

# St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church

## Religious Formation

### Parent Handbook

## General Policies

### Philosophy of Religious Education

Through the cooperative efforts of teachers (Catechists), parents and students, the Religious Formation/ Sunday School Program (also known as CCD) celebrates God's presence among us by creating a Christian learning environment. Realizing that parents are the primary religious educators of children, volunteer catechists work to build a community of faith in which each child can better see and understand the action of God in their community and in the world. These goals are accomplished through faith sharing, prayer and liturgy.

### Policy Statement

Our Religious Formation Program is intended for faith formation and not just sacramental preparation. The program is designed to have continuity from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Skipping years between sacraments does not allow for adequate faith formation. It is difficult, if not impossible, for a child and teacher to make up for inadequate preparation. Young people will be eligible for the Confirmation Program only if they have completed the previous two years (grades 6 & 7) in a religious education program. Children will be eligible for the Reconciliation/Eucharist Program after they have completed one full year of religious education. Exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and the decision of the DRE (Director of Religious Education) and Fr Gabe will be final.

### General Expectations

It is expected that each family be actively involved in the St. Frances Cabrini Religious Education Program and parish in order to model a living, conscious and active Catholic faith and to reinforce the values and attitudes for living that faith. The parents and their children also must act in accordance with these values and attitudes.

### Registration Policy

All Religious Formation families must be registered members of St. Frances Cabrini Parish. This may be done at the parish office during regular business hours or online. The Religious Formation Class fee covers only a small portion of the total costs for this program, while the parish subsidizes all remaining costs. It is therefore assumed that parents are also financially supporting the parish. *Students may not attend the first day of class if they have not been registered in advance of that day.*

### Financial Support Policy

Parents are expected to support the parish with regular tithing. We understand that families are not always able to provide this level of financial support. Parents should never withhold students from Religious Formation classes or sacramental preparation because they are unable to pay the registration fee. **If you are unable to pay the registration fee, please contact the DRE; financial assistance is available.**

# Attendance Policies

Classes are held weekly from September through May and last for 1 hour. Please refer to the calendar for holiday breaks. Promptness and attendance at all classes is expected. **Classes begin at 9:45 AM.** Every class is important in the student's religious education. Perfect Attendance will be rewarded at the End of the Year.

## Sacramental Classes

Six weeks prior to first Reconciliation and nine weeks prior to First Holy Communion there will be special classes held in the Parish Hall, Sunday, 2:00 to 3:00pm. These classes are in addition to regular Sunday morning classes. Absences must be pre-approved by the DRE. Failure to attend all class may delay the student's participation in the Sacraments.

## Arrival

Students may arrive after 9:35am. Students must be dropped off and picked up by their parent unless prior written arrangements have been made. Students may enter their classroom if the Teacher is present. **If the teacher is not present, Parents should remain with their child until the teacher arrives.**

## Absences

When you know that your child will be absent for a particular class, please notify the Religious Education Office in advance of the class. The phone number is (912) 925-5316, email [cre.office@cabrini-sav.org](mailto:cre.office@cabrini-sav.org) we will contact you if your child is absent and we have not heard from you.

## Frequent Absences

When a student has repeated absences within a given year, it may be necessary to schedule a conference with the parents. Depending on the results of this conference, a student may be asked to repeat the same grade the following year.

## Tardiness

*Please be on time.* Students are expected to be in their seat and ready for class prior to 9:45AM. Repeated tardiness will have to be made up after class. Tardy arrivals disrupt the flow of class and take away from other students' learning.

## Homework & Class work

Each student should come to class prepared. This means completion of all previously assigned homework, as well as having the required supplies (pencil and folder). **Textbooks must be brought to every class.** If the text book is lost it is the Parent's responsibility to replace the book. Should a child consistently come to class without their homework or supplies, the DRE will contact the parents to schedule a meeting. Again, while we are here to guide in faith formation, it is primarily the responsibility of the parents to reinforce the weekly lessons.

## Make-up Work

A student who misses a class is expected to do make-up work as assigned by their teacher. The student, their parents, and the teacher share responsibility of seeing that this work is completed.

## Custody Issues

If parents are divorced or separated, the Religious Education Office presumes that both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right. If there are other custody arrangements, a copy of such agreement must be on file in the Parish Religious Education Office.

## **Cell Phones**

**Students may not bring cell phones and other electronic devices into classrooms.** (Unless directed by their teacher) Any disruption caused by electronic devices will result in their being held in the office. Devices will be returned when a parent comes to claim them.

## **Dress Code**

Students should not wear any clothing that is offensive or contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. It is at the discretion of the DRE to determine what is appropriate. For the safety of all in our program, wheeled shoes are prohibited.

## **Dismissal**

A bell will be rung at 10:45 to signal the end of class. Please do not enter your child's classroom before this occurs. *Children will remain in their classrooms after class until a parent comes into the room to pick them up* (grades PK-4<sup>th</sup>). This ensures the safe departure of every child, as well as gives the Catechist a chance to speak with parents. Please be prompt in pick-up. Any child not picked up by 10:55 will be taken to the DRE office. After 2 late pick-ups, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents before the student may return to class.

## **Early Dismissal**

Students will not be allowed to leave class early unless a note from the parents is sent to the Religious Education Office before class. For the protection of the student, the person coming for the student must report to the office to pick up the student. Teachers will not dismiss the student from class early without receiving a prior approval from the office.

## **Medications**

Except in extraordinary circumstances, which must be approved by the DRE, the Religious Education Program or personnel will not maintain, supervise the taking of, or administer medication.

# **Classroom Policies**

## **Conduct**

Good conduct i.e. cooperation, attention and courtesy are expected during class time. Students are reminded that the rooms and desks they use for class are shared with other children within the parish school. All are expected to respect the property of other students. Any student who consistently disturbs a class, shows disrespectfulness of church/school property, or who continually fails to cooperate with the Catechist and other students within a class, shall be subject to the following procedures.

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| 1 <sup>st</sup> offense | Catechist will speak with the student and send student to the office.                |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense | DRE will contact parents; student will not be permitted to return to class that day. |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> offense | DRE will contact the parents by phone to schedule a conference.                      |

If there is no improvement, in fairness and justice to the Catechist and students in the class, the DRE reserves the right to ask the parents to provide an alternate form of religious education.

## **St Frances Cabrini Parish has a Zero Tolerance of Bullying.**

If at any time you have a question or concern regarding the program, please feel free to contact the Religious Education office.

Sarah Fleetwood, DRE

Phone: (912) 925-5316/ (912) 660-6398

Email: [cre.office@cabrini-sav.org](mailto:cre.office@cabrini-sav.org)