

# The Gospel of Love



Now this is eternal life, that they should know you,  
the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.  
*The Prayer of Jesus, John 17:3*

## Parent Handbook 2018–2019

St. John the Evangelist  
Religious Education Program  
502 S. Park Boulevard  
Streamwood, IL 60107

The Office of Religious Education is located in the Parish Office on the lower level of the church building. The address is:

Office of Religious Education  
502 S. Park Boulevard  
Streamwood, IL 60107

The Director may be contacted at (630) 837-6500 Ext 26. The Assistant Director may be contacted at (630)837-6500 Ext. 52. Please leave a voicemail if they are unavailable and they will return your call as soon as possible. Staff members will be available to meet with you by appointment.

St. John the Evangelist Religious Education Program is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

St. John the Evangelist Religious Education Program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its policies, supplementary programs or any other program-based function.

### **Office of Religious Education Staff**

**A message from Mary Rybicki DRE**

*“Welcome to St. John the Evangelist’s Religious Education Program. It is our goal to witness to the children and youth of our Parish to what it means to be a Catholic Christian in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Our primary mission is to support our families as their children learn and discover their Catholic faith. I take my position as St. John the Evangelist Director of Religious Education very seriously, for it is my heartfelt desire to bring the Word of God to our children and to reveal to them the merciful love of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

*I would like to express a sincere thank you to all the parents who faithfully bring their children to our program. This gift you are presenting to your children is an eternal gift of love and faith. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns you may have.”*

## **Mission Statement**

The goal of Religious Education at St. John’s is to form our children in a holistic way that strives to:

- teach the basic tenets of the Catholic faith,
- help develop their spiritual and prayer life,
- encourage them to apply Catholic teaching to their everyday lives,
- integrate them into the worshipping community.

St. John’s Religious Education process is situated within small faith sharing communities based on a classroom model. Each community is hosted by an adult catechist or team of catechists. These volunteer catechists celebrate the mysteries of our faith with the children, work to educate them in matters of church teaching, and give witness to the importance of faith in their own lives.

By sharing experiences which are interpreted in light of Christ’s message in the gospel, catechists are able to lead the children to a deeper awareness of Christ’s presence within the human experience.

## **General Operating Policies**

### **Times We Gather**

Elementary (Grades 1-6)

Tuesday 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Wednesday 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Middle School (7 & 8)

Monday 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Confirmation Yr. 1 and 2

### **Attendance**

If a child is unable to attend a session, parents are asked to please contact the Parish Office at **(630)837-6500, Ext. 20**, as soon as the decision is made. Promptness and attendance for the full class period is expected for all classes. After 3 absences, the parents will be contacted by the Director of Religious Education.

### **Students Obligations**

1. Show respect for the catechist and aides who share the faith of the Church with you.
2. Follow the directions given by your catechist at all times.
3. As a courtesy to others, raise your hand to speak.
4. Respect the thoughts and feelings of your classmates.
5. Become actively involved in the class discussions and/or various learning activities that take place.
6. Be respectful to all adults supervising you before and after class in the hallways and in the parking lot.
7. Bring your religion book and folder to class each week.
8. Do not bring toys to class.
9. Anything brought to class that may be deemed harmful to others by the catechist will be confiscated and duly reported to those in authority.

10. Gum is not allowed in the building. Please dispose of it properly before you enter the building.
11. All electronic devices must be turned off when entering the school building. No cell phones may be used for picture taking. Any use of said devices during class will result in parent notification and disciplinary action.

### **Parent Obligations**

Our Religious Education Program recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children. The catechetical staff is eager to work with parents to help them fulfill their responsibility. We ask for cooperation from each parent/guardian in the following ways:

1. Ensure regular attendance at class and Saturday/Sunday Mass.
2. Make sure your children arrive on time for class.
3. Familiarize yourself with scheduled class and religious education events. Post the schedule in a handy place where you can easily refer to it.
4. Read and reply promptly, if necessary, to all communication coming from the Office of Religious Education. **PARENT NOTES FROM THE DRE** (containing current information about the program), will be sent via email (ConstantContact). Help to prepare the student for classes and discuss what has already been learned.

### **PARKING LOT RULES FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILDREN!**

#### **Kindergarten through Sixth Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures**

Parents are to enter the church parking lot from Park Blvd. and proceed west to the school parking lot. Upon reaching the end of

the driveway between the two lots you may choose one of the following procedures:

1. Turn right and drop children off in the safety zone (designated by the orange cones) at the east entrance.

**OR**

2. Park in the school parking lot (**NOT IN THE SAFETY ZONE AND ONLY IN A DESIGNATED SPOT BETWEEN TWO YELLOW LINES**) and escort your children into the building.

To leave the parking lot, please use the west exit so that traffic is flowing only in a westerly direction on school property.

These two methods of dropping off children should help ensure that **NO CHILD SHOULD EVER HAVE TO WALK IN FRONT OF A CAR UNESCORTED.**

When picking up the children parents are to park in the school parking lot or the Administration Center Parking Lot (**NOT IN THE SAFETY ZONE AND ONLY IN A DESIGNATED SPOT BETWEEN TWO YELLOW LINES**) and walk over to the safety zone to escort your children back to their car. Children will not be allowed to leave the safety zone unescorted.

**PARENTS MUST NOT WAVE THEIR CHILDREN OVER TO THE CAR, YOU MUST COME TO THE SAFETY ZONE AND PERSONALLY ESCORT CHILDREN BACK TO YOUR CAR!**

**Children are to be dropped off no earlier than 10 minutes before class time. Children are to be picked up no later than 5 minutes after class ends. Children not picked on schedule will be escorted to the Parish Office. Please call the Parish Office to let us know you will be late: 630-837-6500 ext. 20.**

Thank you in advance for your cooperation, following these procedures will insure that each child in the program is protected from harm.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Middle School students are to be dropped off and picked up in the school parking lot by the EAST ENTRANCE to the building. There is no safety zone for our older students so please be especially aware at dismissal time of our young people going to their cars.

### **Medication**

Parents are responsible for administering medication to their child if the child normally takes medication during the regularly scheduled session.

### **Custody Issues**

If parents are divorced or separated, the Religious Education Program presumes that both parents have access to the child(ren) and their records unless one parent can provide evidence to the contrary. If parents cannot agree on custody issues, they may be required to make other arrangements for their child(ren). We require copies of court decisions, especially in the cases of ongoing disputes.

### **Release of Information**

A written waiver is required from the parent/guardian in order to be able to release information to a hospital in case of emergency. (This is included in your online registration.)

### **Early Dismissal**

Parents who request that a student be released before the regularly scheduled dismissal time are asked to follow the procedure listed below.

- Write a note to the catechist stating that you are requesting that your child be dismissed early.
- Come to the Parish Office to sign out your child and pick him/her up. Parents are not to go to the classroom. The child will be paged to come to the office as soon as the parent arrives.

### **Entry and Dismissal**

All students are to be dropped off at the east door of the school unless otherwise directed.

### **Late Arrival**

After the students are in their respective classrooms, the school doors will be locked for safety reasons. Students who arrive late must come to the Parish Office before going to class so that attendance records may be adjusted.

### **Emergency Closing**

Weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances sometime require the cancellation of classes on very short notice. Please make sure we have your current e-mail address so we may notify you as soon as possible. You may also check the parish website at [www.mystjohns.org](http://www.mystjohns.org) and select Religious Education.

### **Conduct**

All Children are to be respectful of themselves, their peers, the catechists, and parish facilities. Any child who damages building or grounds (either parish owned or privately owned) will immediately be dropped from the program. Snowball throwing and "skitching" are forbidden. Other offenses which could result in elimination from the program include the following:

- Assault upon any person.
- Possession, use or distribution of smoking materials, drugs, alcohol, or any item which is dangerous or inappropriate.



- Possession or circulation of obscene or pornographic materials.
- Theft.

If any child is disruptive to the small community, the child will be sent to the office and will be required to call his/her parents to inform them of his/her behavior in class. If the disruptive behavior continues after the phone call or in subsequent classes, an interview with the child, the parents, the catechist, and the Director of Religious Education will then be initiated.

### **Parent – Teacher Conferences**

Such conferences, although not formally scheduled, may be arranged by request. Please call the Office of Religious Education to make an appointment.

### **Abused and Neglected Children**

Religious Education personnel are required by law to conform to the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (P.A. 81-1007). All staff has a responsibility to study and understand the Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services reporting requirements.

### **Search and Seizure**

The Pastor and Director of the Religious Education Program reserve the right to inspect all desks, lockers, and other school supplied enclosures. In addition, we reserve the right to inspect a student's personal property when there is a reasonable belief that the student is violating the rules, regulations, and policies of the St. John the Evangelist Religious Education Program.

We specifically retain the right to search for and seize drugs, alcohol and other contraband. Such possession is in violation of the rules, regulations, and policies of the St. John the Evangelist Religious Education Program. Students who possess such contraband will be subject to dismissal from the program.

The Religious Education Program personnel will assist local government authorities by reporting such possessions and, when requested by authorities, will cooperate fully with police and other government authorities in prosecuting.

### **Permission to Walk Home**

Only children who have written permission (per your online registration) will be allowed to walk home. The emergency form that we have on file informs us of who has permission to walk home. If circumstances change during the year, please notify the Office as we will not allow any child to walk home without parental consent.

### **Visitors**

You are welcome to visit your child's classroom at any time. Please sign in at the parish office **before** you go to your child's classroom.

### **Nonconsecutive Religious Education**

Families entering our Program with children older than the First Grade level must meet with the Director of Religious Education to determine placement needs.

### **Lures**

As mandated by the Archdiocese of Chicago, The Child Lures Prevention safety program will be included in our Religious Education classes. Its purpose is to help children recognize situations that might lead to abuse by sexual predators. If you feel that you do not wish your child to be included in this program, please call the Office at (630) 837-6500, Ext. 26 for further information.

## **Parish Covenant**

When a family enters into the Religious Education Program, it is expected that the following faith formation objectives be observed by family members:

- Attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.
- Development of a prayer life within the family.
- Regular attendance of religion classes by children.
- Sharing of what was discussed in religion classes with family members.
- Sharing of time, talent, and treasure as a sign of being good stewards of their blessings.

## **Parish Website**

Our parish website [www.mystjohns.org](http://www.mystjohns.org) contains information about our Religious Education Program. Please become familiar with it to insure you have the latest information available.

## **General Grade Level Information**

### **Primary**

The goal of the First Grade sessions is to help children learn the following:

- How to develop a friendship with Jesus.
- About the love of God through creation.
- An awareness of and appreciation of their five senses as gifts from God.
- About the liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter.
- About Christian attitudes of taking turns, listening, sharing, caring, loving, thinking, and celebrating.
- Basic stories of Jesus in the Scriptures.

Children in Grades, Two, and Three continue to develop and deepen their relationship with God, Jesus and the Church. The goal of the primary classes is to help the children grow in their

love for God and other people as well as to share what they learn, think, and feel with family, friends, and others. They also learn about Scripture, the liturgical year, doctrine, prayer, and the saints.

### **Intermediate**

The goal for the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth grade program is to lead the students to search for a way of life based on the teachings of Christ and the Church. Subject matter includes the study of the bible, liturgical seasons, saints, prayer, and the Mass. The Beatitudes and the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy are also introduced into the children's studies as another way in which the Church assists them in leading a life of Christian Morality.

### **Middle School Faith Formation**

Middle School Faith Formation is basically a time of preparation for the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation through classroom teaching, guest speakers, small group discussion and special events. Classes meet on Monday evenings from 6:30 – 8:00 pm in the school.

In addition, to their classroom experience, candidates are required to attend retreat days, field trips, and special Masses, as well as, some events with their parents and sponsors. These activities are designed to develop a better understanding of what it means to live the life of a Catholic Christian in today's world.

The actual celebration of the sacrament takes place in the freshman year of high school.

### **High School Youth Ministry**

After your teen has been confirmed, his/her faith journey is not over, it is just beginning. We invite you to encourage your teen to become involved in our C.R.U.S.H. High School Youth Ministry.

C.R.U.S.H. is an acronym for Catholic Religion Understood Spiritually Here and encourages youth to pursue their personal relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, faith sharing, service experiences, and community.

For further information contact Liz DeSimon at (630)837-6500 Ext. 49 or ldesimon@mystjohns.org.

### **First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Program**

Children who have completed one full year of religious education are eligible to enter into our First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Program. In addition to their religion classes, children and their parents are required to participate in activities designed to help the children better understand God's forgiveness and love through the celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. These activities include attendance at scheduled parent/child meetings, family retreat days, and a communal Reconciliation Family Service.

The policies and procedures identified in this handbook are to be adhered to so that we may better serve your family in faith and in safety. If you have any questions or concerns regarding anything that has been noted in this handbook, please call the Office of Religious Education at (630) 837-6500, Ext 26 for further information.

*As we enter a new year of learning, may Jesus, who grew in wisdom and age, bless us so that together we may continue on our journey of faith. Amen.*

---

“Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The Religious Education Program will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as practical; however, some changes might be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.”