

St. Francis de Sales

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PARENT HANDBOOK

Kindergarten, Grades 1-8,
RCIC and First Communion Grades 1 & 2
Confirmation Candidates Grades 6-7

129-16 Rockaway Beach Blvd
Belle Harbor, New York 11694
718.945.6911

St. Francis de Sales Program

Courses, Policies and Procedures

Grades K-8

The Diocesan Curriculum *The Seed is The Word of God* is followed in all grades. Our textbooks correlate with the standards in the curriculum.

Every class will have a minimum of two *Family Life* Lessons as mandated by the diocese.

Children will also attend a minimum of one Child Lures Session.

Students in Grade 1 and 2 are prepared for the Sacraments Penance and Holy Eucharist and those in Grades 6 through 8 are prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We also offer Online Catholic Homeschooling provided by My Catholic Faith Delivered for non-sacramental grades 3,4,5. Completion of the program is mandatory each year in order to be promoted to the next grade.

Two Year First Communion Preparation Program

Grades 3-8 students are presented with a summary of the Catholic Faith and Doctrine in an age appropriate way. Students are prepared for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. Mass attendance is required.

Two Year Confirmation Preparation Program

Grades 6-8 students are presented with a summary of the Catholic Faith and Catholic Doctrine in an age appropriate way. They are prepared to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

Fees

One child \$200 Two children \$250 Three or more \$300 If registration is paid before June 20 there is a \$25 discount

Fees are due at time of registration unless other arrangements are made through the Religious Education Office. We do not accept debit or credit cards.

The registration fee for online children will be the same as those children who attend class.

There is a \$150 fee for Confirmation candidates. It covers the retreat, facilitator fee, food, and Confirmation robe.

There is a \$150 fee for First Reconciliation, First Communion and RCIC candidates. This fee covers banners, retreat, food, and activities.

Inclement Weather

We follow the inclement weather directives of New York City.

Listen to 1010 WINS (AM). You might also receive an email from the Religion Education office from Option C parent alert.

Parental Involvement

As stated in the documents of Vatican II, "...As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must, therefore, be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education" (Cf. VAT. II Declaration on Christian Education, n. 3: (1965).

In the Sadlier, We Believe Series, there are the Family Feature and Building Family Faith sections to offer ideas and activities to connect faith and family and reinforce learning at home.

Children Preparing for Sacraments

Children preparing for the sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation are required to attend Religious Education classes for two years: Grades One and Two for Penance and Holy Eucharist and Grades Six through Eight for confirmation. This is to ensure that the Diocesan guidelines are met. "These guidelines are intended to assist catechists in fulfilling the mission of the Church to educate her children in the fullness of the Catholic Faith: to believe what the Creed teaches; To participate in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church; To live a life of love for God and neighbor; and to pray to the Father through Jesus, His Son, in the Holy Spirit."

Special Needs Children

We will work with you, your child, and their Catechist to meet your child's special needs for sacramental preparation for Grades K-8 students. If your child has an active ISP with the DOE, please inform the office and /or the catechist so we can assist them in providing the best environment for them and others in their faith journey.

Volunteers

Our program cannot be run without your help. We need catechists, assistant catechists, and substitute catechists. We will be glad to work with your schedule so that you can evangelize.

Catechists are responsible for teaching the class, and the assistants help the catechist with lessons, attendance, projects, etc. Substitute catechists fill in for the catechists and may specify the grade they would like to substitute for. The prayer aides help students learn their prayers.

All volunteers must complete mandatory diocesan paperwork including a background check and attend a VIRTUS Seminar.

All Volunteers under the age of 18 must take the Diocesan course at: [www.virtus.org / building relationships](http://www.virtus.org/buildingrelationships)

All new catechists are required to attend an orientation session.

All Catechists are required to attend at least one training session. Additional training sessions are offered during the year.

Sunday Mass

Mass attendance is vital to our religious formation and the development of a Catholic community. Children learn by repetition, consistency and good example. When Sunday Mass is part of children's regular routine, they learn to maintain the habit of weekly Mass attendance. Seeing the importance their parents place Sunday Mass attendance teaches them obedience and discipline.

Our Sunday Mass times are as follows:

Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:30 pm

Sunday: 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am and 12:00 pm , 5:30 pm

Prayers

The Diocese has set up guidelines for the memorization of devotional and liturgical prayers. Keep in mind that the family is where the learning of prayer first takes place. We ask that parents take the responsibility of making prayer an integral part of family living. Your child will also be saying prayers in class each week and an assistant will be listening to them and reporting their progress to the catechist. Please help your child learn the required prayers each year.

Advent/Lent Confessions

We attempt to schedule confessions during Advent and Lent. Confession is recommended every three months. Confessions are heard at St. Francis de Sales Church at 4:00 PM every Saturday.

Attendance

For the safety of our children, parents are asked to drop off their children using the Msgr. Reddy Hall as the way to enter the Religious Education program. The Director/Supervisor will meet your child at the door and make sure they get to their class. There is no need for the parent to enter the Hall with them, unless you need to speak to the catechist.

Children will be dismissed as follows: Grades K-2 will be dismissed at 4:25 at the Academy door. Grades 3-5 will be dismissed at 4:30 through the gym doors. Grades 6-8 will be dismissed at 7:30 through the Msgr. Reddy Hall doors.

Any student who is late must report to the Office before going to class.

We ask that you make every effort to have your children in class each week, with the necessary textbooks or materials and to be on time. Our classes build on each other and carry a central focus throughout the year. Religious Education class attendance should take precedence over all extracurricular activities, including sports. Students are required to attend at least 80% (miss no more than 5 classes) of the scheduled classes to be recommended for the reception of the sacraments. Those who miss more than 5 classes could be asked to repeat the class.

If your child has three consecutive absences, we will notify you to discuss whether your child will remain in the program. A parent/guardian is requested to call the Religious Education Office (718-945-6911) to report that a student will not be able to attend class. We will call or email to check on those students who are absent. A child who is absent is responsible for all classwork, tests, projects, etc. that he/she has missed.

If early dismissal is necessary, notify the catechists when bringing your child to class and let the office volunteer know.

Parents may **NOT** go to the classroom to pick up their child. An assistant will bring your child to you at the Religious Ed office. An early release form must be completed. Students must be picked up on time, as volunteers run our program and they need to leave immediately after class.

Books and Supplies

Students will be issued books, a pencil and crayons in an envelope. The current price of the book will be charged to replace a lost book.

Learning Environment

Students will be expected to follow the rules and regulations. Courtesy, cooperation and respect are expected from students towards each other and the catechist. Care must be taken of classroom property including tables, chairs, walls, projects, etc. Cell phones should be used for emergency purposes only. No texting during class time; all cell phones are to be turned off. iPods should not be played in class. St. Francis de Sales is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones or iPod, etc.

Student Regulations

- Dress appropriately—no hats or visors.
- Students should act respectfully toward all adults and use their last name to address them.
- No food or drink should be brought into the classroom.
- Students are never to go into desks and touch or use materials from these desks.
- No chewing gum
- No toys or games.
- Students may not write on chalk or dry-erase boards unless it is for the purpose of the lesson.
- Cell phones should be used for emergency purposes only. Electronic gadgets are to be used only with the permission of the catechist.
- St. Francis de Sales is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones or iPods, etc.

Disruptive Behavior

- First step: Catechist will speak to the child in class and inform the parents of the child's behavior.
- Second step: The catechist will have the child escorted to the office and ask the DRE to call parents and notify them of the situation and ask that they speak to the child.
- Third step: A parent and child will meet with Father Jim Cunningham and the Director of Religious Education to resolve the situation.
- Fourth step: The parent will attend class with their child or use the online program the child.

Progress Reports

Directives from the Diocese call for specific teachings, doctrine and prayers at each grade level. We adhere to these guidelines and issue Progress Reports in January and May to help you determine your child's spiritual, moral, doctrinal and social growth.

Charities

Children should practice sharing with the less fortunate and support our Church. The following charitable activities will be supported: Thanksgiving Food Drive, CRS Rice Bowls, other charitable causes the parish deems fit.

Change of Address and /or Phone Number

Please notify the Religious Education Office if your home address, e-mail address or phone number(s) change.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL COMMUNICATIONS FROM OUR OFFICE WILL BE EMAILED THROUGH OPTION C PARENT ALERT

WE MUST BE ABLE TO REACH YOU BY PHONE WHILE YOUR CHILD IS ON ST. FRANCIS DE SALES PROPERTY.