



**OUR LADY OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT
PARISH**

Religious Education
Family Handbook
2026-27



Welcome

Rooted in the Gospel and guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish **Mission, Vision, and Values** help shape who we are as a parish community and who we are called to become. They reflect our commitment to worship, discipleship, service, stewardship, and helping others encounter and experience the love of Jesus Christ in meaningful ways.

Under Mary's mantle, and with the guidance of the Holy Trinity, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament seeks to share God's love by celebrating the sacraments, proclaiming the gospel, and serving the needs of all His children.

Following on this directive, our religious education program is focused on evangelizing and catechizing our children and families to become intentional disciples of Jesus Christ... To love God above all things, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

At Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, our goal is not simply to teach children about the Catholic faith, but to help families raise children who know, love, and follow Jesus Christ. Religious Education is a partnership between the parish and the family, with parents serving as the primary catechists of their children.

Parents as the Primary Catechists

Parents are the primary catechists of their children. Our Religious Education program is here to support and partner with families, but a child's faith formation begins at home. We ask parents to make the Catholic faith part of everyday family life through regular Sunday Mass attendance, family prayer, conversations about faith, and taking an active interest in what their children are learning in Religious Education. What happens in the classroom is most meaningful when it is reinforced and lived at home.

Sunday Mass Attendance

Regular attendance at Sunday Mass is an important part of Religious Education and is an expectation for our families. Parents are asked to make every effort to attend Mass each Sunday with their children. Religious Education supports the faith being lived at home, but it cannot replace participation in the Mass and the life of the parish.



Showing Up and Staying Connected

Religious Education Attendance

Consistent attendance at Religious Education classes is required. We understand that illness, family circumstances, and other conflicts may occasionally come up. When a student misses class, families are asked to complete the missed work at home. Each family has been provided with a calendar showing the topics and lessons covered at each class.

Reporting an Absence

If your child will be absent, you may contact the CRE and the information will be passed along to the catechist, or you may email your child's catechist directly.

Making Up Missed Work

Families are responsible for completing work missed due to an absence. Parents should use the provided topic calendar to determine what lesson or work their child needs to complete at home.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities

We understand that children are involved in sports and other activities and that scheduling conflicts sometimes happen. At the same time, consistent participation in Religious Education should be a priority. If your child has an ongoing conflict that will cause them to miss multiple classes, please contact the CRE so the situation can be discussed and a plan can be made to help the student remain on track.

Arrival and Tardiness

Students should be in their classroom and seated when class begins. Please allow enough time for drop-off so your child is ready to begin with the rest of the class. Arriving late can be disruptive and causes students to miss valuable class time.



A Safe and Welcoming Place to Learn

Arrival and Dismissal

All Religious Education students should enter and exit through Door 7. Students should arrive with enough time to be in their classroom and seated when class begins.

Grades K-4: A parent or guardian must come into the lobby to pick up their child.

Grades 5-8: Students may be picked up outside at Door 7.

If a parent or guardian is running late, the student will remain safely in the lobby with the CRE until they are picked up. Families are asked to make every effort to arrive promptly at dismissal.

Early Dismissal

If your child needs to leave Religious Education before the end of class, please contact the CRE and come to Door 7 for pickup. Parents should not go directly to the classroom. The student will be brought to the lobby for dismissal.

Student Behavior and Classroom Expectations

Our catechists are volunteers who generously give their time to help disciple and form our children in the Catholic faith. Students are expected to treat their catechists and classmates with respect, use appropriate language, respect school and classroom property, and allow everyone the opportunity to learn. Active participation in class is strongly encouraged. If a student's behavior becomes disruptive to the class, the student will be brought to the lobby with the CRE to complete their work independently, and a parent or guardian will be contacted.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are not permitted in the classroom. Any student bringing a phone to Religious Education must leave it at the designated table before entering class and may pick it up when class is over.

Books and Materials

Students should bring their Religious Education book and any other required materials to every class. Students are responsible for taking care of their materials throughout the year. If a book is lost, the family will be responsible for the cost of a replacement.

Food and Drinks

Students may bring a snack or drink to class as long as it is peanut-free and does not become a distraction during class. Catechists may ask students to put food or drinks away if they interfere with participation or instruction.



Respecting Our Classrooms

Our Religious Education classes take place in classrooms that are generously shared with us by Queen of the Rosary School teachers. Students should respect these spaces and may not use, move, open, or touch classroom materials or a teacher's personal belongings unless their catechist has given permission. Classrooms should be left exactly as they were found.

Student Safety and Building Expectations

Students may not leave their classroom or wander the building on their own. If a student needs to leave the classroom for any reason, including using the restroom, they must first have permission and follow the supervision procedures established by the Religious Education program.





Caring for Every Child

Medical and Allergy Needs

Parents should make sure all medical conditions, allergies, and other important health information are included on their child's registration. If a student requires an inhaler, EpiPen, medication, or another accommodation during Religious Education, please contact the CRE so an appropriate plan can be made on a case-by-case basis.

Keeping Information Current

Parents are responsible for keeping their family's contact and emergency information current throughout the year. Please notify the CRE of any changes to phone numbers, email addresses, emergency contacts, or important medical information.

Custody and Authorized Pickup

Parents or guardians must notify the CRE of any custody arrangements or restrictions that affect who may pick up their child. Please also let us know if there is anyone who is specifically not authorized to pick up your child. Relevant information should be provided in writing and kept current throughout the year.



Partners in Faith Formation

Communication

We want families to feel comfortable reaching out whenever they have a question or concern. Parents are welcome to contact their child's catechist or the CRE directly, depending on whom they feel most comfortable speaking with. Our goal is open communication and working together to support each child.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings are an important part of our Religious Education program, and attendance is expected from all families. We ask that at least one parent or guardian attend scheduled meetings whenever possible. These meetings allow us to share important information, answer questions, and make sure families and the parish are working together in the formation of our children.

Staying Informed

Email is our primary form of communication with Religious Education families. Parents are expected to regularly check their email for announcements, reminders, schedule changes, and other important information throughout the year. Please make sure we have a current email address on file.



Sacramental Preparation

First Reconciliation and First Communion

Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion is intended to be a two-year program. Consistent participation in Religious Education throughout both years is expected. During the sacramental year, students are expected to participate in all required components of preparation, including regular classes, Sunday Mass, First Reconciliation, the First Communion retreat, practice, and First Communion Mass. Families should make these dates a priority when planning other activities.





Confirmation

Confirmation preparation is a two-year program encompassing 7th and 8th grade. Consistent participation throughout both years is required. Students are expected to participate in all required components of Confirmation preparation, including regular classes, Sunday Mass, retreats, sponsor/candidate meetings, Confirmation projects, Reconciliation, practices, and the Confirmation Mass.

7th Grade: 8 service hours

8th Grade: 10 service hours

Required Confirmation dates and responsibilities should be treated as a priority when families are planning other activities.



Weather and Emergency Cancellations

In the event of a weather-related closing, please keep an eye on your email and the OLBS Facebook page for updates regarding Religious Education classes.

Contacts

Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE)

Mrs. Shana Goranson | sgoranson@archchicago.org
(847) 979-0901 x1004

Clergy

Fr. Mike Owen, Administrator | mowen@archchicago.org
Fr. Paul Adaja, Associate Pastor | padaja@archchicago.org

In Closing

Thank you for partnering with Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament in the faith formation of your children. We are grateful for the opportunity to walk with your family throughout the year.





OUR LADY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH

RAISING
Faith In Action
Saints

Queen of the Rosary Church
750 W Elk Grove Blvd

St. Julian Eymard Church
601 Biesterfield Rd

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