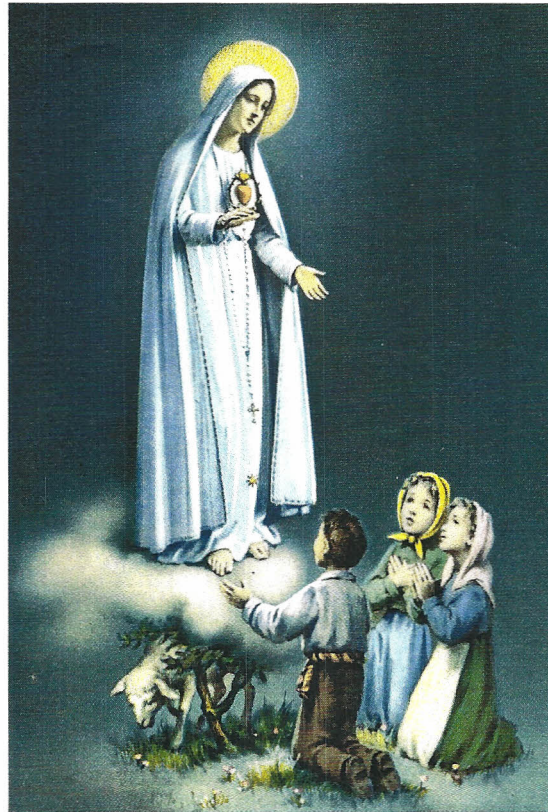


OUR LADY OF FATIMA ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
801 N. DUPONT HIGHWAY - NEW CASTLE, DE 19720

Email: PREP@olfnewcastle.com

Telephone: 302-328-0307

Religious Education Parent Handbook 2016-2017



Parish Mission Statement

We, the people of Our Lady of Fatima Parish recognize we have been called together by the grace of God to experience His presence and loving mercy in our lives and to share it with others. We have been called by the eternal Father to hear the Gospel and to proclaim to others the good news of salvation, to celebrate the mysteries of Christ's saving love in the sacred liturgy, and to put that love into action through our individual and united efforts of service to one another and the community around us.

Aware of the gifts the Holy Spirit has given to each of us in Baptism, we encourage all members of our family to use their particular gifts in building our community of faith, love and service.

We proclaim our faith in the unity of our Catholic communion, with Francis, Bishop of Rome, and Francis, Bishop of Wilmington, and in fellowship with our brothers and sister of other Christian Communities.

We seek to promote the continued renewal of the Church according to the spirit and decrees of the Second Vatican Council. As we wait and work for the Lord who is to come again in glory, we live and pray under the patronage and the example of Mary, Our Lady of Fatima, who heard the Word of God and kept it, who welcomed Christ into her life and shared Him with our world.

The primary purpose of our Religious Education Program is *faith formation*. Faith formation is an ongoing development of the whole person into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, Discipleship. To use the image of St. Paul “we put on Christ” so that Christ is the center of our lives. All Catholics are on the journey of faith formation. We begin this life-long journey in the waters of Baptism. The end of this journey is eternal life with Jesus in heaven. Our P.R.E.P. (Parish Religious Education Program) Program is a School of Discipleship. Our Religious Education Program strives to provide a solid foundation in our faith, age-appropriate to the students in our program. Students are encouraged to begin formal religion classes in the FIRST GRADE of Public or Private (non-Catholic) Schools.

The second purpose of our Religious Education Program is *sacramental preparation*. Registration for a sacramental program requires a **separate registration form and fee**. Children are prepared to understand and to receive the sacraments in an age appropriate formation program. The celebration of the sacraments takes place within a parish celebration. It is the desire of the Diocese that children receive the Sacraments in their **home** Parish. Students attending Catholic schools throughout the diocese are asked to notify us in September. More information regarding Sacramental Formation Programs can be found under *Sacramental Formation Program* heading.

Religious Education Contacts

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Dolly Ibarrondo, Hispanic Ministry (302) 328-7210

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

Share knowledge	Give advice to those who need it
Comfort those who suffer	Be patient with others
Forgive those who hurt you	Give correction to those who need it
Pray for others	

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name my God, have mercy. Amen.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead: he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer before Meals (Table Grace)

Bless us Oh Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from thy bounty, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

“It is our privilege and our responsibility to preserve the memory of Christ’s words and the words themselves and to teach future generations of believers to carry out all that Christ commanded his apostles.”

PRAYERS & PRACTICES

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Glory Be to the Father

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning. and is now and will be forever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name: Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Corporal Works of Mercy

	Feed the Hungry	
Give drink to the thirsty		Shelter the homeless
Clothe the naked		Help those imprisoned
Care for the sick		Bury the dead

The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hung and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me – rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

REGISTRATION

Registration to Religious Education or Sacramental preparation programs is limited to registered, active, and supporting parishioners. Registration begins in May for the following September.

Registration is never closed. However, students who register late are marked “absent” for those classes which they missed. A student must complete 30 hours of class time to receive credit for the year. Students who fail to achieve 30 hours will need to make up their hours missed the following year. For this reason, parents are encouraged to **register early. Re-registration is necessary every year.** It is expected that children attend Religious Education classes without interruption through 9th grade and Confirmation formation. Registration information and forms appear on the parish website at olfnewcastle.com under the Religious Education tab. Registration forms must include a copy of Baptismal certificate (if not baptized at Our Lady of Fatima parish) and completed Consent Form A.

TUITION

All Religious Education families must be registered, active, and supporting members of Our Lady of Fatima Parish. Registration fees cover the cost of textbooks and supplies used throughout the year. Full tuition payment is expected by the first class. These fees combined do not cover the cost of running our program. The parish subsidizes the program through the generous sharing of the time and talents of our many volunteers and financially through the Sunday Offertory collection. *No child will be denied Religious Education based on their inability to pay.* Please contact the Religious Education office if payment arrangements are needed.

2016-2017 CLASS TIMES

Sunday, 8:30 AM to 9:45 AM

Wednesday, 6:30 PM to 7:45 PM

SCHEDULE

PREP class schedules are posted on the parish website olfnewcastle.com under the Religious Education tab. Diocesan guidelines require *at least* thirty hours of formal instruction each year. Continuity of instruction is important, therefore attendance and punctuality are expected. *Any missed class work is expected to be completed, signed, and returned within 2 weeks of absence.* Any student absent five or more times will require a recommendation from their current catechist and the Catechetical Coordinator before being moved to the next grade level.

REMIND NOTIFICATION SYSTEM SIGN-UP

Remind is a free notification system that many parishes now use to quickly share important messages with parish families. We will use this system to inform you of emergency closings, meeting reminders, and any other important messages that need to be shared. *It will be your primary means of notification for any changes to class schedules due to bad weather or any other emergency.* The parish cannot sign you up for this program, it must be done by the persons who will receive the messages.

Parents are requested to sign up for this text/email notification system early. This is accomplished by 1) text 81010 OR 2) go to www.remind.com/join. Simply enter the class code for your child's RE class day, and/or any sacrament program for which your child is enrolled. The codes are:

PREP CLASS CODES:

Sunday ClassK-8: rmd.at/olfpr
Wednesday: rmd.at/362gc

SACRAMENTAL FORMATION CODES:

Reconciliation & First Eucharist: _____

Confirmation: _____

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Cancellations due to bad weather or any emergency will be sent out through a *Remind* notification, WJBR (99.5FM), WSTW (93.7FM), and will be posted on the parish website.

ARRIVAL

Classes take place in the DAPSS Charter School located on the premises. Please use the parking lot entrance to the school only. Upon arrival, students should report directly to their assigned classroom. If your teacher has not arrived, please do not enter classroom. Please wait outside the classroom until your teacher arrives. Unless there is a parent meeting or you need to visit the office, we request you do not remain in the building during class time.

RCIC:

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Children is a two year program for children between the ages of 8 and 16 who have not been baptized or who are baptized but have not received their First Communion. RCIC is open to both parishioners and non-parishioners (with letter from home parish) who are in need of preparation for these Sacraments and for reception into the Roman Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. Whether your family is just entering the church; is returning after time away; decided as a family to delay the children's sacramental preparation or any other circumstance, **all are welcome.**

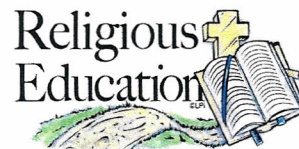
ADULTS

(18 years of age & older) who have not received sacraments are invited to speak with one of the parish priests about sacramental preparation for Adults.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement is essential. Please pray with your children daily. Attend Sunday Mass weekly and find ways to serve others—this is our baptismal call. Ask about what was learned each week and how it applies to life. Attend parish activities whenever possible. See Sunday Mass Attendance Policy.

We are always grateful for parents who are willing to volunteer of their time in this rewarding ministry. If you would like to learn more, volunteers are always needed. Here are just a few of the many ministry needs of Religious Education: Catechist, Asst Catechist, Class Aide, Door Monitor, Hall Monitor/Runner, Office Asst, Reconciliation/Communion Team or maybe you would like to help with a project or an event, If you would like to find out more about you could serve your parish and our youth, please don't hesitate to visit the Religious Ed Office, call (302) 328-0307 or Email: PREP@olfnewcastle.com.



SACRAMENTAL FORMATION PROGRAMS

Sacramental programs are separate from the Religious Education program and do require separate registration and fees. Students are eligible to enroll in the parish Reconciliation/First Eucharist program in second grade, after completing at least one full year of religious education classes. Students are eligible to enroll in the parish Confirmation program in the ninth grade, after completion of eighth grade. Sacramental prep forms and schedules are posted on the Religious Education web page.

BAPTISM:

Children 7 years of age and younger are considered infants. Please consult the information on Infant Baptism. Children who are eight years of age and older must attend PREP for one year before we will consider Baptism.



FIRST RECONCILIATION (Confession):

Students are instructed in the Sacrament of Penance before First Holy Communion; and are given the opportunity to go to First Confession several months BEFORE First Holy Communion.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:

Students age 7 (Grade 2) or older must attend Catholic School or PREP classes for TWO YEARS (present year included) in order to receive FIRST HOLY COMMUNION. Older children (grades 4–8) will be placed in an age-appropriate class but still must attend TWO YEARS before First Holy Communion.



CONFIRMATION:

According to Diocesan norms, students must be in the EIGHTH GRADE or older to be considered for the sacrament of Confirmation. The students must also possess knowledge of the faith BEFORE entering Confirmation formation.

SAFETY

Safety of our children is essential. Please follow the procedures listed under “Arrival” and “Dismissal” to help ensure their safety. In compliance with diocesan regulations and local fire ordinances, we will be conducting an evacuation drill at least twice during the year. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. Teachers have been informed of evacuation rules and will review them with students during their first class.

COMMUNICATION

Most communication from our office will be sent via parish website and/or with students. This includes newsletters, reminders of important parish/RE events, monthly *Partners in Faith* flyers, service projects, progress reports, registration forms, etc.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be sent home with students in early January and at the end of the RE year. The purpose of the report is to give parents feedback on your child’s general effort, cooperation, and participation in class. In return, your comments are welcomed by the catechists. **Please sign the report and return it to your child’s catechist by the end of January.**

NON-VIOLENCE POLICY:

Students must show respect for others at all times. Our program is a “NO BULLY” “NO CYBER BULLING” “NO VIOLENCE” zone. If a student brings to class any object that could be used in an inappropriate manner, that student shall face a suspension or be expelled.

DISCIPLINE

This is necessary to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and to model Christian Values. At the first class, catechists will explain expectations regarding appropriate classroom behavior.

- 1) If a student continues his/her disruptive behavior or attitude after the catechists have asked the student to stop the distractions or interruptions, the student will be asked to leave the classroom and report to the Religious Education Coordinator for a short period of time. At the coordinator’s discretion, it may be necessary to call his/her parents.
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- 2) The second time a student is excused from the classroom for disciplinary reasons, the student will report to the coordinator and the parent(s)/guardian will be notified immediately of their child's behavior. the child will remain with the coordinator until the end of class or until the parents come to pick up their child.
- 3) The third time a student is required to leave the classroom because of inappropriate behavior, the student reports to the coordinator and the parents are called; the student remains with the coordinator. At the close of class the catechists, student, parents, and director will meet to discuss possible solutions or consequences. If the parents are unable to meet at this time, the student will be asked to withdraw from the Religious Education program until a parent conference is held.

FOOD

Absolutely no food or drinks will be allowed in the classrooms. No gum is permitted in the building.

CLASSROOM SAFETY

Students are not allowed to bring matches, lighters, cigarettes, knives, weapons, drugs, food, drink or any inappropriate materials into the building. Cell phones, electronic devices, including earbuds must be put into silent mode and put away during class. Respectful classroom behavior is expected at all times. More information under Textbook and Personal Items heading.

TEXTBOOKS and PERSONAL ITEMS:

Textbooks must be marked with the student's name and grade. A label was provided when books were distributed. All items (e.g. notebook, assignment pad, pencil holder) should be marked with the student's name and class. Valuables should not be brought to school. We cannot take responsibility for their loss or damage. No cell phones, Ipods or headsets, tablets or electronics of any nature are permitted in school. Students who have cell phones must turn the cell phone OFF during class time. Students are NOT permitted to use a cell phone during class time. Unauthorized use of such devices disrupts the instructional program and distracts from the learning environment. Therefore unauthorized use is grounds for confiscation of the device by school officials, including classroom teachers.



Devices must then be picked up by a parent. No games or toys (action figures, trading cards) are permitted. No pets, please!

DISMISSAL

Dismissal takes place outside the parking lot entrance of the school. A parent /guardian must wait for students who will be dismissed by grade. **No child will be dismissed to the parking lot unattended.** Please be *prompt* in picking up students at the designated dismissal time. Except in the case of emergency, early dismissals are not permitted.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

We appreciate any feedback from parents regarding the strengths and weaknesses of our program, provided they are shared in a respectful manner. Your comments and suggestions are a valued tool for further improvement of our program. Please respond to surveys when invited.

RECORD KEEPING

Please promptly inform the office of any changes in address, phone numbers, email, medical or learning issues with your child.

Thank You Prayer

"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

*For all that You have given to me, we thank you Lord.
For all that You have taken away, we thank you Lord.
For all that You have permitted, we thank you Lord.
For all that is yet to come, we give praise and thanks to you
Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*
