

**Corpus Christi Parish
Religious Education (REC)
Parent and Participant Handbook**

Revised 2018



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**REC SESSIONS Grades 1-8
Mondays 4:30 - 5:45 PM
6:45 - 8:00 PM**

MISSION STATEMENT

Corpus Christi Religious Education for Children (REC) is dedicated to the spiritual and moral development of children in grades one through eight. Recognizing the role of parents as primary teachers of the faith, REC supports this faith formation by providing opportunities to study the Catholic beliefs and traditions in a classroom setting as well as to expose the children to communal and individual prayer experiences. Together, REC and the home foster within the child a personal recognition of God's love for them while they embrace the Gospel values of Jesus Christ.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Corpus Christi parish Community affirms the teaching of the Church which states that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. Our catechists supplement, in a more formal way, the education in faith that occurs in the home. With your help in the following areas, together we can make your child's REC experience positive and productive:

- Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days
- Teach your child to pray in their own words as well as to learn the prayers required at their level (as well as review previously learned prayers)
- Review the study guide and pacing chart weekly
- Make sure your child completes assignments and masters study homework
- Join your child in participating in age appropriate parish activities
- In the event that a teacher/aide needs to miss a class, be willing to substitute in an aide capacity for that session

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Arrival

All students enter the building using door B. At arrival, parents are not permitted beyond the door B lobby.

Students in grades 2-8 will go directly to their classrooms. Students in grades 1 will gather in the Door B lobby area and will be escorted to their classrooms by teacher/aides.

Lateness/Early Dismissal

Classes begin promptly and end at the time indicated on the REC schedule. If a child is chronically late, or continually leaves class early, his/her name will be referred to the Director of Religious Education. The Director will require a parent conference to determine the reasons for this situation. It should be noted that chronic lateness and early dismissals may interfere with your child's promotion and delay the reception of sacraments. If a child must leave REC early, the parent must report to the school office and sign the child out. The office will call the child's classroom and have them sent to the office. No parent is to go directly to the classroom and no child should be sent to the office prior to the parent's arrival.

Dismissal

Parents or designated carpool adults must pick up their children in the classrooms. **A current year dismissal card must be shown before a child will be released to that adult.**

Attendance

REC classes are scheduled for approximately thirty hours per year. Each class builds on the preceding class, therefore it is imperative that students attend REC classes regularly. If your child is unable to attend class for any reason, the procedures listed below must be followed:

Do not call the REC when the student is going to be out.
Instead, please email us or send a written note when your child returns the following week.

Any student who accumulates three unexcused absences may be dismissed from the Corpus Christi REC. The student may be reinstated the following year, but will be required to repeat the previous grade level that was not completed. Also, this may delay the reception of the sacraments.

Excused absences include but are not limited to illness, family emergencies, or a death in the family. Extended absences (3 or more) due to long term illness must be verified through a doctor's note. In the event that a child is dismissed from REC due to excessive absences or lateness, no refund of tuition or fees will be made. If a student is absent, all assigned work for that week is expected to be completed (see pacing chart).

Corpus Christi Parish CYO

Students in grades one through eight who wish to participate in any CYO activities must be enrolled and regularly attending REC classes.

Non-Custodial Parents

It is the responsibility of both parents to provide the Corpus Christi Parish REC office with the latest, most up to date Custodial Order or Custody Agreement. The Corpus Christi Parish REC office will request these documents in the beginning of the year. If either the Custody Order or Custody Agreement changes during the course of the year, it remains the responsibility of both parents to provide that document to the REC office immediately.

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, our program will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the records and other program related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official and latest copy of the court order.

If a court order prohibits our releasing a child into the custody of a non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official copy of the court order or custody section of the divorce decree.

Special circumstances

Please notify the REC office of any allergies, medical conditions, or special learning needs that your child might have. We will forward this information to the teachers. We do our best to provide a safe classroom environment during REC session, but we cannot guarantee that the classroom will be allergen free as many other groups use our parish facilities.

Cancellation of Classes

If REC classes are cancelled due to inclement weather or another unforeseen circumstance, this information will be announced via an email. You will need to provide us with your most current email. If you don't have one, please contact us.

***** REC classes are always cancelled if the North Penn School District is closed. *When REC classes are cancelled, students are expected to complete all written and study assignments for that week as indicated on the pacing chart.***

SACRAMENT REQUIREMENTS

Sacraments may be received only when the following criteria is met:

- the student has had two (2) years of religious instruction prior to receiving the sacrament
- the family is registered in the parish
- the family participates at Sunday Mass
- the parent(s) and candidate **MUST** participate in the required **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION ACTIVITIES** (All meetings, retreats and practices)

HOMEWORK

All children in grades 1 through 6 will have study homework each week. Occasionally a written or faith action assignment may be added. Our REC students as well as our parish catholic school children have religion homework on a regular basis to help reinforce their classroom experiences. Faith cannot be taught in one hour a week. It must be practiced and lived out in everyday life.

ASSIGNMENTS

Every student from Grades 1 thru 6 receives a pacing chart and study guide which is based on the Philadelphia Archdiocese guidelines (see below). The pacing charts lists by date the material that is expected to be covered in class and at home for that week. **STUDY**

ASSIGNMENTS are included on the pacing chart and students are expected to master these concepts by the next class or date noted.

PARENT INITIALS

A column is provided for parents to initial when all work is completed for the week.

ABSENTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Any student who misses a REC class is expected to complete all work assigned on the pacing chart before returning to the next class.

TESTING

The students will be assessed on a weekly basis. These assessments will reflect the material introduced in the preceding session (see pacing chart). If a child is absent, he/she will complete the assessment during the next REC class. No tests will be sent home to be completed. Since assessments are given on a weekly basis, they are not noted on the pacing chart. If a student has not mastered the material, a notation will be made on their pacing chart. Please review those concepts and your child will be reassessed.

RELIGION GUIDELINES

The religion guidelines for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia can be found at <http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/>. Below is a synopsis of the core content guidelines for each grade level.

Grade One God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, Sacraments of Initiation, Mary, Liturgical Year and prayer

Grade Two Holy Trinity, Sacraments of Initiation and Healing, The Mass: Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist, Topics related to Mass, Mary, prayer, Liturgical Year (as well as preparation for Sacrament of Penance and Eucharist)

Grade Three The Trinity, Sacraments, God's Law, Christian Community, Mary, Liturgical Year and prayer

Grade Four God the Father, Commandments, Grace, Sin, Conscience, Jesus Christ our Redeemer, The Beatitudes, Works of Mercy, Virtue, Mary, prayer, And Liturgical Year

Grade Five The Seven Sacraments, Mary, Liturgical Year, prayer.

Grade Six The Bible, Old Testament, Mary, Liturgical Year (as well as preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation), prayer

Grades Seven/Eight New Testament, Jesus, Mary in the Gospels, Liturgy & Worship, the Liturgical Year, Morality: Ten Commandments, Social Justice, Prayer

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are completed twice a year (January and May). If a student receives a "NI" evaluation, notification will be mailed to the parents. The student is required to master those concepts before proceeding to the next grade level. The progress reports are broken into two categories; knowledge of content (includes prayers) and behavior. Each category is assigned one of the following evaluations:

E = Exceeds expectations 93% - 100% grade average

M = Meets expectations 75% - 92% grade average

NI = Needs Improvement 74% and below grade average

The student's attendance is also recorded.

DISCIPLINE

The Parish Religious Education Program offered by Corpus Christi is designed to assist parents with the faith formation of their children, as well as foster values and behavior that are in accord with Catholic Church teaching. The program has **NO TOLERANCE** for behaviors that are contrary to Catholic faith and morals, including but not limited to ongoing acts of obstinacy, improper language, fighting, physical, emotional or psychological intimidation, vandalism, demeaning behavior such as name-calling, obscene language or gestures, and harassment. Such behaviors violate the central teaching of our faith and will not be tolerated in any form. These categories do not cover every possible situation. The parish determines what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior, both in and out of the classroom, in the parish community generally, and outside the parish community where such improper behavior affects the parish community.

Conduct by children or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the Parish is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to, immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate.

In addition, in the case of threats of violence or harassment, in any form, including oral, written, or electronic, by a child against any

member of the school community, the child, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to school.

In the event a participant engages in any of the above listed behaviors or any other inappropriate conduct, and has failed to respond to a catechist's attempt to stop or correct the behavior, the following action may be taken and at the discretion of the Pastor or Director of Religious Education:

1. **First Incident:** The student will be removed from the session and the parent or guardian will be immediately notified by phone by the program director. The program director will schedule a conference with the parents/guardians, student, and catechist to discuss the matter.
2. **Second Incident:** The student will be removed from the session and be suspended from the program for a period of one session. The parents/guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child. Prior to returning to the program the program director will schedule a conference with the parents, student, and catechist to further discuss the matter.
3. **Third Incident:** The student will be removed from the session and dismissed from the program. The parents or guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child. Following a conference with the program director, parents, student, and catechist, the parents will be provided with the option of having their child repeat his or her current grade level the following school year or opting to complete the current year's material by home-schooling their child. In either case, no refund of tuition or material fees will be made. **However, Corpus Christi Parish reserves the right to supersede the foregoing course of action depending on the particular circumstances of any given situation.**

CONTRABAND

BRINGING CONTRABAND TO PROGRAM SESSIONS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED AND WILL BE CONFISCATED AND RETURNED TO PARENTS ONLY! Depending on the contraband confiscated, the proper legal authorities could be notified.

1. Items considered contraband include, but are not limited to gum, food, beverages, toys, electronic games, beepers, walk-mans, weapons, drugs, & alcohol and tobacco products.
2. It is unlawful for minors to be in the possession of alcohol or tobacco products. Participants found to be in the possession of such products may be immediately suspended from the program. Depending on the contraband confiscated, the proper legal authorities could be notified.

SEARCH & SEIZURE

It is the policy of the Parish Religious Education Program of Corpus Christi Parish to respect the privacy of its participants. However, in the event that a student is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession or is believed to be a threat to himself/herself or others, the director will be notified immediately. The director will conduct a search with an adult staff member as a witness. Refusal on the part of the student to cooperate will result in the parents/guardians being contacted and asked to assist with the search. Parental refusal to cooperate will result in the student's immediate dismissal from the program.

CELL PHONES

We realize that devices such as cell phones have become a necessary tool in keeping communications open with children, especially for working parents. However, it is the policy of this program that if such devices are brought to catechetical sessions, they may not be in use during our REC class times. If a student uses a cell phone during the program, the device will be sent to the school office and must be picked up by a parent/guardian.