

# 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 ninth grade. We feel that 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 the inadequate preparation that this absence might cause. Young people will be eligible for Confirmation only if they have completed the full 2-year preparation cycle (grades 8 and 9) 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 CRE (Coordinator of Religious Education) and Fr. Gabe will be final.

##### General Expectations

It is expected that each family is 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 CRE; financial assistance is available.**

##### COVID-19 Policy

The CRE and parish continue to closely monitor local COVID-19 transmission rates and health guidelines. Parents/guardians/ students must agree to abide by all precautions and safety measures that may be implemented to keep the students and teachers in the Religious education classroom environment safe (i.e. masks, social distancing, etc.).

## 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, and we ask that your family please make regular attendance a priority.

### Sacramental Classes

In order to align with the preferences of Bishop Parkes, St. Frances Cabrini will be adjusting the timeline for when some of the sacraments are conferred. Students will now be confirmed in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, with preparation classes taking place in grades 8 and 9. Because of this, Confirmation will not take place in the 2021-2022 school year but will resume in the 2022-2023 school year.

Students in the second grade will still be prepared for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, with the majority of sacrament preparation taking place during the Sunday school hour.

### Arrival

Students may arrive after 9:35 am. Students must be dropped off and picked up by their parents unless prior arrangements have been made. Students may only 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 from a particular class, please give advance notice if possible. You may call the Parish office at 912.925.4725 and leave a message, send an e-mail to [cre.office@cabrini-sav.org](mailto:cre.office@cabrini-sav.org), or text Hannah Ross through the Remind app.

### 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 seats and ready for class prior to 9:45 AM. Late arrivals disrupt the flow of the class and take away from other students' learning.

### Homework & Classwork

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 (though in some cases students will leave their textbooks in the classroom each week).*** If the textbook is lost, it is the parent's responsibility to replace the book. 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 CRE 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 CRE office. Multiple late pick-ups may result in a meeting between the CRE and the parents.

## **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 prior approval from the office.

## **Medications**

Except in extraordinary circumstances, which must be approved by the CRE, 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 may be used by other groups within the parish. All are expected to respect the property of other students. Any student who consistently disturbs a class shows disrespectfulness of church property, or who continually fails to cooperate with the Catechist and other students within a class, shall be brought to the CRE's office and the parent will be called for an immediate conference.

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

**St Frances Cabrini Parish has Zero Tolerance for Bullying.**

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

Hannah Ross, CRE

Phone: (912) 925-4725

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