

WELCOME!

Welcome to the Catholic Weymouth Collaborative Religious Education Program! We are happy you have chosen to continue your child's religious education with us. We support you in your important role as the primary educators of your children, and are ready to assist you in handing on our Faith to the next generation of believers.

Jesus Christ is at the heart of all we do. His grace, received at the celebration of Sunday Mass, is the most important education our children can receive. Religious education classes can never replace prayerful participation in Sunday Mass. We look forward to seeing you and your family at Mass, and together joining in the celebration of the Eucharist as the Body of Christ.

This handbook serves as both a guide and information tool for parents. It explains the mission and goals of the religious education program and provides information about sacramental preparation, classes, curriculum, child safety, and how to get in touch with our parishes and religious education program. We are blessed to have dedicated catechists, and are most grateful for their commitment, dedication and, most importantly, their faith.

Again, we welcome you and your children to our program! May the Holy Spirit be with us this year as we guide, direct and teach our children by word and example in the Catholic faith.

Denise Gleason
Director of Religious Education

Joan Chenette
Religious Education Secretary

Religious Education Office - K-8

Monsignor Hackett Parish Center

1203 Commercial Street

Weymouth, MA 02189

781-337-3024

religiouseducation@catholicweymouth.org

Immaculate Conception Parish

1203 Commercial Street

Weymouth, MA 02189

781-337-0380

icoffice@catholicweymouth.org

Saint Jerome Parish

632 Bridge Street

Weymouth, MA 02191

781-335-2038

stjoffice@catholicweymouth.org

WEEKEND MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil Mass

- 4:00 p.m. at Immaculate Conception
- 5:30 p.m. at Saint Jerome

Sunday Masses

- 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. at Immaculate Conception
- 7:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at Saint Jerome

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

- Saturdays, 3:00-3:30 p.m. at Immaculate Conception
- Saturdays, 4:30-5:00 p.m. at Saint Jerome
- First Wednesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., Saint Jerome

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Grades 1-8

“Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child’s earliest years.

*This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith
by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the gospel.*

Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith.

*Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray
and to discover their vocation as children of God.*

*The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families;
it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents.”*

— Catechism of the Catholic Church

MISSION STATEMENT

The goal of the Catholic Weymouth Collaborative Religious Education Program is to form the students to be disciples of Jesus Christ, prepared to live their lives with Catholic-Christian values. The program is rooted in the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, where the entire parish draws strength from both word and sacrament. The Religious Education Program is intended for the children of our parishes who attend schools that do not have formal religious education as part of their curriculum. The Program supports parents as the primary catechists of their children.

GOALS

To promote and encourage:

- Proclamation of the Good News as revealed through Jesus Christ;
- Worship of God through private and liturgical prayer;
- Service to the Christian and entire world community; and
- Parents in their role as primary catechists of their children.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING CHILDREN TO HOLY MASS

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them;
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” - Mt. 19: 14

When we bring our children to Holy Mass, we are bringing our children (as well as ourselves) to Jesus, to His perfect Sacrifice offered to God the Father for the salvation of the human race. We are bringing them to Jesus – Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. We are bringing them to the fountain of grace flowing from His Paschal Mystery.

Attendance at Sunday Mass is expected as part of the Religious Education Program. Our religious education curriculum (see page 9) is based on the Gospel readings for Sunday Mass. Children will better make the connection between the celebration of the Mass and learning about their faith with regular Mass attendance.

Some guidelines:

1. Bring them and keep bringing them; be consistent. Mass is the greatest privilege this side of heaven.
2. If possible, sit close to the front. It is usually the easiest place to find a seat, and gives children the best view of the sacrifice taking place on the altar.
3. Try to get to Mass a little ahead of time and stay a few minutes afterwards. Before Mass is a perfect time for prayer and previewing the readings, and after Mass, the entire family can say hello to the priest.
4. Teach them about the parts of the Mass, especially the Consecration. The better we learn about it and the more faithfully we attend, the better we will be able to teach our children. Start young and stay at it. Sometimes it might not seem like they are understanding it at all, but they will probably get a lot more than we realize and surprise us from time to time. The more prayerful and faithful we are, the more predisposed we will be to tap into the tremendous graces that are available to us in the Mass and the better able we will be to communicate the faith to our children.
5. Teach them to bless themselves with holy water and to genuflect toward the tabernacle, since it contains the Blessed Sacrament, when entering or leaving the Church. We should teach them these signs of reverence over, and over, and over, and over, and over again, with the utmost patience.
6. Teach them about the parts of the Church building, e.g. tabernacle, stories on stained glass windows, altar, crucifix, baptismal fonts, etc.
7. Don't let the Mass be the only time they pray or that they see you pray. Incorporate prayer in your family routine such as prayer before meals, before bed, and upon waking.
8. If possible, try to attend Sunday Mass at the time that is best for the children. Many families find the 9am at Immaculate Conception and the 10:30am at Saint Jerome to be convenient, especially if they also attend religious education classes on Sunday mornings. We would love to see you then, or at any of our other Masses during the weekend!

9. Try to make the entirety of the Lord's Day a day for God. A great way to do this is to make Sundays a family time, and, as much as possible, a peaceful, unhurried time.

10. Persevere, Persevere, Persevere, Persevere, Persevere, Persevere!

BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN IN BRINGING THEM TO MASS

- They receive the grace outpoured during the celebration.
- It helps develop a love and fascination for the sacred.
- When brought to Mass frequently, children more quickly learn the language of the Faith.
- Behavior at Mass gets better at an earlier age if they are taken from an early age and become accustomed to it.
- The Faith becomes interwoven into the fabric of their lives.
- They develop a love for and hungering after the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

*—Adapted and printed with the permission of James F. Gontis,
Diocese of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*

ENROLLMENT

All students (new and returning) must be enrolled for the Religious Education Program. The cost of tuition is:

- Grades 1, 3-8: \$100 per child;
- Grade 2: \$125 per child;
- Maximum tuition \$225 per family

CLASS SCHEDULE

Immaculate Conception Parish Class Schedule

All Classes Meet in the Hackett Parish Center

GRADES	DAY	TIME
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	SUNDAY	10:10-11:10a.m.
5, 6	MONDAY	3:15-4:15p.m.
7, 8	MONDAY	7:00-8:00p.m.
1, 2, 3, 4	WEDNESDAY	3:45-4:45p.m.

Saint Jerome Parish Class Schedule

All Classes Meet in Saint Jerome School

GRADES	DAY	TIME
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	SUNDAY	9:15-10:15a.m.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism

It is expected that all children enrolled in the Religious Education Program are baptized Roman Catholics, and that their baptismal certificate is provided upon registration to the program. Parents of children who have not received the Sacrament of Baptism must contact the Religious Education Office to arrange time for instruction and preparation to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion Retreat, First Holy Communion

Students must complete Religious Education for grade one before entering Religious Education in grade two. Preparing for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion is the primary focus of the grade two curriculum. The First Holy Communion retreat is a special day for all grade two students and their parents to come together for prayer and activities that focus on the Eucharist.

Parents of children in grade three and above who have not received the Sacraments of Reconciliation or First Holy Communion must contact the Religious Education Director to arrange time for instruction and preparation to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

Arrival/Dismissal

Children must arrive promptly for the beginning of class. Children in grades 1 and 2 must be accompanied by an adult and enter and exit through the main door of the Saint Jerome School gymnasium or the Hackett Parish Center. At both Saint Jerome Parish and Immaculate Conception Parishes, the catechists will greet their students in the gymnasium and escort them to their classroom.

Please do not drop your children off more than 5 minutes prior to the start of class. This means no child should be left unaccompanied for 20-30 minutes in the gym prior to class.

At the end of class, the catechists will escort the students back to the gym, where they will meet their parent/guardian or other adult designee. If the adult has not arrived, the child will stay with the catechist or director until he or she arrives. No child will leave without an adult. If you would like your child to walk home without an adult please inform the office via email or letter.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential to your child's development and learning in the religious education program. It is expected that students will attend every class except in the event of illness. If your child will not be attending class, please call the Religious Education Office and leave your child's name, grade and reason for their absence.

Students are responsible for all work missed during an absence, and parents are expected to work with their children to make up any work missed. The catechist and Director will review the lessons missed and prepare the necessary lessons for the parents. Parents are asked to contact the Religious Education Director to make arrangements for a child who has a long term disability or illness.

Class Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather, please watch for the cancellation on WBZ-TV Channel 4 on the morning of class. The office will attempt to contact families if classes are cancelled. Please do not call the parish emergency number.

Respectful Behavior

It is the expectation that children will come to class ready and prepared to learn and to participate in the class discussions in a thoughtful, prayerful and respectful manner. If a child becomes disruptive, he/she will be asked to leave and must meet with the Religious Education Director to complete the lesson. If the behavior continues, the parent will be asked to accompany the child to class.

Cell Phones and Technology

The use of cell phones and other devices is not permitted while in the building for religious education classes. This includes before and after class. Please ask your children to keep them put away and on silent. Should you need to reach your child during class time please call the office at 781-337-3024.

Classroom Treats

Snack foods and beverages will not be provided for children. For classes that meet on Sunday morning, please provide your child with breakfast before coming to class. If your child is coming from school to weekday class you are more than welcome to provide them with a snack, which they can eat before class begins at the designated snack table outside the gym.

Health Concerns

Information on students who have health issues, allergies, or are on medications must be noted on the registration form and parents must notify the Religious Education Director of these and any other health issues.

Child Safety

We take child safety seriously. The Archdiocese of Boston mandates that every parish implement a prescribed child safety program for grades K-8. The child safety program will discuss ways to stay safe at home, with friends and with adults they may encounter in unfamiliar situations. You will receive more information on the program selected and how this will be incorporated into the weekly lessons.

All volunteers in our program must also submit a CORI and sign a Code of Conduct form. All catechists and assistant catechists must attend a training program on child safety.

Restroom Facilities

The use of restroom facilities should be limited to emergencies only. Children should use the facilities prior to the start of Religious Education class to minimize class interruptions.

Communication

Communication is key to the success of the religious education program. Updates to the program will be emailed and posted on parish websites, summarized in the weekly religious education column in the bulletin and, when necessary, sent by mail.

Our Collaborative website contains a wealth of information about the religious education program. Often, answers to questions can be found quickly online, in addition to information about happenings in the parish. Check it out at www.catholicweymouth.org.

Curriculum and Resources

The Catholic Weymouth Collaborative uses the *Pflaum Gospel Weeklies*, a liturgically-based catechetical program that helps parents participate in their important role as the first educators of their children. There are two components to the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies:

- 1. The Gospel at Home**

This simple resource connects you to your child(ren)'s lessons each week. Designed for busy families, *The Gospel at Home* provides a short description of the Sunday Gospel plus suggested activities and discussion starters for each age level. These easy-to-do ideas will bring families together to share what each member has learned about the Gospel that they heard on Sunday (and studied in class.)

- 2. Grade-specific resources**

These are the catechetical resources we will use in class:

- Grade 1: *Promise*
- Grade 2: *Together in Jesus First Reconciliation/First Eucharist*
- Grades 3-5: *Venture*
- Grades 6-8: *Visions*

In the Declaration on Christian Education, the Second Vatican Council wrote that the primary and principal duty regarding the education of children belongs to parents: *Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators. This role in education is so important that only with difficulty can it be supplied where it is lacking. Parents are the ones who must create a family atmosphere animated by love and respect for God and man, in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is fostered.*

It is our hope that the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies will support parents in this important role.

Supplies

All supplies are provided.