

Holy Cross Church Religious Education



Parent/Student Handbook
2020-2021

Holy Cross Religious Education
1502 S. 48th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68106

The Mission of Holy Cross Religious Education Program is to walk with our families, stir desire to discuss faith and grow with each other as the Holy Cross Family of Faith. We want to support you on this journey.

How to reach us:

Phone:

Parish Office	402-553-7500
Fax	402-553-7735
Wednesday evenings:	402-551-3773 School
	402-741-0133 Mrs. Hansen's Cell

Email:

Elizabeth Hansen	ehansen@holycrossomaha.org
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Staff:

Pastor	Fr. Carl Salanitro
Parish Coordinator of Youth and Adult Discipleship:	Elizabeth Hansen

Catechists:

Ms. Amanda Wiggins
Ms. MyKenzie Brannan
Miss Taylor Wiester
Mrs. Rosemary Hagedorn
Mrs. Kathy Harris
Ms. Beth Carlson
Mr. & Mrs. Brian & Catie Johnson
Deacon & Mrs. Tim & Teri Mulcahy

All persons wishing to be enrolled in Religious Education classes will be joyfully welcomed into our program and our community. We hope that all participants will choose to become full and active members of the parish. If you have not yet registered in the parish, please call the parish office at 402-553-7500 to register or go to www.holycrossomaha.org and click on newcomers tab to print the registration form.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

To ensure the safety of your child(ren), they should not arrive for class more than 5 to 10 minutes early. Catechists come early to prepare their classroom and there is not adequate supervision for children who arrive early. Due to the current school protocols, families arriving for Family of Faith nights will be screened and sent to classrooms. Likewise on Grade Level nights, children will be screened immediately upon entry and will be taken to their classroom for opening prayer. At dismissal, Saint Squads/children will be dismissed at staggered times from the main hallway.

ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESSES

In case of an accident or illness during Religious Education, the child will be sent to the office where care will be given and a parent notified. When a parent cannot be contacted, the person listed as the emergency contact will be called. Current information is extremely important. When professional assistance is required, the rescue squad will be summoned and will provide transportation to a medical facility as necessary. The costs shall be the parent's responsibility.

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

For absences, a written note signed by the parent prior to the absence, a phone call to the office at 402-553-7500 from the parent, or an email at ehansen@holycrossomaha.org is requested. If we have no prior notice, we assume that the child should be in class. We will call you to determine the child's safe whereabouts.

Children must be in their classrooms when the class begins. No child may leave the parish premises during class time or during a parish activity (see early dismissal of a child).

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are not permitted during Religious Education hours. The use of cell phones **during class time** is prohibited. If a catechist finds it necessary to remove the cell phone, it will be sent to the office and remain there until a parent has an opportunity to pick it up. If you need to contact your child during class time, call the office at 402-551-3773 and a message will be delivered to your child in the classroom.

CLASS TIME SCHEDULE

Class time: 6:00 pm-7:30 pm

Families and children will enter and exit the building through the main doors by the flag pool just off 48th street.

DISCUSSION OF CONCERNS – RESOLUTION OF CONCERNS

Parents are asked to contact the appropriate catechist about any concerns they have regarding their child/children's education. If the parent's concerns are not resolved through discussion with the Catechist, the Parish Coordinator will meet with both parents and Catechist to assist in resolution of the concern. Concerns are most effectively addressed and

resolved when parties to the concern speak from first-hand knowledge of events, remain open to and respectful of others' viewpoints, and focus their discussion on establishing the factual basis of the concern. Catechists are encouraged to be sensitive to, and responsive to the concern parents have for their child/children. Parents are encouraged to be trusting of the Catechist's professional competence and supportive of the Catechist's role as an authority essential to effective instruction of groups of Children.

The Parish Coordinator is responsible for the operation of the Religious Education Program, and in accord with that responsibility, has authority to make final decisions relative to resolution of concerns. The Parish Coordinator also addresses concerns of parents relative to operations of the program. In the event that a parent feels that his/her concern has not been given due attention, or that the resolution of the concern is not in accord with the mission, he or she may request further discussion from the pastor.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Children with a condition which may be passed on to others in the classroom must be excluded from attending Religious Education classes until no longer contagious. Including but not limited to:

1. Chicken Pox – Children/Family member may return after pox has scabbed.
2. Fever – Children/Family member should remain home until 24 hours after a fever breaks.
3. Antibiotics – Children/Family member should be kept home for a minimum of 24 hours after starting on the medication.
4. Head Lice – Children/Family member may return after treatment with head lice shampoo.
5. Vomiting and diarrhea – Children/Family member should remain home until 24 hours after an episode.
6. Pink Eye – Children/Family member should remain at home until 24 hours after an episode.
7. COVID-19 – Children/Family member may return after following the Holy Cross

Some conditions may require a doctor's attention and note before returning to Religious Education classes.

EARLY DISMISSAL OF A CHILD

Whenever possible, medical and other appointments should be made outside of Religious Education class time. However, if it is necessary for a Child to be excused during class, a note from a parent or guardian stating the exact time of leaving and the reason must be given to the Child. The Child must give the note to his/her Catechist who will send it to the office. The parent and Child must stop in the office before leaving the building through the main doors. These measures are in place to ensure the safety of each child.

EARLY DISMISSAL OR CLOSING

The Religious Education Department recognizes the right and responsibility of parents to keep children at home when class is in session if they believe that bad weather poses a

safety threat. Please call the school to inform us of such a decision. If weather is questionable, an email will be sent as a first line of communication. Closing of Religious Education will also be posted on the on the website (www.holycrossomaha.org) and television stations. When it is deemed necessary to close school during regular class time, because of inclement weather such notice will be given via email, website, and television. If public and/or Omaha Catholic schools are cancelled for that day due to weather, Religious Education classes will also be cancelled.

FIRE, CRISIS, AND TORNADO DRILLS

In accordance with regulations of the State Fire Marshal's office and the Omaha Fire Department, fire drills and tornado/disaster drills are held regularly.

All parish personnel are versed in the defined procedures for emergencies, and Children will always be protected and under close supervision.

Plans of action have also been developed for a variety of crises that may develop during Religious Education. The safety of the children and staff is always the highest priority.

FOOD

Food, drinks, and gum are **not** permitted in the hallways or classrooms. The upkeep of our building as well as the health and safety for all are our top priorities. Please make sure that your child has eaten his/her snack before entering the building. Special consideration is given to children with medical conditions.

HOMEWORK

Homework will be assigned according to individual Catechists. This may mean books are sent home and must be returned to class the following week. Seesaw will also be used to communicate with your catechist(s). This tool will be used for observation as well as assessment.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Items of personal adornment, which could be a distraction to the learning environment, will not be permitted in school. Any garment advertising drugs or alcohol or contains reference to put downs or glorified destruction are inappropriate. Office personnel have the authority to decide when clothing and accessories are inappropriate, distracting to the learning environment, or pose a threat to safety and they may instruct the child to remove such articles.

PICTURES AND MEDIA CONSENT

Occasionally we have requests for photos of children to be used in various publications such as the Omaha World Herald or the Catholic Voice.

Holy Cross Parish has adopted a policy which includes pictures of children on the parish website. If you do not wish to have your child/children's pictures included, please inform the

Parish Coordinator in writing no later than the first two weeks of classes. We also have included a media consent within their registration form.

SMOKING

The school provides a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted in the school building or on the grounds by any school representative or visitor during any school activity. Possession of tobacco products by children is a violation of the law and will be treated as a very serious offense.

CHILD CONDUCT

Holy Cross Religious Education is a program with a mission to develop leaders of all to Christ. The program has adopted three guidelines for success. When a child chooses not to follow these guidelines, the catechist will implement the classroom discipline cycle. If the classroom discipline cycle does not remedy the situation, a Four Step School Discipline Cycle may be put into action.

Guidelines for Success:

1. Respect yourself and others as children of God.
2. Contribute to the learning environment.
3. Follow school and classroom procedures.

Occasionally, serious infractions occur that threaten the safety of our children. The infractions include but are not limited to physical/psychological danger, severe disrespect, and out of control behavior. If possible, the adult who removed the child will work together to redirect the inappropriate behavior. If regaining control does not happen or the action warrants more serious attention, the child will be sent to the coordinator's office and the Four Step Discipline Cycle will be set in motion.

FOUR STEP SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CYCLE

Step One: The child and coordinator develop a personal plan for the child to use in changing inappropriate behavior.

Step Two: If a child is sent to the coordinator a second time within a two-month period, a conference with a parent will be scheduled. A contract may be drawn up listing actions that will be taken by the parent, coordinator, catechist, and child.

Step Three: If a child is sent to the coordinator a third time within a two-month period, or in extreme cases when the coordinator determines the seriousness of the action warrants starting at Step Three of the Discipline Cycle, a parent conference will be scheduled and the child will be suspended for the next class. Depending on the severity of the situation, the conference would take place over the phone or in person. Step Three can be repeated as long as a child is able to demonstrate satisfactory improvement.

Step Four: The coordinator will recommend expulsion.

An office referral will result in the implementation of the Four Step Discipline Cycle. Office referrals include, but are not limited to:

- The classroom management plan has not remedied a situation.
- Physical or psychological threat or assault.
- Theft of valuables.
- Public defiance or disrespect.
- Out of control behavior.
- Repeated exhibitions of offensive conduct and/or harassment.
- Any medications brought to school.
- When punches are thrown and a child is not quickly able to gain composure.
- Talking about and/or threatening to use a weapon.

The following infractions will always result in an immediate move to step three or step four:

- Serious physical or psychological threat or assault.
- Illegal possession or use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs.
- Leaving grounds without permission.
- Serious violence to a person or property.
- Weapons brought to school. This includes any kind of knife or “weapon like” instrument.
 - Weapons: Children are forbidden knowingly and voluntarily to possess, handle, transmit or use any instrument in school, on school grounds, or at school events that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon. Any object which could be used to injure another person and which has no school-related purpose will be considered a weapon for the purpose of this code.
 - The following are examples of instruments ordinarily or generally considered weapons: knives of all types, guns, lead pipes, chains, chuck-sticks, throwing stars, darts, metal knuckles, blackjacks, unauthorized tools, fireworks, matches, explosives or other chemicals. No toy weapons of any kind are allowed at school.
 - Police will be contacted when there is suspected violation of criminal laws concerning weapons.

Any other very serious infraction, in the judgment of the coordinator, could result in an immediate move to step three or four.

**If your child has been suspended from his/her 5-day school, the Parish Coordinator must be notified.

THE W.I.R.E. – RE Updates

As an extra form of communication, the W.I.R.E. will be emailed to you on various Wednesdays. It is important that you check email for extra mailings and read them completely in order to be informed about events in our parish.

If you, or your organization, has an item for inclusion in The W.I.R.E., please contact the office.

TRAFFIC

Holy Cross Parish has, because of its location and size, special problems that necessitate particular driving and parking patterns on our property. It is imperative, for the safety of the children, to follow our traffic pattern directions. It is the responsibility of the parents to comply completely with all parking regulations. On Grade Level specific nights, all children will be dropped off at the flagpole doors with everyone following the one way traffic pattern. Children must exit on the passenger side of the car closest to the doors. All must be screened and temp taken before entering the classroom. At dismissal, all parents are to back into parking stalls in the south parking lot. For the safety of our children, ALL cars must be parked into a stall for pick up. On Family of Faith nights, all families must park in the school parking lot and enter the flagpole doors while maintaining social distance. All members of the family will be screened and temp checked. All families will be dismissed at staggered times. Please be sure to double check while pulling out of your parking spot.

UNAUTHORIZED ARTICLES

Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether to bring personal possessions to class. In general, children should NOT bring toys or unusual items to class unless they are intended for a specific purpose in the classroom. Cell phones, IPODS, video games, or other electronic equipment are NOT permitted in class. If a catechist finds it necessary to confiscate any item, it will be sent to the office and remain there until a parent has an opportunity to pick it up.

VANDALISM

Our school and school equipment is parish property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is vandalism and is cause for immediate suspension and possible expulsion. It is the child/parent's responsibility to repair or replace any damaged property. If a child accidentally causes damage, it should be reported to a catechist immediately so that the damage is not misconstrued vandalism.

VISITORS

For security reasons, all outside doors except the main doors off 48th street will remain locked and closed at all times. All visitors are required to report to the hall monitor upon entering the building. All staff has been instructed to report anyone who has entered the building and is not wearing a pass. In order to be consistent, this includes all visitors, even parents. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school and classrooms, at the same time they are considered visitors and must report to the office first.