children and families cannot benefit from the activities and instruction planned each week if attendance is inconsistent. Everyone is expected to attend the entire session every week. This expectation will provide each student the required amount of instructional hours for proper religious formation as determined by the Diocese. These attendance requirements are emphasized especially during Sacramental Preparation years (typically 1st/2nd grade and 7th/8th grade).

More than three (3) absences and/or recurring tardiness or early dismissals may result in removal from the RE Program for the year as the amount of instructional hours required by the Diocese will not be met. Courses of action are determined on a case by case basis.

- Three (3) absences are allowed for illness, extra-curricular activities or occasional unforeseen circumstances. Please coordinate with your child's schedule accordingly.
- **Tardiness** (5 minutes past the start of class) and **early dismissals are strongly discouraged**. Each tardy or early dismissal will be considered half of an absence. Two tardies, two early dismissals or a combination of these will result in one Absence.

If your child arrives late or must leave early, a parent/guardian must come to the RE Office to sign your child in/out of the building. If leaving early, your child will be called down to the office to meet you once you have signed them out. Students will NOT be dismissed from their room to meet their ride outside. We reserve the right to request identification from any adult leaving with an RE student.

If you are unavoidably detained at the end of class, please contact the RE Office so that we can alert your student. Upon your arrival, please come to the RE Office where your child will be waiting for you. Recurring lateness may necessitate a family conference with the Coordinator of Religious Education.

Any student leaving the campus without permission will need to have a parent conference with the Coordinator and Pastor **before** being allowed to return to class.

CLASS TIME INSTRUCTION

To maximize the limited amount of time Catechists have teaching their students, “recess”, or outside play time, is NOT permitted during RE classes. Catechists are welcome to teach a lesson outside (weather permitting), but no playtime will be allowed.

PARTIES/SNACK

Our instruction time is limited; therefore, parties / celebrations **WILL NOT BE HELD**. St. James RE program shall be a safe environment for all children. Therefore, all RE sessions will be held in a food/snack free environment. Catechists, volunteers or parents shall not serve, distribute, provide access to, or reward students with any form of food product for consumption during, or to be taken home from, RE sessions. This includes both home prepared and pre-packaged foods. Exceptions to this policy shall **ONLY** be allowed at the discretion of the Coordinator of Religious Education.

DUAL CUSTODY

In the case of split families, the Religious Education Office will presume that both parents have access to the child (ren) and their records unless we are told otherwise. When custody is disputed, we require the parent with sole custody to provide the office with written verification and a clear explanation of procedures to follow.



HEALTH and SAFETY

INJURY/ACCIDENT

In the event of an illness or minor injury, simple first aid procedures will be followed and parents will be notified. In the event of a serious medical emergency, 911 will be called first and then parents will be notified.

ILLNESS - Students who have been recently ill, must be fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours prior to the start of their RE session to attend class.

MEDICATION - Law prohibits us from dispensing medication of any kind. If, however, you feel it would be beneficial for us to be aware of any particular medication your child is taking, please indicate such on your child's online registration form. Similarly, if a special health condition (severe allergic reaction, for example) or a learning/behavior challenge exists, please indicate this in your child's online registration form. Having such information is in the best interest of your child and is treated confidentially by the RE office and your child's catechist.

LOST & FOUND

We urge that clear identification be placed on such things as books, folders, coats, hats, backpacks etc. Lost items may be found in the "Lost and Found" bin in the School foyer or in the RE Office before or after class.

PHOTOGRAPHY

During the course of the year, photographs are sometimes taken of group activities or special events. When we write about program activities in the parish bulletin or on our parish website, some of these photos may be displayed in publications and media as granted by your authority. Last names of children are never used in conjunction with these photos. Our registration form each year asks parents to indicate whether or not they wish their child's photo to be used in this way.

PROPERTY

St. James the Apostle Parish School is a shared space with other ministries. Therefore, it is important that our students respect the building, classrooms and hallways. This includes all property inside desks, projects, displays, works in progress etc. in the room and hallways. These items should never be disturbed. If a student is found to have caused damage to the parish, Church, school, or classroom property, the student and his/her family is responsible for repair or restitution.

We reserve the right to inspect all desks, lockers, and other parish supplied enclosures. In addition, we reserve the right to inspect a participant's personal property if there is a reasonable belief that the individual is violating the rules, regulations, and policies of St. James' the Apostle Parish and/or Religious Education program.



BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

Learning is best fostered in an orderly and peaceful environment. This requires respect and cooperation of students with their catechists, aides, volunteers, office personnel and each other.

BEHAVIOR

Unacceptable behavior will be handled in the following manner:

- (1) At the catechist level; an attempt will be made to rectify the situation.
- (2) If the behavior does not improve or the problem persists, the student will be sent to the office to discuss and write out what occurred.

- **This explanation will be sent home for a parent to sign prior to the next class period.**
- If the explanation is not returned the next class period, the Director will notify the parent(s) and email a copy of the explanation to the parent(s) for their signature prior to the next class period.
- If it is still not signed, the student will be asked to remain out of class until the explanation is signed and returned. This will result in an absence(s).

- (3) If the student is sent to the office a third time, a parent conference with the Pastor, Director and the catechist, if applicable, will be held to determine whether further participation in the program is possible.

WEAPONS

Weapons of any nature (even “look-a-like” weapons) are not permitted on the Parish grounds at any time. All reports will be taken seriously. The matter will be immediately investigated and a parent conference will be required with the Pastor and the Coordinator to determine whether further participation in the program is possible.

ANTI-BULLYING

All elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Joliet shall actively seek to provide a supportive, caring environment in which all persons are safe from all forms of intimidation including bullying, which is unacceptable, unchristian and strictly prohibited.

For the purpose of this policy, bullying is defined in conformity with Illinois Law as follows:

“Any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s or students’ person or property;
- (2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s or students’ physical or mental health;
- (3) Substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ academic performance; or
- (4) Substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.”

105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 (b)

Bullying Conduct

Bullying conduct covered by this policy is conduct that occurs anywhere on St. James the Apostle property or at St. James sponsored activities or events or cyber bullying as defined hereinafter.

Cyber Bullying

This policy prohibits bullying and intimidation of students through the use of internet and social media sites on any electronic device (private, public, or school owned), whether on or off the school campus, or during non school hours.

Any student who engages in bullying will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion and referral to local law enforcement. Behavioral interventions may be included as a component of the disciplinary actions. This may include but is not limited to mandatory counseling.

Retaliatory behavior by a student accused of bullying will also incur consequences. False accusations of bullying will result in disciplinary action taken against the accuser.

Any reported bullying issue will be promptly brought to the attention of the appropriate party: the Pastor or the Director of Religious Ed, and thereafter investigated.

Reference: *The Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS, 5/27-23.7*

*****RIGHT TO AMEND*****

*St. James the Apostle Religious Education Office reserves the right to amend this Handbook.
Notice of Amendment will be sent via REinders.*