

St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish

Family Handbook



2017-2018

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Mission Statement



We, the catechists of the parish community of St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish, commit ourselves to sharing our faith tradition with the children of our parish. We strive to do this in partnership with their parents by implementing a diocesan approved curriculum. We structure our sessions to foster:

+ ***an understanding of Scripture***

As the people of God we come to know his love for us as individuals who are called to be part of the community of the family of God, the church.

+ ***a desire for prayer***

By way of prayer we develop a relationship with our God as his family through our common experience of Sunday worship and celebration of the sacraments. We also develop our personal unique relationship with the Lord by encouraging an individual experience of prayer.

+ ***an explanation of the doctrine and traditions of our Catholic faith***

This helps us to be aware of our identity as a Catholic faith community and to appreciate the truths which God has communicated with us.

+ ***an awareness of how Faith impacts on the life of a Catholic Christian*** We are baptized into Christ and so we need to pattern our thoughts, words and actions on the person of Jesus Christ.

In accomplishing the goals of our catechesis, we recognize our need to impart to our parish children the love of Christ which we ourselves have received.

Keys to a Successful Year

Policies and Procedures

✦Communication

Parents may contact the Office of Religious Education at 390-2203 or email cotreliged@yahoo.com

Office Hours:

Sunday: 9 AM – 1:00 PM & 5 – 7:30 PM

Monday: 10:00 AM - 7:30 PM

Tuesday: 10:00 AM -7:30 PM

We welcome your questions and input which help keep the lines of communication open. If you wish to speak to a catechist, we will take your name and number and ask the catechist to contact you. Catechists will be given your phone number and email in the case that they may wish to contact you.

✦Registration

New Registration

≅ Families must first be registered members of this parish. Children should then be registered for Religious Education at the Religious Education Office.

≅ A baptismal certificate must be presented at the time of registration if a child was not baptized at the Church of the Resurrection or St. Casimir.

≅ If new children are registered after classes are in session, parents should bring with them a record of previous Religious Education attendance as well as baptismal certificates for those children being registered. Parents may be given materials and be required to make up any missed work with their children.

≅ Contact the Religious Education Office for any questions concerning registration.

Re-Registration

Families are requested to complete a Family Registration form annually. This usually takes place during the month of April. Families are asked to contact the Religious Education Office if there is a change in their phone number or address. Tuition fees for the 2015-2016 school year are as listed below:

\$125 for one child; \$175 for two children; \$200 for three or more children

✦Class Schedule

All classes meet in the Saint Maximilian Kolbe (COTR) classroom area and start the week of September 18th. Classes will continue through the first week of May. The Religious Education program follows the Upper Township School Schedule. Any changes in the schedule will be posted in the Sunday Church Bulletin.

Pre-School and Kindergarten classes meet Sunday mornings beginning September 17 during the 9:30 a.m. Mass.

Sunday mornings – 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM – Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Sunday evenings – 6:00 PM – 7:15 PM – Levels 7, 8

Monday evenings – 4:00 PM-5:15 PM Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

6:00 PM – 7:15 PM – Levels 6, 7, 8

Tuesday evenings – 4:00 PM – 5:15 PM – Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

5:45 PM – 7:00 PM – Levels 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Level 7 and Level 8 will meet in the Church extension on Sundays at 6:00pm on the first Sunday off the month unless otherwise noted.

✦Transportation

Children should arrive at least 5 minutes before the start of class. Those in levels 1 through 6 should be walked to their respective classrooms by an adult. Please do not drop them off in the parking lot.

At dismissal, parents of children in Levels 1 through 6 must pick their children up at their respective classroom. For security reasons, doors are locked while the students are in class. They will be opened at dismissal time. Should you need to pick up your child earlier, come to the side door, knock, and someone will open it for you. If anyone other than a parent is taking a child home, then the child's parent must notify the child's catechist in writing or call the Religious Education Office. This regulation is meant to be a safety precaution for each child.

Levels 7 through 8 will be dismissed by the main doors into the parking lot. Parents are asked to be on time for dismissal. You may meet the children in the parking lot.

✦Health Information and Special Concerns

All parents are requested to write on the emergency/doctor form all the health concerns or special learning needs of your child. If a new problem occurs during the school year, please inform the Religious Education Office.

✦Discipline

Religious Education catechists are all generous men and women who volunteer their time and talents to sharing Faith through teaching God's message. Because they have a short time to do this each week, they cannot afford to have disruptions in class. This is unfair to them, to the other children in the room, and to their parents who are expecting their children to be learning about their Faith. For this reason, the following code has been determined.

The first time a child misbehaves, he/she will be corrected by the catechist. The catechist does reserve the right to contact the parent. If the misconduct continues, the child is sent to the Director who will speak with the child. The next time the child is sent to the Director, a parent will be contacted. If the misconduct continues after these measures have been taken, the child may have to be removed from the program and an alternative method of religious education will have to be planned with the parents.

✦Attendance

Weekly Attendance:

Attendance at *every* weekly class is essential. That means the child should be present for the full time of the scheduled class period. Parents are asked to please notify the Religious Education Office when a child will be absent.

Families will be notified concerning the missed lesson/s which should be completed at home. Students are expected to complete all lessons.

Perfect Attendance Awards will be distributed at the end of each year.

Lateness:

Lateness will be noted on the Progress Reports. Children leaving early will also be noted. If, for some emergency, it is necessary for a parent to take a child before the end of the class period, please notify the Religious Education Office and then report to the Office to pick up your child. Early dismissals must be signed out in the RE Office. No catechist may dismiss a child before the end of the scheduled class time.

Parents are free to and encouraged to observe a class but please call ahead so we are aware of your visit!

✦Absences

Please report each absence to the Religious Education Office by advance note or by phone call.



You may leave the message on the answering machine. This procedure is for the safety of each child. Children are expected to make up the lesson that they missed. ***We recommend that no more than 3 absences occur in a year. More absences may necessitate the repetition of the year's work. This is especially applicable to the level preceding or during the celebration of sacraments.***

✦Cell Phones

All cell phones must be off unless they are being used for research in the class. If necessary, teachers may collect phones and keep them in a basket on the teacher's table during religious education classes.

✦Fire Drills

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys orders promptly and exits the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. Directions for exiting the building are displayed above the classroom door. Children are to exit in a quiet and orderly manner.

✦Emergency School Closings

Religious Education classes at Saint Maximilian Kolbe follow the Upper Township School schedule. If the Upper Township Schools are closed, then Religious Education classes are also closed. At times it becomes necessary to cancel Religious Education classes for emergencies, such as heavy snow or lack of heat. In such situations an email will be sent immediately. Announcement that the classes are canceled will be made as soon as possible on the following radio station:

WMGM-TV Channel 40 (4)



WOND 1400

Please be sure that your child knows what to do in the event religion classes are canceled due to an emergency. It is strongly recommended that arrangements be made with a neighbor or relatives if parents are not at home during the day.

Parent and Student Responsibilities

✦ Sacraments

The sacraments of Penance and Eucharist are normally received in the second successive year a child has participated in Religious Education classes. Confirmation is normally celebrated in the Camden Diocese in the eighth year of Religious Education. Our parish follows the procedures for the reception of the sacraments as outlined in the Diocesan Guidelines and adapted to meet the specific needs of our parish faith community.

Reception of the sacraments is not automatic in a given grade level. The person receiving the sacraments must do so freely and of their own accord. Participation in the parish religious education classes or parochial school classes as well as in the procedures for the reception of the sacraments is the way the parish community infers that the person wishes to receive the sacrament.

Parents are asked to help in the preparation of their child by being Faith-models: living a life of Christian virtue, praying as a family, and participating at Mass on Sunday or Saturday evening. Parents are also asked to participate in the meetings prior to the reception of each sacrament. Please refer to the calendar you received. It is also posted on our website and on the Bulletin Board. Sacrament meetings are listed in bold print.

Children's Catechumenate

✦ Policy for Participation in the Rites of Catholic Christian Initiation for Children of Catechetical Age

The Children's Catechumenate is a process for children of school age who are seeking Christian Initiation into the Catholic Faith. This process is adapted to the spiritual progress of the child within the context of the family, the worshipping community, and their peers. *This is for older children who were never baptized and/or never received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.*

Children in this process are grouped together for two years and follow a different textbook. Once the two year process has been completed, the children are placed in their appropriate grade level.

✦ Progress Reports

Progress Reports are issued in January and again at the end of the year in Religious Education. Children are evaluated by periodic review quizzes, oral participation, cooperation, and attendance. Parents are asked to sign and return the mid-year reports and help the child with any home assignments or projects that are required of the child.

✦ Books

Children in Levels 1 through 8 will be responsible for bringing books to class with them each week.

✦ Special Education

Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish makes every effort to provide special provisions for children needing more individualized catechesis. Contact the Religious Education Office for further information.

✦ Curriculum

Children in Levels 1 through 6 will be using the program entitled, Finding God, published by Loyola Press, 2013 edition. This series is consistent with the Catechism of the Catholic Church and offers a complete and comprehensive presentation of the Faith.

Children in Level 7 & 8 will be using the program entitled Chosen published by Ascension Press, 2013 edition.

In addition to the weekly lessons, children at each level are required to master the formal prayers and/or precepts on last page of this booklet.

✦ A Note about our Catechists

The catechists and assistants in the Religious Education Program at Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish are people of faith sharing the journey with you and your children. Our catechists participate in diocesan sponsored workshops and classes as well as parish sponsored programs of faith enrichment.

We thank those catechists who graciously help to form the Catholic Community of the future.

✦ A Parent's Agreement

We ask our parents to please read and heed the information contained in this handbook. All policies and procedures are only efficient when all parties agree to make the effort to work together. The task of religious education can only be accomplished when together we work to foster the faith formation of your children.

Prayers and Precepts

Below are the various prayers and precepts that the children are required to know at their respective grade levels. Time should be spent in each class reviewing these items. Children will be evaluated on their mastery on the Progress Report

- Level 1:** Sign of the Cross, Lord's Prayer,
Hail Mary, the Glory to the Father,
Prayer to Guardian Angel
- Level 2:** Review prayers already learned.
Act of Contrition, Grace before and after
Meals, Law of Love
- Level 3:** Review prayers already learned.
Apostles' Creed, Simple Acts of Faith,
Hope, and Love
- Level 4:** Review prayers already learned.
Hail Holy Queen, Ten Commandments
- Level 5:** Review prayers already learned.
Seven Sacraments, Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary,
Precepts of the Church
- Level 6:** Review prayers already learned,
Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary,
Memorare, Prayer of St. Francis
- Level 7:** Review prayers already learned.
Nicene Creed, Holy Days of Obligation,
Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary,
Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, G
Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Level 8:** Review prayers already learned.
Cardinal Virtues, Capital Sins, Glorious

**Mysteries of the Rosary, Theological
Virtues, Principles of Catholic Social
Teaching**

This Handbook is always accessible on our website! If you wish a hard copy please contact me. Please refer to it for dates and situations which arise during the course of this year. All dates are subject to change; please consult the Sunday Church Bulletin for updates. God bless you and your family!