

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church

Parish Religious Education Program (PREP)

Welcome to the **Parish Religious Education Program (PREP)** of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. Our goal is to support you in your role as your child's primary religious educator. Our program seeks to assist the children and families of our parish to develop a closer relationship with God through the study of our Catholic Faith.

This Handbook for Parents seeks to familiarize the families participating in the Parish Religious Education Program with the policies and procedures of the program. Please keep in mind that we will be updating the handbook as needed.

PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Our Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) provides for the instruction of children from 1st grade through 6th grade.

- Classes meet on Tuesday or Thursday from 6:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. for all grade levels.
- All classes meet at Cold Spring Elementary School
- Our Calendar will be updated on a monthly basis via our website.
- Please check our web site on a regular basis for important announcements/paperwork from the PREP office.

REGISTRATION

Children must be re-registered by their parents every year. Re-registration information will be posted on our website.

- Families must be registered members of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish.
- Newly registered children will be placed in a level suitable to their Religious Education background. There will be times when this level will not correspond to the child's public school level.
- Baptismal certificates** must accompany new registrations. Please mail us a copy or feel free to bring them into the PREP office.
- Tuition and fees are to be paid at the time of registration¹.

COLD SPRING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Please remind our children to be respectful of the school. We are grateful to have the use of the facility. Let's show our appreciation by keeping the classrooms clean. Please note the following is not permitted on the school premises during PREP classes.

- No food or drink.
- No chewing gum or candy.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND CELL PHONES

- Electronic devices are not permitted in the classrooms.
- Cell phones are for emergency use only. Please turn cell phones off during class.

SAFETY

In order to insure the safety of our children volunteers monitor our hallways at all times. Unauthorized persons are not permitted in the hallways or classrooms during class time. Volunteers also monitor the parking lot to provide greater safety for our children.

STUDENT SUPPLY LIST

The Parish Religious Education Program provides textbooks for all children. The program also supplies supplementary sacrament textbooks for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation, as well as bibles for all children in the 6th grade level.

Children should bring the following materials to class each week:

- Their text book(s). If a book is lost, please notify the catechist about a replacement. A replacement fee will be collected.
- A pencil or pen, and whatever other supplies are requested by the catechist.

PROCEDURES FOR ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The children's safety must always be our first priority. Therefore, please be patient during dismissal and remember that we are doing our best to make things run efficiently.

ARRIVAL

Parents please plan for a 6:05 p.m.-6:10 p.m. arrival, Please do not come earlier as Catechists need time to setup classrooms.

Classes begin promptly at 6:15 p.m.

Student Arrival For Grade Levels 1 & 2:

Students in grade levels 1 and 2 must be accompanied to and from class by a parent for the entire year.

Student Arrival for Grade Levels 3-6:

Students in grade levels 3-6 are **not** required to be accompanied by a parent **to** class. However, parents may accompany their child until he/she feels comfortable in going to class unescorted. (Parents may drop children in grade levels 3-6 off at the school but not before 6:05 p.m.)

Once classes begin please do not remain in the school corridors. You have a free hour!

LATE ARRIVAL

For safety reasons students who arrive late should be escorted to class by a Hall Monitor.

DISMISSAL

All grade levels (1-6) will be dismissed at 7:30 p.m. Please be on time to pick up your child (ren).

All grade level (1-6) students are required to be picked up from their classroom at dismissal by a parent for the entire year. No child is permitted to leave the school building unsupervised by an adult.

Please follow the direction of the Parking Lot Monitor! Please use caution while exiting!

EARLY DISMISSAL

If for any reason a student needs to be dismissed early please notify your catechist in advance. Once you come to the school one of our volunteers will bring your child to the lobby area.

CAR POOLING/WRITTEN PERMISSION REQUIRED

On the first night of PREP your child will be given a student release form. Please complete this form and return it at the next class.ⁱⁱ Please include any one who you think will be picking your child up from PREP during the school year (mom, dad, carpool, etc.).

Please remember: a minor is not permitted to leave the building with another minor. All drivers must be 18 years of age or older and on the release form.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

- If Central Bucks School District is closed or if the district cancels after school activities, PREP classes will be cancelled.
- When classes are cancelled, the information will be broadcast on NBC-10, KYW Radio 1060 AM, and our Webpage. Our broadcast number is 1165

The only way to insure your child receives the best religious education possible is if we work together. Please do your best to have your child in class on time. It helps them to relax and creates a nicer learning environment for everyone involved. If your child is late please ask them to enter the room quietly.

If you know your child will be missing due to a long term illness please contact your catechist and the PREP office. We will do our best to work with you and your child.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an ongoing process that incorporates both informal and formal tools. Informal assessment occurs as catechists and children interact. This process helps the catechists evaluate what has been learned and helps children understand their strengths. Formal assessment supplements informal assessment using methods such as those listed below:

Tests and quizzes will be administered by the catechist throughout the year. Children will be notified at least one week prior to a test. Quizzes may be administered to check the children's understanding of the lesson taught during the previous class. Quizzes may be given at any time. Children will also be tested on their knowledge of prayers assigned for a particular level and may also be tested on prayers learned in previous levels.

By utilizing both informal and formal assessment, we strive to communicate to the child and parent a picture of the child's progress in remembering, understanding and living the faith.

PREP HOME-WORK

Home-Work-Assigned by Catechist

In addition to the weekly Family Page of your child(ren) textbook, Catechists may assign other specified home-work to be completed at home by the students.

Parents are asked to sign the child's assigned home-work page each week before the child attends the next class.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports will be sent home with the child twice a year, in January or February and May.

Grading on the Progress Report will be on a 3 level system:

A- Excellent - indicates the child performs exceptionally well consistently, contributing by word and example.

B- Above Average - indicates the child performs above average and who contributes to the class by word or example.

C- Average - indicates the child performs in a range suitable for an average child.

INFORMATION ABOUT SACRAMENTS

Preparing a child to receive God's gift of grace in a sacrament is an important and serious responsibility for the family and parish. A two-year program gives us the opportunity to develop the child's understanding and appreciation of the sacrament. Therefore, every candidate preparing for the reception of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation should be enrolled in a two-year program. The Catholic Church also requires that parents be catechized so that they may more fully participate in the preparation for sacraments. The following requirements apply for all sacraments:

- Registration in the parish.
- Documentation of Baptism.
- Participation in the Sunday Liturgy.
- Participation in Prayer and Practice Days.
- Regular attendance at PREP classes.

FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST

Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist occurs during the two years prior to reception. These classes generally correspond to academic levels 1 and 2. First Reconciliation is celebrated prior to First Eucharist. Both sacraments are celebrated during the Eucharist II year of Religious Education.

CONFIRMATION

Preparation for Confirmation begins with the year prior to the year of reception. For academic year 2009-2010, Confirmation will include academic grade level 6 only. Confirmation classes following 2010 will remain in grade level 6. In addition to the stated requirements for sacraments, Confirmation candidates are expected to:

- Have a satisfactory attendance record. If a child is consistently absent, the parents will be contacted as to the seriousness of the child's intent on being confirmed.
- Complete a Confirmation formation program, attend a retreat, and offer service to the parish and community at large and work closely with their sponsor.
- Complete the required saint project and forms due prior to Confirmation.

CONFIRMATION SPONSOR

The role of the sponsor is to guide the candidates throughout their lives to fulfill their baptismal promises. The sponsor role is not an honorary title, but it is a responsibility to be a credible witness and effective model of the gospel. According to the revised Code of Canon Law:

- A parent may **not** be a sponsor.
- A sponsor should be at least 16 years old.
- A sponsor should be a Catholic Christian living in harmony with the faith.
- A sponsor must have received the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation).
- A sponsor must present a Certificate of Eligibility from the pastor of his/her present parish if the sponsor is not from Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND EXPECTATIONS

Our Parish Religious Education Program is for the purpose of informing the children in the truths of their faith. It is also for the purpose of forming the children in the ways of Christ. In order to maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect during Religious Education classes, the following guidelines apply for acceptable behavior:

- Children are asked to respect their teachers, classmates and any other persons participating in PREP. Respectful participation will help them to grow in faith and will make the class enjoyable to everyone involved.
- Children may not leave a class or the building without permission and supervision by an assistant.

CURRICULUM SYNOPSIS

Eucharist Level One:

God the Father, Creation, Living in God's World, God the son: Jesus Christ, God the Holy Spirit, Sacraments of Initiation, Titles of Mary, Sacramentals.

Eucharist Level Two:

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion including memorization of the Act of Contrition, a study of the Mass, Sacraments of Initiation, Bible stories of forgiveness, the Blessed Trinity, Sacramentals, Liturgical Year, Prayer, Mary.

Level Three:

The Blessed Trinity, Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Healing, Sacraments of Service to Communion, God's Law, The Christian Community, Sacramentals, Liturgical Year, Prayer, Mary.

Level Four:

God the Father, covenant, memorization of the Ten Commandments, Grace, Sin, Conscience, Jesus Christ: Our Redeemer, memorization of the Beatitudes, the Great Commandment, Works of Mercy, Sacramentals, Liturgical Year, Prayer, Mary.

Level Five:

Sacraments, Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Healing, Sacraments of Service to Communion, Titles of Mary, Shrines to Our Lady, Sacramentals, Liturgical Year, Using the Bible, Prayer.

Level Six:

The Bible, The Old Testament: Genesis, Moses, Exodus, the Covenant, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Important Biblical Women, Prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Fulfills the Old Testament, Mary, Liturgical Year, Sacramentals, Prayer – the Rosary.

Confirmation:

New Testament, Jesus, Jesus as God and Man, Jesus as Savior, Jesus as Prophet, Jesus as Teacher, Jesus as Priest, Jesus as King, Parables, Miracles. Sacraments, Mary, Prayer, Sacramentals, Liturgical Year. The Sacrament of Confirmation in depth, church History, Morality, Liturgical Year, Sacramentals, Prayer, Mary.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

We are very grateful to our volunteers for giving so much of their time and talents to our children. If you would like to help with our program please call us at 267-247-5374. We are always in need of catechists, assistants, parking lot attendants, hall monitors and office assistance. Tuition discounts are also available to our volunteers.

All volunteers who work with children must obtain a Pennsylvania Criminal Check, a Child Abuse Registry Clearance and attend Archdiocesan Safe Environment training within a six month grace period. The Parish will assist in obtaining these forms and will also cover any expenses associated with the forms.

ⁱ If you find that you are having financial difficulties please feel free to call us for a payment plan. We will not turn a child away from the program because of finances.

ⁱⁱ Only sixth graders will be permitted to collect their siblings. They are not, by law permitted to leave the building without adult supervision. Therefore if you have a sixth grader picking up a sibling please meet them in the lobby and exit the building together. The sixth graders name must be on the release form.