

***Most Holy Redeemer Church  
School of Religion***

***Parent-Student Handbook  
2011-2012***



***MOST HOLY REDEEMER  
SCHOOL OF RELIGION  
9536 S. MILLARD  
EVERGREEN PARK, IL 60805***

***PASTORAL STAFF***

Fr. James Hyland, Pastor  
Fr. Richard Dempsey, Pastor Emeritus  
Fr. Matthew Nemchausky  
Fr. Joseph Ruiz  
Fr. Albert Adamich  
Deacon Couple Larry and Pat Antonsen  
Deacon Mark Phelan  
Kim Madonia, Youth Minister

***DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION***

Arlene Astrowski

***ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT***

Lillian Trasko

***OFFICE HOURS:***

Office Telephone # 346.8185

Mon.	12 noon – 8:30 p.m.
Tues.	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Wed.	9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Thurs.	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Fri.	9 a.m. - 12:00 noon

***SCHOOL OF RELIGION CLASSES***

***Monday***

Grade 1 – 4    5:30 - 6:45                      Grade 5 – 8            7 - 8:15

CARE Classes 5:45 – 6:45 p.m.

[www.mostholyredeemer.org](http://www.mostholyredeemer.org)

*Click on School of Religion*

## ***PARENT/GUARDIAN—STUDENT HANDBOOK***

Welcome to Most Holy Redeemer Religious Education Program. We are dedicated to you and your child(ren), to foster their religious formation, and work to incorporate Christian values and traditions into daily living experiences. This Catholic education is to be shared and held sacred.

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide for working toward a better union of parents/guardians, catechists, and students. As parents/guardians we need to make the weekly commitment to attend Sunday Mass with our children and support our church community with our time, talents, and treasures.

It is my hope that this handbook will provide you with the information needed to understand the philosophy and requirements of this program. We will all work together to continue to proclaim the message of Jesus to all our young people entrusted to us.

Your sister in Christ,



Arlene Astrowski  
Director of Religious Education

### ***MOST HOLY REDEEMER SCHOOL OF RELIGION MISSION STATEMENT***

The mission of Most Holy Redeemer School of Religion is to provide our youth with opportunities to grow in their knowledge of the sacraments, scriptures, and teachings of Jesus. We are dedicated through the help of the Holy Spirit to build Christian community through worship, education and service, and to bring the love of Jesus to all we come in contact with.

### ***PHILOSOPHY***

The School of Religion at Most Holy Redeemer Parish supports the call of Christian parents/guardians to share their faith with their children. The faculty will strive to develop each child's spiritual potential. We will endeavor to have the atmosphere, teachers, and materials for your child's spiritual growth and development.

## ***OBJECTIVES***

1. To aid our young people in the formation of a healthy self-concept based on the principles of the Bible.
2. To offer our young people a community where relationships may be formed based on trust and prayer.
3. To give affirmation, acceptance, and the feeling of belonging to a Christian community through the celebration of the sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation, Confirmation, and attendance at weekly Mass.
4. To provide experiences and opportunities to understand, develop, and choose the values of the Kingdom.
5. To provide Christian values in the area of human growth and development.
6. To share stories and religious truths of our Catholic tradition as they apply to the lives of our young people today.
7. To experience the living faith of a Christian community which is celebrated in the Eucharist at Mass and to support the church community through our time, talents, and treasures.
8. To provide a variety of prayer opportunities: Family Mass, class Mass, prayer service, class prayer, and Reconciliation.

## ***LITURGICAL LIFE***

Liturgy is the prayer of the people who try to live rooted in the vision of Jesus. Through listening and reflecting on the Word of God, as it relates to our own lives, we come together as a community around the Lord's table. **Sunday Mass participation is a must because it is an integral part of this liturgical life.** In this action we share our joys and struggles and are nourished for life's journey. Weekly Mass must be a priority in the spiritual life of a family.

## ***SACRAMENT PREPARATION***

### ***EUCHARIST, RECONCILIATION, CONFIRMATION***

Due to the importance and limited time we have to prepare your children for Reconciliation, First Communion, or Confirmation, your child's **weekly attendance at class and Sunday Mass is of utmost importance.** Therefore, we must put a limit on the number of absences permitted in the pre-sacrament and sacramental years; *i.e.* first and second (Eucharist), third and fourth (Reconciliation), and seventh and eighth (Confirmation) grades. If a child misses five (5) or more classes, he/she must wait until the following year to celebrate the sacrament unless explicit permission has been given by the Director, and missed work has been completed.

## ***ADMISSION INTO SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM***

Students celebrating First Eucharist and Reconciliation must be enrolled **continuously** for grades one through four in order to prepare for First Eucharist and Reconciliation.

Parents/guardians are reminded that their child(ren) should be enrolled in the School of Religion Program for the entire eight years. Acceptance into the Confirmation Program, which is a two year commitment of learning, prayer, and service hours, is based upon regular attendance of the student in the School of Religion Program. **Weekly attendance at Sunday Mass is an integral part of the sacramental program.** They must be enrolled in sixth grade here or in another program to be accepted into the Confirmation Program.

## ***SPECIAL SACRAMENT PREPARATION PROGRAM***

Children in grades 4-8, who have not routinely attended Religious Education classes and have not received the sacraments of Reconciliation and or Eucharist, will be placed in their grade level Religious Education class. After consistently attending class for one year, these children become eligible for the Sacramental Program. This program will provide direct preparation for the sacraments and will include an overview of the Catholic Faith. Attendance in the Sacramental Program is in addition to all regular classes. Please contact the Office of Religious Education for placement of your child in this program.

## ***PARENT/GUARDIAN—CATECHIST COOPERATION***

Parents/guardians are first and foremost teachers of their children. They teach informally but powerfully by example and instruction. Parents/guardians nurture faith in their children by showing them the richness and beauty of lived faith. Catechists are there to enrich what has already been instilled by the parents/guardians at home. The catechists need the support of the parents/guardians in all areas, i.e., homework, being prepared for class, attendance at Sunday Masses and special Family Masses, etc. Parents/guardians should understand that Christian formation is not limited to preparation of a sacrament, but rather must continue as long as one lives.

## ***ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION***

1. Admission to the religious education program is open to all children of all registered families in the parish. No child will be refused admittance to the program on the basis of sex, race or national origin. A family may register at any time during office hours.
2. At the time of initial registration, a baptismal certificate is to be presented for any child not baptized at Most Holy Redeemer Parish.

3. Transfer students must bring a record of participation from the previous religious education program and their baptismal certificate. They must meet with the DRE who will explain the goals of the program and ask for a commitment to those goals by the parent/guardian and the student.
4. Attendance at the New Parent Meeting is mandatory.

### ***SPECIFIC AREAS OF PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION***

1. Teaching prayers, **attending weekly Sunday Mass**, using any teachable moment at home, and financial support by using church envelopes will give credibility to the teaching presented in class.
2. You will have an opportunity to attend prayer services with your student. Please mark your calendar with these special nights.
3. Helping your child(ren) with homework and completing the parent page provides an opportunity for the sharing of faith.
4. Parent/guardian participation in parent/guardian meetings held during the year is essential. This is especially true for parents/guardian with children who are preparing for the reception of a sacrament.
5. Progress reports are given out at the January Open House and mailed home at the end of the school year.
6. Parents/guardians are encouraged to call the child's catechist with any questions, concerns, or problems via the DRE.
7. **Parents/guardians are required to call the office when their child(ren) will be absent. Please call 346.8185 and leave a message. After three (3) consecutive absences, a phone call will be made to you by the Director. After a total of five (5) or more absences, your child will have to repeat the grade unless there are special circumstances.** Parents/guardians are also required to help their student with any make-up work due because of their absences.

### ***TUITION***

The tuition for the School of Religion Program is applied toward salaries for professional staff, rentals, materials, and catechist training and enrichment. The parish must then subsidize the difference between monies collected and expenses incurred. In order to keep this subsidy to a minimum we do depend on full payment of tuition.

Tuition is due on prayer and room assignment night. Tuition is due at the time of registration for families new to the program. **If the payment of tuition presents a problem for you, tuition must be subsidized through the parish Gecko Program.** Please contact the Director of Religious Education for further information. **(Registration should not be delayed for financial reasons.)**

Fees are as follows

One child	\$220.00
Two	\$330.00
Three or more children	\$380.00
Sacramental Fees:	
First Communion	\$40.00
Reconciliation	\$10.00
Confirmation	\$50.00

An additional fee of \$100 will be charged if you are a member of a neighboring parish and do not wish to enroll at MHR. We encourage all families in our program to be enrolled at our parish. Our program is subsidized by all parishioners of MHR.

There will be a \$10.00 book fee to replace a lost book. In addition to the payment of fees, it is important that all families with children in the School of Religion Program financially support the Church, i.e. through use of Church envelopes.

### ***ATTENDANCE / ABSENTEES***

Parents/guardians are required to call the office at 346.8185 when their child(ren) will be absent. The SchoolReach Program has been initiated and will be used frequently to relay messages. If parents do not call in their student's absence, they will receive a call via SchoolReach. This is for the safety of your student.

We request that parents/guardians see to it that their child arrives **PROMPTLY** for class and is picked up **PROMPTLY** after class. Regular, consistent attendance is expected for a productive learning experience in Religious Education.

The children are expected to attend **ALL** classes and should be in class by his/her starting time. When unsatisfactory progress is noted by the catechist or the student is absent from class three (3) or more times, a call will be made to the parent/guardian by the DRE. If a student is absent from class a total of five (5) times, the child will repeat the grade unless there are special circumstances or until the child has made up the missed work and learned the necessary material covered for the current year.

### ***ATTENDANCE—SACRAMENTAL YEAR***

Same expectations as non-sacramental year except student may be asked to withdraw from the Sacrament Preparation Program for the year if attendance is not regular and punctual and assignments and service not completed. Upon an interview with the parent/guardian, DRE, and catechist (if necessary), a determination will be made whether or not the sacrament will be celebrated by the family member enrolled in the School of Religion Program. All absences must be reported.

## ***SAFETY***

In the interest of fire safety, we ask that parents/guardians do not congregate in the halls. If you arrive early to pick up children, please wait outside.

## ***PROGRAM POLICIES—Discipline***

The gospels teach us that love, forgiveness, and respect should govern all actions. It is expected that each family become actively involved in Most Holy Redeemer's School of Religion Program, weekly attendance at Sunday Mass, and financially supporting the Church in order to model a living conscious faith and to reinforce the values of that faith.

Should we have a problem with your child during class this procedure will be followed.

1. Verbal warning, their name placed on a list indicating some rule has not respectfully been followed, being sent to the office so the student and DRE can discuss what happened and why they were sent to the office. The student will return to class.
2. Continued unacceptable behavior or any other serious misconduct will not be tolerated. A note will be sent home to the parents/guardian. Parent/guardian and DRE will meet to discuss the situation and a determination will be made regarding the student's status.

Students are expected to show consideration for their education, their catechist, their classmates, all others involved, classrooms and desks. Students are expected to be ready for class so bathroom visits need to be kept at a minimum. Please have your child go to the bathroom before coming to class. Students will not be allowed to wear baseball caps in the parish building or classrooms. Caps must be removed when **ENTERING** the building. No gum chewing or candy will be allowed unless approved by the DRE. No games, electronic devices, cell phones, texting, walkman, pagers, or toys will be allowed to be used in class. Devices will be collected by the teacher or the Director and will be returned after class. If any item is broken or stolen, MHR will not be held responsible.

## ***HOMEWORK***

Homework when given must take its rightful place in the child(ren) curriculum. Work at home is particularly important in the sacramental grades. Catechists request your help and support in this area. Make-up homework due to an absence needs your prompt attention before returning to the next class. You may go online and check lesson schedules to see what chapter your student has missed.

## ***VOLUNTEERS***

Volunteers are the "heart and soul" of the School of Religion Program. Parents/guardians are asked to give of their time and talents during the school year. Further information can be received by contacting the School of Religion. All volunteers working with children within the Archdiocese are required to participate in all aspects of the Safe Environment Program, including Virtus Training and a criminal background check.

It is our goal to ensure that everyone completes all aspects of this program. Anyone working in our program must be in full compliance with the requirements detailed online at [www.mostholyredeemer.org](http://www.mostholyredeemer.org), click on Protecting Children.

### ***SPORTS PROGRAM***

Any student involved in the MHR Sports Program needs to be in good standing in the School of Religion Program. This means attendance at all classes, (parents must call when child will be absent) weekly work completed, and projects completed. All past tuition must be paid in full and monthly payments being made for the current year. If you are not in good standing, this could jepordize your student from qualifying for the MHR Sports Program.

### ***EMERGENCY CLOSING INFORMATION***

The Religious Education Office will follow District 124 snow days.

### ***TRAFFIC PATTERN***

On Monday evenings children must enter the school from the North parking lot. Please follow the drop off and pick up procedures that follow. Your cooperation will help to keep your children safe.

#### **Drop off procedure for grades 1-4.**

1. Please enter the school parking lot from Lawndale
2. Drive straight along the path marked by the lines.
3. Children should exit on the passenger side only.

Proceed to Millard Ave. to exit.

#### **Pick up procedure for grades 1-4 and drop off procedure for grades 5 - 8**

1. Enter the parking lot from Lawndale Ave.
2. **Park** in the lot on the north side of the yellow lines.
3. Children will be released into the parking lot for pick up.
4. Proceed to Millard Ave. to exit.
5. The 5 – 8 graders will line up according to grade levels before entering the building through the double glass doors on the west side of the building.

**Program parents are assigned one evening during the school year to help patrol the parking lot during the 6:30 – 7 p.m. drop off / pick up time.**