

FAMILY COMMITMENT PRAYER



Loving and merciful Father, who
Instituted the family as an
instrument of your fruitful love and
raised it to be a sacrament of the love
of your Son for his Church, send forth
your Holy Spirit to forgive us for our
sinful failures, to heal the personal and
social wounds that afflict us, to bring
consolation to the vulnerable among
us, and to enable us to reach out in
compassionate care to all those fami-
lies in need. Make possible within us
and for us what only you can do.

Through Christ our Lord
Amen.

Holy Family Catholic Church

Mitchellville, Maryland



Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) Handbook 2016 ó2017

Welcome!

Our program includes classes for almost everyone in the parish . We have PREP that are in preschool through 8th grade. Within this program we have classes for children with special learning needs, RCIC for children in grades 3-6 that missed reception of Baptism, Reconciliation and Eucharist, HSPREP for our youth in grades 9-12, and RCIT for students in grades 9-12 that need sacramental preparation.

The mission of our program is to promote the faith, teach the word of God, in our parish and in our community. We will strive to help all to explore their Catholic faith, develop morally correct attitudes towards God, self and others as they grow in religious understanding and practice. Specifically, by our own example and commitment to our own formation, we will assist parents in their roles as primary educators of their children.

Our texts and materials help to enhance our mission. Our pre-school will be using RCL Benziger's Stories of God's Love. We will continue to use W.H. Sadlier's We Believe for children in Kindergarten through 6th grade, We Live Our Faith for our 7th & 8th graders; A Year Through The Gospels—St. Mary's Press, for our High School program.

The Faith Knowledge Standards developed by the Archdiocese of Washington are at the core of our teaching. These Standards are based on the 6 pillars of catechesis (pray, learn, celebrate, share choose and live). Although we use the term grade to represent each level of our program, our intent is to provide a complete catechesis. Therefore, each child is placed in what is deemed an appropriate level/grade with the expectation the he/she will participate from the beginning level to the end. It has happened in the past, where a child may attend for one or two years and drop out, only to return at Sacrament time. In this situation, the child will be placed at the level when he/she left our program.

Parents, we need your support in our mission. Please review this handbook for program policies, discuss with your child what is being taught in the classroom and most importantly, attend Mass together. Let us all pray for a fruitful year filled with learning and love for the Lord.

Holy Family Catechists

On a final note...

"God's love is communicated to infants and young children primarily through parents." Parents have shared the gift of human life with their children and, through Baptism, have enriched them with a share in God's own life. They have the duty to nourish it. Their faith, their attitude toward other human beings, and their trust in a loving God strongly influence the development of the child's faith. Parents are catechists precisely because they are parents. Their role in the formation of Christian values in their children is irreplaceable. They "should speak naturally and simply about God and their faith, as they do about other matters they want their children to understand and appreciate." (NDC, p. 202-203)

We are a team.

We cannot and should not replace you as the primary catechist of your child.

It is our role to support you in your efforts and we respectfully ask that you reciprocate.

We believe that with prayer, faithful Mass attendance, reception of the sacraments, service to others and study of the teachings of our faith we can all be the people that God has called us to be.

Knowledge Based Standards For Religious Education

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In 2012, the Archdiocese of Washington, implemented the new Faith Knowledge Standards. A CD of the entire Curriculum Guide was provided to each family and currently offered to any newly registered family. If you have misplaced your CD, a link can be found on our parish website. The new guidelines are:

Forming Disciples for the New Evangelization
Archdiocesan Religion
Curriculum Guide
Grades Pre-K to 8

This curriculum looks at the six tasks of catechesis as six key elements of lived Catholic life so as to help young disciples in formation to realize the intimate connection between our Catholic faith and life. These six key elements of Catholic life “constitute a unified whole by which catechesis seeks to achieve its objective: the formation of disciples of Jesus Christ.” (GDC nos. 85-86; NDC no. 20)

As mentioned on page 5 of this handbook, knowledge based assessments will be administered annually to students in grades 3- 8. Our students will take this assessment in the Spring. **Please make sure your child is in attendance for the Assessment as there are no make-up days for this test.**

In past years if a student missed this exam, the score was not included in the progress report. However, all of our other tests are open book while this exam is not and the results could be a clearer indication of what the student actually knows. As we truly want an accurate overall picture we want all of our students in grades 3-8 to be present to take this exam. Therefore this year all scores will be reflected in the progress report.

You can reach us by phone at 301-249-1167
or by email at: holyfamilyprep@msn.com
Visit our webpage at www.holyfamilywoodmore.org

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Program Times

PREP - (Preschool- 8th Grade) 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays from 10:40 - 11:50 AM (see calendar as there are a few exceptions).

REAL—(Religious Education for Atypical Learners)

RCIC - (Grades 3-6) 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays from 10:40 - 11:50 AM

RCIT - (High School Sacrament Preparation Class) 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays from 10:40 - 11:50 AM

HSPREP - (High School Religious Education) 1st, 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays from 6:30 - 8:00 PM (Students may be excused to attend Mass)

Confirmation Preparation - 1st Wednesday of each month from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Dates included on 8th grade syllabus.

Our program year runs from September through June to meet the Archdiocesan requirement of 30+ hours of instruction.

Please make your best effort to have your child here on time. It is very disruptive to have a child enter the classroom once instruction has begun! **Excessive tardiness (20 minutes or more)** will be counted as an absence.

Attendance Policy (Updated in 2015)

If a student should miss 9 more classes, during the program year, the parent(s) will be required to meet with the pastor to discuss the reason for such high absenteeism. As a syllabus is provided at every grade level, parents should be able to help their child make up any missed work.

Dismissal Procedures

For the safety of our children, the following dismissal plan will be followed:

- At the end of each session, students will be dismissed, as a group. Students in grade 2 and above will be allowed to leave the hall to wait in the designated area (weather permitting) (look for traffic cones). **Please be reminded that no child from preschool through 1st grade will be released without an adult, They will not be released to a non-adult sibling.**

Service Projects

Over the years, we have offered several opportunities for the children to participate in service projects. While the projects may vary from year to year, some traditional ones include:

- Cemetery Clean-up
- Christmas Giving Program
- Lit For Little Ones
- Shepherd's Cove
- So Others Might Eat (SOME)
- Various Charitable Collections

While these projects are not mandatory, we hope that you would encourage your child to participate to teach them a sense of stewardship of God's creation and to each other.

Internet Communication

Email is a wonderful tool for communication. On your child's registration form, you were asked to provide an email address. Please be assured, that your email address will not be sold or given out to anyone. All group emails are sent via blind copy.

Each week, on Mondays for HSPREP & Confirmation and on Thursdays for REAL, RCIC & PREP, you will receive reminder emails regarding the upcoming classes. Please check for reminders both in email and in the bulletin. This is a courtesy and not meant to replace the printed calendar.

Our parish has a webpage www.holyfamilywoodmore.org This page has a link for Religious Education.

You will not receive SPAM (cute stories, pictures, jokes, or political rhetoric) from my office. I ask that you also do not use this form of communication to send SPAM.

Confirmation

In the Archdiocese of Washington, it is recommended that confirmation be celebrated during the 7th-8th grade year. Here at Holy Family, we begin our preparation in January of the student's 7th grade year. Preparation concludes in June of the 8th grade year.

Our program has 7 Components:

1. Faithful attendance at Sunday Mass (including 1 monthly class mass that all candidates should attend)
2. Faithful attendance of Confirmation Class (once-a-month on the 1st Wednesday of each month)
3. Regular communication and journaling with Sponsor
4. Completion of Community Service Projects
5. Attendance at Spirit Day and a weekend retreat (held in spring of 2nd year)
6. Written letter to the Bishop requesting Confirmation
7. Interview with the pastor to determine readiness

Confirmation is a Rite not a Right. Readiness of the candidate determines its reception.

Students that are out of sequence should review the requirements on page 7 of this handbook.

Class work

Each student should come prepared for class with his/her textbook and binder. We will provide all other needed supplies. Each year, your child's binder will contain the program calendar, handbook and textbook. Upon request a CD containing the Archdiocesan Faith Knowledge Standards will be given to newly registered families each program year. The standards may always be found as a link on the Religious Education page of our parish website. A syllabus for each grade/level is also provided.

Unit Assessments and quizzes are part of the curriculum. Unit Assessments will be taken in class. Students will be allowed to use their text and given 45 minutes to complete the test.

A Faith Knowledge Assessment will be given in the Spring to students in grades 3-8.

Homework

Students may be given homework, this includes those students in Sacramental Preparation. Any uncompleted class work and homework should be completed and returned by the next session unless otherwise indicated.

Progress Reports

Two progress reports will be given to students in grades 1-8. The first report will come mid program year and the final report will be mailed home in June. Reports will indicate scores from Unit Assessments, Faith Knowledge Assessment (if applicable), Summer Packet Score and attendance records. **An overall proficiency of at least 60% must be obtained to progress to the next grade/level.**

Home Study

Parents, are the primary teacher of their child. If the preference is to teach Religious Education at home, we have materials that can be purchased. This excludes those students preparing to receive Sacraments. These children should be part of our Preparation Program per the *Liturgical Norms—Archdiocese of Washington (2010), para.17.1.*

Summer Packets

An integral part in retaining the knowledge taught to the children is the completion of a Summer Packet. **This packet is mandatory** for children in grades 1-8 and part of the registration requirement. Packets can also be found on the parish website. Printed copies may be requested and also found in the church vestibule.

Child Protection

The Archdiocese of Washington (ADW), has implemented policies and procedures in an effort to protect our children. All of our adult volunteers, who work with children, are required to be in full compliance with the ADW's policy. Volunteers undergo a background check and Child Abuse awareness training.

Students are educated, in an age appropriate manner, about ways to maintain their safety. Upon request, parents will be given a guidebook and an overview of the lesson material given to their child.

Our program offers Safe Environment education for all students in grades K-12. These sessions are held in the fall and your child's participation is strongly encouraged as we must meet 80% or greater participation.

REAL

(Religious Education for Atypical Learners)

Formerly called SPRED People of all abilities have a right to know the mystery of faith. However, we recognize that each person develops at differing rates. Some may also have special educational needs. These needs may include learning related or developmental related issues. We ask that you work with us, to help identify what they are so that we can do our best in bringing your child to God. Our catechists will utilize the individual's learning style so he/she can be a more integral part of our parish community of faith. Any information provided will be treated with respect and confidentiality.

Sacrament Preparation

It is Archdiocesan Policy that students receive Sacraments at their home parish. Preparation (catechesis) for the reception of these sacraments is also received at their home parish. Students attending a Catholic School should make arrangements to participate with our parish program for this preparation. Primarily, this affects those students in grades 2, 7 & 8. Please be aware of the following:

1. All parents of children preparing for sacraments are required to attend parent meetings. Review the calendar for time and place of meetings.
2. Parents of Catholic School students are asked to donate \$20 for supplies versus the \$80 registration fee.
3. Catholic School children will need to attend classes, as scheduled (see calendar). These classes will focus on knowledge of the sacraments, exploration and investigation of the specific sacrament and foster a sense of community.

Children who are out of Sequence

These are children who did not receive sacraments at the usually prescribed age. This is a 2 year program which aims at helping them become fully initiated Catholics.

Year 1 is an introductory year, exploring the Roman Catholic Faith, its traditions, practices and beliefs.

Year 2 focuses on the Sacraments and their reception.

Students in grade 2 that have had no prior religious instruction will be enrolled in grade 1 and will meet during PREP.

Students in grades 3-8 will meet during PREP. This is RCIC class.

Students in grades 9-12 will meet during PREP. This is RCIT class.

All participants are required to attend class each week, complete all homework assignments, attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation and complete any required service projects.