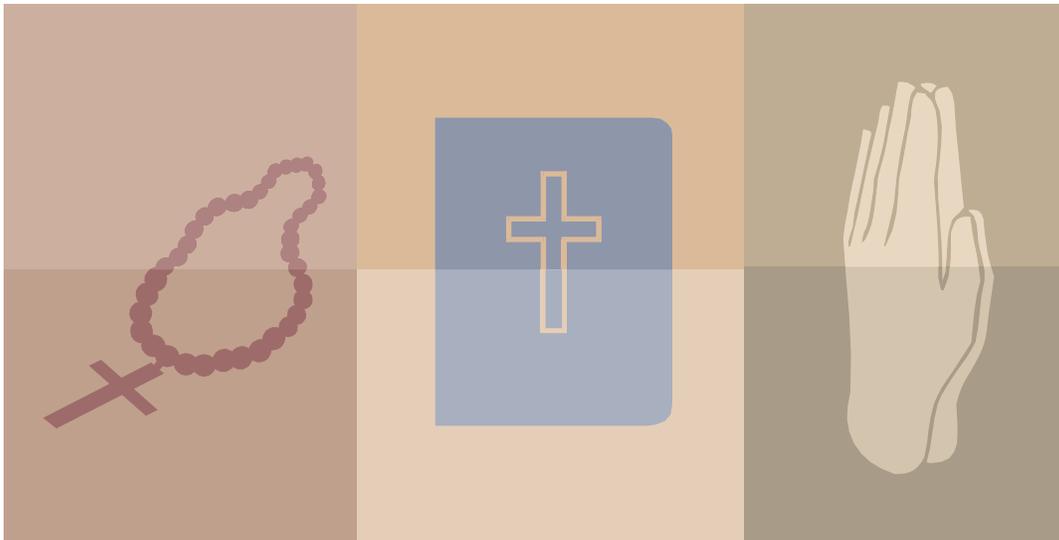


Religious Education Handbook

Faith through Education



Education through Faith

**Catholic Area Faith Community
Of Christ the King**

**St. Genevieve
Lake Benton**

**Sts. Peter & Paul
Ivanhoe**

**St. Dionysius
Tyler**

**St. John Cantius
Wilno**

Fr. Ron Huberty, Pastor 507-694-1402
Kari Nilles, Director of Religious Education 507-215-7747
www.christthekingafc.com

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Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the Religious Education program! We are excited to have you and look forward to seeing you at each class. Throughout our Catholic Church's long history, our emphasis has been on deepening an understanding of the riches of our faith through our students' relationship with God. Our small class sizes allow each student many opportunities to gain a solid understanding of the faith, to ask questions and to gain the knowledge they need to face the many challenges they encounter in life with faith and courage.

Our experienced and dedicated catechists and staff promote a family atmosphere to allow each student to learn about our Catholic faith and pray together. Students will enjoy a variety of fun and stimulating activities, such as cooperative learning, ministry projects and Mass participation.

The Religious Education program has enjoyed strong support from the parish and civic communities. Our goal is to provide all students with the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a solid Religious Education program. As we work toward this goal, we try to keep tuition affordable so all students can attend.

If you would like additional information regarding the Religious Education program, have suggestions, or would like to simply stop by and visit the classrooms, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Yours in faith,

Kari Lenae Nilles
Director of Religious Education
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Religious Education Policies

As your son or daughter begins this year's Religious Education class remember that you too are a vital part of this program. At your child's Baptism you accepted the challenge of educating your child in the ways of the faith. As you continue to respond to the challenge of parenting your sons and daughters in living their Catholic faith, may you grow in faith and in love for your child and God.

Your faith makes a profound impact on your children, no matter what their age. Therefore, we will provide several opportunities to share the faith experience being lived within your family. These features aim at stimulating your own desire to grow in Christ and to live your daily life in fidelity to the Gospel message. More importantly, these opportunities will allow you to communicate with your children in a way that will support them in following Jesus. Opportunities include attending class with your child when speakers are scheduled, attending Reconciliation, attending Stations of the Cross, attending Mass before or after Religious Education classes and most importantly, attending Sunday Mass.

As a parent you can help your children by becoming involved in the activities listed in each lesson. These activities will help the student carry the message of Jesus from the classroom to all facets of life. They will involve prayer, family life, peer relationships, projects and weekend Mass participation. Many of the projects would be enriched by the assistance of a parent or another adult.

Attendance:

Attendance at religious education classes is critical in order for the student to learn about their Catholic faith, and for preparation of the sacraments.

If a student will be absent from or tardy for an RE class, parents are expected to call the DRE at least 15 minutes prior to class start time at 507-215-7747.

Note: If a student is absent three or more times throughout a year we will ask the parents to meet with the director of Religious Education and with the pastor to evaluate whether or not the student is ready to move to the next grade level in their Religious Education. More than three absences from sacramental preparation classes will necessitate an evaluation of the student's readiness for the reception of the sacrament.

Classes will meet Wednesday evenings at the below times:

- ❖ **1st Grade – 9th Grade:** 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- ❖ **Confirmation (10th & 11th Grade)** Wednesdays/Sundays per schedule
- ❖ **Post-Confirmation** Once a month per schedule

Please be on time dropping off and picking up your children. If you will be late in picking up your children, please contact the DRE so we are aware.

Many times throughout the year, students will be attending Mass or speakers as part of their class. Please watch the monthly newsletter for scheduled dates. If any of these dates should change, notification will be sent home. We strongly encourage parents to attend Mass as well.

Classroom Etiquette:

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Students are expected, at all times, to exhibit and maintain good Christian behavior and courtesy. Self-control, consideration for others, and following rules are desirable and **expected behaviors.**

The first responsibility for discipline in the Religious Education program lies with parents to help their children understand appropriate behavior at class. Our catechists will have clear guidelines for behavior and will help the students to understand them. The catechists, then, will be responsible for enforcing classroom behavior. If a student is disruptive, the following steps will be taken:

1. Student will be moved within the classroom in a first attempt to end the disruption.
2. Student will be asked to go sit the remainder of the class with the hall monitor. Parents will be called by the catechist or the Director of Religious Education. Parents may come to observe the behavior of their child in future classes. The Director of Religious Education will meet with the student in an effort to resolve the issue.
3. After being removed from class three times, parents will be asked to either attend class each week with their child or to homeschool their child.
4. Extreme behaviors could result in immediate removal from the Religious Education program as determined by the Director of Religious Education and the Parish Priest.

Students are expected to demonstrate their faith by recognizing the sacredness, goodness and beauty of the human body. Please dress with dignity in appropriate student attire. **Inappropriate attire includes** short shorts, tight jeans, and articles of clothing that expose underwear, bra straps, cleavage or inappropriate wording or logos (i.e. pants with words across the back, etc.). Any student wearing these types of clothing will be asked to leave the classroom and go to the DRE, where parents will be called to bring a change of clothing for the student.

Our Religious Education classes are held in classrooms where desks and/or tables are used. Our expectation is that the classrooms and other spaces will be left in the same condition and order in which they are found. Obviously accidents happen, but part of being a responsible Christian is reporting broken or misplaced items.

Food and Drink:

Food and drink are allowed in the classroom **only** at the discretion of the catechist teaching the class. As a general rule, food and drinks should be limited to special occasions. If food is brought to the classroom there should be enough for everyone to share. Drinks should be limited to water, unless otherwise approved by the catechist.

Communication:

Communication is a key part of providing quality religious education for your children. Paper copies of the monthly newsletter will be sent home with students and will also be available on the parish website under the Religious Education tab. Be sure to also check with your child weekly for any notes that may have been sent home from class.

Every month you will receive a Parent Newsletter that will contain important information regarding the Religious Education program, opportunities for enrichment, parish happenings, dates, etc. This newsletter will also include the parish monthly calendar.

If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions or comments, please feel free to contact the Director of Religious Education at 507-215-7747 or via e-mail kari.lenae@gmail.com so these thoughts and/or concerns can be discussed.

If you wish to speak to one of the Religious Education catechists, please feel free to call the catechist directly or call the Director of Religious Education to make an appointment.

If you are not comfortable discussing your comments or concerns with your child's catechist or the DRE, you may contact Father Ron Huberty at 507-694-1402 or via e-mail ronhuberty@mchsi.com

Registration and Tuition:

By registering your child (ren), you agree to pay tuition and offer your volunteer services. Each student should be registered prior to attending Religious Education classes. Registration forms are available from the parish office and on the Religious Education web page at www.christthekingafc.com Tuition should be paid prior to the first class. The cost of tuition is \$30 per child.

Note: In order to make tuition financially feasible for large families, there will be a \$75 tuition maximum.

We will not exclude any student from Religious Education because of an inability to pay. If you are unable to pay the full price of tuition, please contact the DRE or Father Ron Huberty to arrange for a scholarship or reduction of tuition. Please know that this information is strictly confidential and is not shared.

Materials:

Student workbook, Bibles, notebooks and other classroom supplies will be provided for each student.

Note: Please do not bring hats, cell phones, i-pods, etc. into the classroom. If you bring anything other than what is required, the catechist or DRE will keep it until after class.

Homework:

Homework will be assigned weekly. As part of the sacrament of Baptism, parents are singled out to be the first teachers of the Catholic faith to their children. This education should not stop once a child begins Religious Education classes. We strongly encourage parents to help their children with their homework assignments. This is a wonderful opportunity to spend quality time together and help students memorize prayers, the Ten Commandments, and prepare for the sacraments.

Fundraising:

Our biggest parish fundraiser for Religious Education is our Palm Sunday Breakfast, Silent Auction, and Bake Sale. Each parishioner and student is encouraged to work and/or donate items for this fundraiser. If everyone works together it will be another successful fundraiser! Information regarding other fundraisers for the parish will be sent home as needed.

Weather:

Mother Nature is unpredictable, as we have all experienced. Our main concern is that everyone remains safe on those occasions that the weather turns inclement. All weather related class cancellations will be called into Marshall Radio Stations 99.7 and KLOH Pipestone Radio Station 98.7 and will be posted on the Religious Education web page. The cancellation will be announced at least one hour prior to class start times. Please note if school is cancelled or released early there will be no Religious Education Class that evening.

Homeschooling:

Parents have the option to home educate their child(ren) with their catechetical formation. Keep in mind, that if this is an option a family chooses, the parents need to present themselves to the Priest and Director of Religious Education. This directive comes from the National Directory of Catechesis (NDC, pp. 259-260). This ensures the Priest and DRE that the parents are teaching the faith of the Catholic Church and are using approved curriculum. These parents will need to meet regularly with the pastor and his catechetical designate monthly (or at least once every two months) during the catechetical year (September-April). And these families, during the years of sacramental preparation, are encouraged to attend some of the sessions of sacramental preparation (to be determined by the priest and DRE) at the parish because of the communal nature of the sacraments.

Religious Education Safety

Attending Religious Education classes should be a safe and holy experience for your children, and as a parent, you should be comfortable sending your child to class. You can be assured that each catechist has been trained through the VIRTUS program, that background checks on every employee and volunteer have been reviewed by the pastor, and that all diocesan policies in regard to your child's safety are strictly enforced. In addition, the Church of Christ the King stands firm on the following policies:

Smoke/Tobacco Free Environment:

The Christ the King Area Faith is a smoke and tobacco free facility. Any student in possession of a tobacco product will be disciplined accordingly.

Drugs and Alcohol:

No person is to use, sell, dispense or possess controlled substances or alcohol and must not be under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol while in the Christ the King parish buildings or on the grounds. Any student found to be in possession or under the influence of either drugs or alcohol will be disciplined accordingly.

Weapons:

Possession of a weapon of any kind by a student is prohibited within the Church of Christ the King parish buildings or on the grounds. Any student found to be in possession of weapons will be disciplined accordingly.

Safe Environment Compliance:

We are committed to providing a safe and holy place for your children to learn about the faith. In order to accomplish this goal, we strictly follow and enforce the Diocese of New Ulm's Sexual Abuse Policies. For further information or for details of disciplinary procedures and policies, you may request a copy of these policies from the DRE. Every employee and volunteer of the Church of Christ the King has read and agreed to follow these guidelines.

Emergency Plan:

The Church of Christ the King Emergency plan is as follows:

- ❖ Fire – Evacuate the building(s).
- ❖ Severe Weather – Take shelter in the designated areas of school and/or church.
- ❖ Bomb Threat – Evacuate the building(s).
- ❖ Poisonous Gas – Evacuate the building(s).

Each teacher in the Religious Education program has access to the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning's "Emergency/Disaster Preparedness: A Planning Guide for Schools" manual. Also, all buildings on the parish campus have in place plans for the evacuation of the buildings should the need arise, getting the children to the basement in case of tornado, etc.

Beyond the Religious Education Classroom

In an effort to provide a well-rounded religious education experience to the youth of our Area Faith Community, we offer a wide range of activities for the youth to be involved in outside of the religious education classroom. These activities are not meant to replace religious education classes, rather, they are intended to enhance classroom learning.

Family Fun Nights

Formerly known as youth group, Family Fun Nights are offered once a month for all students and families. The three pillars of Family Fun Nights are faith, food, and fun. Past activities have included campfires, pool parties, relay races, ice skating, movies, Christmas caroling and a praise band.

Youth Mass

Once a month, youth mass will be held. Youth will be serving as lectors, song leaders, ushers, etc. during this mass. Please make every effort to attend youth mass with your family every month.

Youth Choir

Youth Choir for elementary students will meet during religious education classes for 15 minutes. They will perform a masses a few times per year. Older students will only have choir practice on the Wednesday night prior to youth mass and will meet one hour prior to youth mass for a second practice.

Teaching Mass

Teaching Mass will be held for students, their parents, and interested parishioners in place of one regular education class.

Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered for students twice per year during religious education classes. It will be offered once during the season of Advent, and once during the season of Lent. Encourage your children to view reconciliation not as going before a harsh judge, but as going before our merciful and forgiving Father.

Speakers

Speakers may be brought in to discuss topics or present information to the students in place of religious education classes. Typically, these special events will be open to parents and interested parishioners. On these nights, students from the entire Area Faith Community will meet in one place. Depending on the topic, the speakers may be for students of a certain grade level or open to all.

Youth Events

Junior High and Senior High students will have the opportunity to go to youth events in our diocese and outside of our diocese. These events could include Cor Jesu, Steubenville InterMISSION, and youth rallies. Please plan on having your child attend one or more of these events!

Trick or Canning/Food Drive

In order to serve others in our communities, we will have either a food drive or go trick or canning in the fall of the year (depending on the day Halloween falls on). When there is a food drive, each grade will compete to bring the most food items on the last Wednesday of October. On Halloween, students in grades 6-12 will go trick-or-canning. Students will meet at their local church (Lake Benton, Tyler, and Ivanhoe; Wilno students will meet in Ivanhoe) and be split up to collect canned foods in different neighborhoods. The collected food will be taken to the local food shelf.

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School will be offered during the summer for elementary students. Details will be available in the spring.

Youth Trips

If interest is shown by students, youth trips may be taken. In the past, youth have gone on mission trips, such as the Steubenville Conference, Catholic Heart Workcamp or to the National Catholic Youth Conference. In order to participate in youth trips, students must make the required payments and help in fundraising efforts. Scholarships are available for those students that cannot afford the required payments. Chaperones are also required for any youth trips and parents are encouraged to consider chaperoning. Typically these trips are for high school students.