

ST. JOSEPH PARISH

Religious Education Program

www.sjy.org/reled



SAINT JOSEPH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM HANDBOOK

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The ministry of Religious Education flows from the mandate of Jesus to go into the whole world and teach the Good News. The Church has, throughout time, initiated and developed systems to proclaim Christ's message, to foster community, to call people to worship and to challenge them to responsible service

Catechesis (Religious Education) is about the conversion of the whole person to God, Jesus Christ and the Church. It is living and learning in the midst of a Christian community that shares, nurtures and strengthens the faith of the individuals who make up the Body of Christ.

The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and in intimacy with Jesus Christ, who alone can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Joseph Religious Education Program is to teach the doctrines of the Roman Catholic faith to the children of St. Joseph Parish who attend a school where the Catholic religion is not part of their curriculum. In addition, we strive to build a spirit of Christian community, to foster a spirit of prayer that will enable growth in intimacy with Jesus, and to encourage students, according to their age and ability, to reach out to all people in a spirit of loving service.

Role of the Parents

We believe that parents are the primary teachers of their children and that the home environment is the most important source of a child's religious development. While we can provide the formal education, the parents provide the lived out experience of faith. Therefore, we encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's ongoing development in the Catholic faith, especially by participating in weekly Sunday Mass together.

Role of the Catechist

Catechists in a parish Religious Education program are Catholic persons of faith who volunteer their time and talent to share that gift of faith with the youth of the parish.

Catechists strive to build up among the youth a community spirit which will strengthen and nourish them and which will call them to discover, internalize, proclaim, and live the Gospel message and to grow in faith.

Catechist Certification: Catechists work toward Basic Catechist Certification. Courses required for this are: Teaching Methodology (Parts I and II), Overview of Catholic Doctrine: The Creed, Introduction to Scripture, Introduction to the Sacraments, Introduction to the Church, Introduction to Morality, and Introduction to Prayer. Catechists are asked to complete at least one course per year until they have earned basic certification. Courses are available via Webinar.

Role of the Support Staff

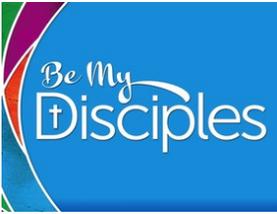
The Religious Education support staff consists of catechist aides, office help, hall monitors, traffic monitors, gym monitors and class parents. The service of these volunteers is essential to the smooth running of the Religious Education Program and enables the catechists and the C/DRE to better fulfill their specific roles.

In Appreciation

The pastoral staff of St. Joseph Church and our entire parish community are very grateful to all our volunteer catechetical personnel for their generous assistance with the challenging and awesome ministry of Religious Education.

Our Religious Education Program is sustained by the goodness of God, graciously mirrored in the goodness of our families. We believe that every person has talents, gifts and abilities to be shared for the building up of the Body of Christ. Annually, we ask each family to take an active part in carrying out the many and varied tasks which encompass our program.

CURRICULUM



Grades K – 8

St. Joseph Religious Education Program uses the RCL Benziger Religion series, “**Be My Disciples**” in K through Grade 8. Additional activities are available at: www.bemydisciples.com

Special Needs Curriculum

The Special Needs Class is offered on Sundays at 9 a.m. The class is based on the lectionary and liturgical calendar. Sacramental preparation is also offered as part of the curriculum through the use of adaptive materials (First Eucharist, First Reconciliation, and Confirmation). Our program follows the *Guidelines for the Celebration of Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to determine proper preparedness of reception. Please select Special Needs Class (Sun. 9 a.m.) to register your child for this class.

Sacramental Preparation

The Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist are part of the process of initiation into the community of faith. The Christian Initiation of Children states, “Any kind of initiation has to do with a process of being absorbed into and bonded to a group;” and the Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA), which is the Church’s norm for preparation and celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation, states very clearly that initiation is the responsibility of the entire community and that both the preparation and celebration of these sacraments “takes place within the community of the faithful.” So, while the family always be the primary vehicle for initiation of a Church community and the child’s Religious community are also a necessary part of the of communities responsible for a child’s preparation for these sacraments.



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With this in mind, it is the policy of the Diocese of Harrisburg, that children must have a minimum of two years of formal religious education in the Catholic school, the Parish Religious Education Program, or the equivalent in a Home School Program, in preparation for the Sacrament of Eucharist. During these two years, children are also prepared for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Participation in the entire program of Religious Education is part of the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Meetings for parents and retreat programs are part of the preparation for the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation.

Confirmation is NOT equivalent to graduation. One never thinks of “graduating” from an initiatory community. Confirmation is only the beginning of living a life fully committed to loving God above all things, and one’s neighbor as one’s self. Therefore, one’s religious education ought not to stop with Confirmation. We see it to be on-going throughout a Catholic’s life. For this reason, the parish offers High School and Adult Religious formation opportunities – classes, bible studies, and retreats.

SPARKS Catholic Kids' Club

SPARKS is a youth ministry for students in grades 5-6 that is available *in addition* to the Religious Education classes offered here at St. Joseph's. Sparks normally meets on the 3rd Friday of each month from October through May from 6:30-8:30pm in the gymnasium.



The main focus of SPARKS is FUN and FAITH. Each meeting consists of crazy, fun games and activities, snacks, prayer, and learning about a certain aspect of our Catholic Faith.

Our hope and goal for SPARKS is that it will be 1) an opportunity for children from St. Joseph School, home school, and the Religious Education Program to be together, 2) create opportunities and environments for significant spiritual experiences to occur, and 3) to create a "feeder" program for future involvement in the other parish youth ministries

For information on SPARKS please visit: www.sjy.org/youthministry or contact Mr. Scott Anthony in the Youth Ministry Office at: 757-5424 or Anthony@sjy.org

IGNITE CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY (Grades 9 – 12)



Senior High Religious Education is included in our Comprehensive Youth Ministry. All students in grades 9-12 are encouraged to attend the IGNITE Catholic Youth Ministry meetings held on various days and times throughout the month.

The IGNITE Catholic Youth Ministry offers older teens the opportunity for retreats, national conferences, regional and diocesan gatherings, weekly and monthly prayer activities (like Eucharistic Adoration, Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet), service opportunities (Compassion York, College Care Packages, cards to shut-ins, pro-life work), Bible studies and catechetical sessions, small discussion groups, and recreational events (Hershey park, sports, etc.). Religious Education (catechesis) is one of the main components of Comprehensive Youth Ministry (as outlined by the US Bishops) and is incorporated into the regular youth ministry schedule. By implementing catechesis in this manner, we try to heed Blessed Pope John Paul II's call in *Catechesis Tradendae* (1979), when he wrote "(the) definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ."

For information on IGNITE visit www.sjy.org/youthministry or contact Mr. Scott Anthony in the Youth Ministry Office at: 757-5424 or Anthony@sjy.org.

Home School Religious Education

Homeschool Instruction must be in line with the **Mission Statement** of the Religious Education Program. Parents of children being homeschooled for Religious Education must **re-register** their child/children every year. The homeschool curriculum includes an online chapter review for 1st-8th grade students at www.sjy.org/reled/parents. **Home school students are required to email the Religious Ed Coordinator chapter review results.** A score of 80 or above is needed for successful completion of the curriculum.

Materials included are: Student book, teaching aids at the online website (for all grades K-8 at www.sjy.org/reled/parents), and a lesson plan calendar. In addition, Teacher's manuals can be borrowed from the RE office with a \$25 *refundable* deposit. Homeschool families are required to attend all the same sacramental prep meetings, parent meetings, and retreats scheduled if their child is in a sacramental year. To complete enrollment in our homeschool curriculum, all home school families must attend a brief meeting following the Opening of the Year Mass. All materials will be handed out at this meeting.

RCIA Adapted for Children (RCIC)

Youth, not baptized as infants, who are between the ages of 8 and 14, are initiated into the Church through the process of Christian Initiation known as the Children's Catechumenate (RCIC or RCIA adapted for children).

The RCIC is also for those children who were baptized as infants but who have had little or no formal Religious Education, as well as, children whose Religious Education has been interrupted and who now desire to celebrate the Sacraments of Eucharist and/or Confirmation. The length of time for the preparation process will be determined by the religious background of the individual child. RCIC is generally a two year process and is a combination of age-appropriate religious education, sacramental preparation, and rites of the catechumenate. For more information, please call or email Deacon Neil Crispo at 755.7503 ext. 227, or crispo@sjy.org. Please select RCIC on the registration form to register your child for this class. RCIC is offered during the Sunday session time at 9:00-10:15 a.m.



Participation in Liturgy and Prayer

The Mass and the Sacraments are central to our faith life and religious formation. It is expected that students participate in the celebration of Mass every Sunday and on all Holy Days. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered during class time once a year. Children will have the opportunity for individual private confession. Praying with the Scriptures is the form of prayer used to begin each RE class session. At other times catechists are encouraged to use a variety of other prayer forms. Students are expected to memorize the prayers suggested for their grade level. These can be found in their textbook or may be provided by the catechist. ***Parental help is necessary for children to memorize these prayers.*** Liturgy of the Word with Children is celebrated for all children ages 4 through 7 years during the 5 p.m. Saturday evening Mass and on Sunday morning during the 10:30 a.m. Mass.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

General Program Policy: Everyone involved in the Religious Ed Program, Parents/Guardians, Students, and Staff, is expected to be familiar with this Handbook and to abide by the policies set forth herein. In addition, all are expected to be aware of the contents of all communications such as newsletters, calendars, bulletins, etc. and to respond promptly when a communication requires a response.

St. Joseph Parish utilizes photographs and other media for communicative and promotional purposes. These media can sometimes include the recording of a minor's likeness, namely, his or her face. While St. Joseph Parish takes precautions to prevent misuse of a minor's likeness across the various media available, parents or guardians have the right to opt-out of their child's likeness being used for such purposes. Any parent or guardian who wishes may complete a Student/Youth Media Opt-Out Preference form located on the IT website (www.sjy.org/it) under the Forms, Documents, and Policies page and submit it to the Religious Education office.

- 1. Registration:** Students must be re-registered each year. Registration is opened every spring and can be done online at the website: www.sjy.org/reled . **Please register no later than August 19th for the upcoming school year.** There is an option for the Scrip program on the registration form. If the payment of \$75/student presents a hardship, please call the coordinator for Religious Education at x248 when you submit your registration. No child will be denied entrance into our program. Please select your choice on the Family Registration Form.
 - 2. Tuition:** Tuition must be paid at the time of registration. Tuition for the current year is: **\$75 per child.** This tuition covers approximately 30 percent of the cost of running the program. The balance is subsidized by the Parish.
 - 3. Late Admittance:** Also, please note that we will not accept late admittances into the Religious Education program after the end of the First Marking Period (in mid-November) for the current school year. By this point in the year, catechists have already established classroom dynamics and it is unfair to our volunteer staff to continue adding students to their rosters. Exceptions will be made only for extraordinary circumstances on a case by case basis. Homeschool options may also still be available after this date. Please contact the Religious Ed Office for details.
 - 4. Class Assignment:** Due to limited space it is necessary to have two different sessions of classes for Children in Grades K-8. Every effort will be made to allow the parents to choose which session their child(ren) will attend. Students who register late will be assigned to a session which has an opening in their grade level.
 - 5. Class Hours:** Classes are held for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 at the following times:
Sunday: 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
Monday: 6:30 – 7:45 p.m.
- High School Religious Education is included in our Comprehensive Youth Ministry Program led by Scott Anthony. Information is available at: <http://www.sjy.org/youthministry>
- 6. Class Size:** No class will be larger than 18 students, without the consent of the Coordinator, in agreement with the catechist, who will be teaching that particular class.

7. **Arrival:** Parents are responsible for the safe and punctual arrival of their children. Students need to arrive for class, with their materials, early enough to begin class on time. **All students must report to the gym** upon arrival. When catechists arrive, they may determine whether or not to open the classroom to students before class. **NO STUDENT MAY EVER ENTER A CLASSROOM WITHOUT A RESPONSIBLE ADULT BEING PRESENT TO MONITOR.** For security reasons, only students and Religious Education personnel are permitted in the classroom hallways. Parents are NOT PERMITTED to enter the classroom hallways without signing the visitors log in the office, and only before or after the session, NOT during the session. All outside entry doors will remain locked during Religious Education sessions.
8. **Dismissal:** Catechists and parents are responsible for the safe and orderly dismissal of students. Parents of children in Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd Grade must personally pick-up their children in the Gym. The children will be brought to the Gym by their catechist.

Parents of children in the morning session, who arrive to pick-up their children before the dismissal bell, must wait in the Gym, not in the hallways.

Parents of children in the evening session, please wait in the front lobby until the dismissal bell rings. To the extent that our office has been informed of "custodial rights," catechists will be informed. **Early dismissals are discouraged** due to the disruption of class. If parents request the early dismissal of a student, the parents must write and sign a note to that effect and must come to the office to sign-out the child.

9. **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures:** The **morning session** will have drop-off and pick up of students in the **back of the school.** Traffic will be **ONE WAY** from Courtleigh Road down to the drop-off/pick-up point at the back door of the school. **Parking in the back of the school is reserved for catechists.** There is to be NO drop off or pick-up from cars in the front of the school. Parents may park in the church parking lot and walk their children up to the front of the school if they wish. **The doors at the ends of the hallways where the classrooms are located will NOT be open during arrival or at dismissal time. All outside entry doors will be locked during sessions.**

Evening session drop-off and pick-up will continue to take place at the **front of the school.** Please do not stand or park in this area. If you need to wait for your student/s please park in the lot. No other doors will be available for entry to the building except the front door.

10. **Attendance Policy:** Consistent and punctual attendance is imperative if children are to benefit from Religious Education classes. Excessive absence can affect the grade level for the following year. Please inform the Religious Education Office in writing of any circumstances (custody, extended illness, etc.) which might keep a child from regular attendance. It is the parent's responsibility to obtain make up work when the child will be absent by contacting the child's catechist. **When the child is absent (1-8 grades), the chapter review for the missed class is required to be completed online** at www.sjy.org/reled/parents. Choose the link for Be My Disciples Chapter Reviews at the left. When the website opens, you will choose a particular grade or text book name (for 7th and 8th grade). Results should be emailed to the child's catechist. The emailed review results should be 80 or above in order to be successfully completed.

Students who miss more than 5 classes total for the year, or consistently leave early will be required to complete a review packet over the summer. This will ensure the child is ready to move to the next grade level. Please take into careful consideration your child's sports and activities schedule for the whole year before choosing a Religious Ed session time.

11. **Absence from Class:** We are responsible for students during the time they are registered for our program. Therefore, we must keep accurate attendance and tardiness records on file in the Religious Education Office. When a child is absent, please send in an absence excuse form when he/she returns to class. The catechist will collect the form and turn it into the Office. Each child will receive three forms in their folder at the beginning of the year. Should you need additional forms, please come to the office or ask your child's catechist. The child is responsible for the work missed. See note above for details.
12. **Tardiness:** While it is understandable that everyone occasionally runs late, consistent tardiness is unfair to all involved; the student who misses the beginning of class, the class that is interrupted, and the catechist who has to repeat the material. A student is late any time he/she arrives after the starting time. Late students must report to the hall monitor before going to class. Parents MAY NOT walk late students to the classroom.
13. **Communications:** Parent/catechist communication is strongly encouraged. A phone call to the catechist and a visit during Open House encourages both the child and the catechist. Monthly and periodic e-newsletters entitled ***Pass the Word*** or bulletins are emailed to the family. It is important that these be read by the parents. Parents are also encouraged to be in communication with the C/DRE whenever there is a concern, a question, or a suggestion. It is usually best to do this at a time other than class time. Parents should also frequently visit the Religious Education website at <http://www.sjy.org/reled> for policies, the calendar, and archived Pass the Word issues.
14. **Custody of Child:** Concerns regarding parental custody of a child in the Religious Education Program must be communicated in writing to the C/DRE. Non-custodial parents may be given access to unofficial copies of student records, and catechists will be available to discuss the student's progress unless a court order stating otherwise is filed with the C/DRE.
15. **Student Evaluation:** Homework assignments, as well as periodic checkups and tests may be required by catechists. All students in grades 1-8 have a chapter review to complete at home.
16. **Materials and Supplies:** Each student receives the materials and supplies necessary to participate in class. Please place your child's first and last name in all of their materials. Parents are responsible for the cost of replacing any and all lost books, Bibles, and folders. Replacement books are available for \$15 from the office.
17. **Book Bags:** We strongly encourage the use of a Religious Ed school book bag. We feel that this will cut down on the misplacement and/or loss of books as well as keep materials in better condition. St. Joseph Religious Ed book bags are available for sale in the Religious Ed Office for families who wish to purchase them. The cost is \$4 per bag.
18. **Dress Code:** We believe that attitudes are affected by what one wears. Students are to dress neatly and appropriately for class. Clothing that is torn, bears obscene or inappropriate messages, or carries a logo for alcoholic beverages or cigarettes may not be worn. Halter tops, short shorts, or any immodest apparel is prohibited.
19. **Discipline Policy:** Following Jesus' command, "Love one another as I have loved you", our Religious Education staff and students treat each other with mutual respect. Religious catechesis is a process that provides instruction on the truths and traditions of our Catholic faith while incorporating the formation of students into full membership in our Church for ministry and mission. It is a serious undertaking and should be entered into with the understanding that certain expectations on the part of the students must be

met in order for the process to be successful. These expectations concern attitude, behavior and attendance. Catechists, together with the students, discuss and agree upon a few, clear basic classroom rules ensuring a respectful, Christian environment for learning and interacting. Realistic, appropriate consequences are also discussed and agreed upon. In general, students who disregard classroom or program rules are given timely warnings. A student, who continually disregards classroom rules after timely warnings, warrants the involvement of administration and parents to determine the course of action to be taken. Ridicule and public humiliation are to be avoided at all times. Corporal punishment or any physical form of discipline is never permitted.

The following behavior is deemed unacceptable:

- The display of a belligerent attitude by way of words, gestures, or actions toward the staff or other students.
- The display of anger by way of physical or verbal abuse toward the staff or other students.
- The display of unchristian-like behavior by way of put-downs or practical jokes toward the staff or other students.
- The display of irreverent behavior at times of individual prayer or communal worship.
- The display of willful destructive behavior by the misuse of the buildings and furnishings as well as the personal property of the staff and other students (including chewing gum).
- The display of disregard for the safety of others. This includes possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products and weapons (pretend or real).

20. Search and Seizure: If a student is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession, the C/DRE is required to investigate. The procedure that will be followed is:

- Reasonable suspicion of possession
- The student will be walked to the office, or the C/DRE will go to the classroom.
- In the student's presence, the catechist will explain the situation to the C/DRE.
- The student will be questioned about the suspected item, and if he/she admits possession of it, will be asked to give it to the C/DRE.
- Parents will be notified of the incident whether or not an item was found in the student's possession.
- If a student denies having such an item, and there is reasonable suspicion that he/she does possess it, or admits having it and refuses to give it to the C/DRE, the parents will be contacted to come and assist in the search.
- If parents refuse to cooperate, the student may be excluded from the program.
- If a weapon or drugs are found to be in the student's possession, the pastor and law enforcement will be notified. Pending review of the situation, the student may be expelled from the program.

21. Off Grounds Trips: Off ground trips are **not** permitted.

22. Guest Speakers: Guest speakers are welcome. **Prior permission from the C/DRE is mandatory** for all guest speakers. Guest speakers should stop by the office to sign in with the Coordinator.

23. Food: Food is not allowed in the building. This includes gum, drinks, candy, etc. Specific permission must be obtained from the C/DRE for an exception to this rule. When permission is given, it is the responsibility of the catechists and aides to have all trash collected in a garbage bag and brought to the dumpster in the back parking lot. Trash is not to be left in the classroom wastebasket. The classroom must be left in perfect order. If students are carrying food out of the classroom, it must be in a bag and is not to be eaten until they leave the property.

- 24. Use of Parish Buildings:** As a parish building, St. Joseph School is used by many groups. Like every other group using the building, those involved in the Religious Ed Program are expected to care for the building and everything in it, and to touch nothing in the classrooms except what is specifically for their use.
- 25. Inclement Weather/Emergencies:** In the event of bad weather, we will post closings on the front page of the St. Joseph parish official website, www.sjy.org. We will notify WGAL TV Channel 8, WHP TV (CBS) Channel 21, and ABC 27 TV. On Line - www.abc27.com, www.whptv.com, www.thewgalchannel.com. We will also send out a notification via the Pass the Word E-Newsletter. Please check the Church website, or watch your television or tune into the radio for the listing of St. Joseph, York, Religious Education Program. **Please do not call the stations!** This ties up the phone lines and prevents them from receiving the cancellation calls.
- 26. Emergency Care:** Each parent is required to fill out the emergency excuse form found in his/her child's folder. Since children are with us such a short time, we expect all medications to be administered before or after class. However, it is understandable that there may be a need, such as the need to use an inhaler, which would warrant medication to be brought to class. The C/DRE must be informed of any medication a child will be bringing to class and appropriate forms will then need to be completed by the parent(s).
- 27. Emergency Care: Students with HIV/AIDS or Related Diseases:** Students who are HIV-infected or who have AIDS or other related diseases and desire to attend a diocesan religious education program will not be denied admission to or discriminated against solely because of their medical condition. However, the parish does reserve the right to dismiss a student or curtail a student's activities (curricular or co/extracurricular). This will be done on a case by case basis by the pastor or C/DRE in consultation with the student's physician if it is determined that a student presents a substantial risk to himself/herself or others. If, for reasons of health or safety, a student can no longer continue to attend classes, arrangements for alternative instruction will be determined by the pastor or C/DRE and the parents or guardians.

Parents/Guardians are expected to inform the pastor or C/DRE if or when their child has HIV/AIDS or related diseases in order that the pastor or C/DRE can provide for the protection of the child and other individuals in the Religious Ed Program. This parish follows the Universal Precautions to Prevent the Spread of Infectious Diseases to reduce the risk for employees, volunteers and students.

- 28. Universal Precautions to Prevent the Spread of Infectious Diseases:** In a school or parish religious education setting, knowing who carries an infectious disease and what germ may be present is not possible. Carriers do not always show outward signs of infection and often are not aware of being infected. All schools/parishes should evaluate current procedure for handling spilled blood and body fluids to insure proper cleaning and disinfection. The following precautions are required:
- Surfaces soiled with blood, urine, feces, vomit, etc. should be thoroughly washed with soap and water, then, disinfected with a 10% solution of household bleach and water (1 part to 9 parts). This solution should be freshly prepared for each use.
 - Personnel cleaning the spill should wear gloves and wash their hands when finished.
 - Disposable towels should be used whenever possible.
 - Mops should be thoroughly rinsed in the disinfectant solution.
 - Handle all discharges from another person's body (particularly body fluids containing blood) with gloves and wash hands thoroughly with soap and running water (for at least 15 seconds).
 - Avoid punctures with objects that may contain blood from others.

- Carefully dispose of trash that contains body waste and sharp objects. Special containers with plastic liners should be used for disposal of refuse that contains blood or any body spills that contain blood. For disposal of sharp objects, containers that cannot be broken or penetrated should be used.
- Students should be encouraged to use good health and hygiene throughout the school/parish. To the extent that the administration has been informed of a health problem concerning a child, the Catechist will be notified.
- It is recommended that students, whether at curricular, co-curricular or extracurricular activities, not share a common drinking container. Arrangements should be made for all participants to have an individual drinking cup.

29. Safety: Religious Education personnel take every reasonable precaution to ensure the safety of those in their care and to notify the administration of any unsafe conditions. Students are never left alone or unsupervised. Catechist aides and hall monitors are available when and if a situation arises that the catechist must leave the classroom. Hall monitors are situated at the head of each hall throughout class time. Their role is to monitor the hallways, bathrooms, and doors.

30. Incident Report: If an accident or incident occurs, the C/DRE should be notified immediately and the specifics written down as soon as possible.

31. Background Check: The Diocese of Harrisburg requires background checks on all persons who work alone and directly with children. In the past this has not been considered necessary for volunteer Religious Ed personnel. However, given the legal climate in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, we now require a background check on all personnel, paid or volunteer. The Religious Ed Office has the necessary request forms or please visit www.sjv.org/ypp for directions and paperwork.

32. Abuse/Neglect: The state has laws that persons who work with children and young people are mandatory reporters when there is suspected abuse and neglect of a child. Persons who fail to report suspected abuse or neglect can incur both civil and criminal penalties. Catechists must document their suspicion of abuse and/or neglect, report the incident to Childline, and bring the matter to the attention of the C/DRE.

33. Harassment: The Diocese of Harrisburg affirms the inherent value of every individual and upholds the respect due to each because of his/her uniqueness as a child of God. Therefore, the Diocese is committed to providing for its employers, employees, students and volunteers a working and education environment which is free from physical, psychological, sexual or verbal harassment. The Diocese prohibits any form of harassment of or by employers, employees, students or volunteers.

Prompt investigation of allegations of harassment will be made on a confidential basis by the most immediate administrative authority not involved with the allegation to ascertain the veracity of complaints. Any individual who engages in such harassment is subject to discipline, up to and including discharge, depending on the seriousness of the offensive conduct. Harassment will not be tolerated.

COMMITMENT TO ST. JOSEPH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I have read the St. Joseph Religious Education Handbook. I understand that attendance at weekly Mass and at the Parish Religious Education program is important for my child to grow in spiritual formation. I have read and understood the attendance policy and procedures. I agree to comply with all St. Joseph Religious Education policies and guidelines therein.

Name: _____
(Parent/Guardian First and Last Name. Please print.)

Children's Names: _____
(Name of Children enrolled in Religious Ed. First Names. Please print.)

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Thank you for your commitment to the faith formation of your family!

St. Joseph Office of Religious Education
2935 Kingston Road
York, PA 17402
(717) 755-7503
<http://www.sjy.org/RelEd>