



**St. Joseph Religious Education**  
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## **Welcome to St Joseph Religious Education**

### **OUR MISSION**

The aim of religious education is to promote communion with Jesus Christ. At St. Joseph Parish, we seek to nurture a faith that is living, conscious, and active in the light of instruction. Our goal is to offer formation to help your family live in a way that is faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the tradition of the Catholic Church. Our work involves catechetics (instruction in the faith), opportunities for service, sacramental preparation, and appreciation for public prayer and worship, fellowship, and spiritual renewal.

*“The work of a catechist and religious educator depends on the witness of the Church for full effect. As Pope Paul VI said, “People today listen more to witnesses than they do to teachers and if they do listen to teachers it is because they are witnesses.” –Evangelii Nuntiandi*

### **THE WAY OUR PROGRAM WORKS**

We strive to provide a comprehensive faith formation program for children beginning with children in Grade 1. The children are instructed by a dedicated team of volunteer catechists who strive to be good adult role models. They provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the classroom so that the children will be able to grow in their faith and develop a strong Catholic identity. The shared catechetical process between the catechist, church community and family is designed to nurture each child in his or her life-long faith journey.

We strive to enhance faith formation by encompassing the six fundamental tasks of catechesis:

1. Promoting knowledge of the faith;
2. Liturgical education;
3. Moral formation;
4. Teaching prayer;
5. Education for community life;
6. Create and stimulate a missionary spirit

**Children in Grade 1** participate in a home program (one on one) with their parents and attend monthly Activity Sessions at the school.

**Grades 2 -7** students attend weekly class on Tuesday or Wednesday from October through April.

### **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Sacrament preparation is a parish based program. Children who are attending either a Catholic school OR the St Joseph Parish Religious Education Program are eligible to enroll in this process of preparation.

- **SACRAMENTS OF FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST** Preparation begins no earlier than the second year of regular grade level religious education classes.

- **SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION**

Students entering Grade 6 are eligible to enroll in the 2-year Confirmation Program. Students participate in final preparation activities and celebrate Confirmation in the fall of Grade 8.

**Grades 8-12** students who have not attended regular grade level classes and would like to celebrate the initiation sacraments are welcome to enroll in the program.

### **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

It is our commitment to make our programs inclusive and accessible to children with special needs and disabilities. Parents are the most knowledgeable about their own children. Please inform us of any special circumstances your child or family may have so that we can make arrangements that meet their needs.

### **BECOME A CATECHIST!**

We have a continuous need for catechists (religion teachers) in order for our program to be sustained and grow. We invite and encourage parents, grandparents, and parishioners to consider joining our ministry. It is only with your help and participation that that we can accomplish the task of passing on our faith to the children. Catechists are responsible for planning and carrying out the designated curriculum. We invite you to prayerfully consider joining this ministry.

*What our catechists say...*

*“What I thought would be a giving thing, a few hours a week of my time, turned out to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.”*

*“We plant seeds of faith in the children with God's grace. Our efforts and our prayers will bear fruit at some stage in their life. We don't always see immediate results but quite often a word, a story or even a picture triggers the children's hearts so they want to know more about the love that God has for us.”*

*“I guess that being a catechist, is like being one of God's instruments in bringing souls to know and love Him. The rewards of teaching far outweigh the effort!”*