

St. Justin Martyr Catholic Church

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK

Elementary and RCIA



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www.sjmtx.org

Welcome to St. Justin Martyr Religious Education!

We'd like to thank you for entrusting us with the secondary faith formation of your children. We recognize that as parents, you are your child's primary educator (CCC 2221-2226). We look forward to working alongside you in the catechetical education and spiritual formation of your children. It is our hope that St. Justin's religious education program will foster within each child a personal relationship with God and a desire to "show forth and communicate [the glory of God]" (St. Bonaventure, *In Il Sent*).

Communication

We are here to serve the religious education and spiritual needs of our children. If there is any way we can support you or if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to share them with a catechist or contact the CCE office.

Parents will be notified of important dates and events through the parish bulletin, email, phone call, written notices on the whiteboard, or letters sent home with children. Please check your child's folder every week for important information.

Visit our website at www.sjmtx.org/childrens-ministrycce

Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/sjmcce

Staff

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Expectations

Staff

- Will ensure that the catechists are trained and will provide support in a loving, Christian environment
- Will prepare the curriculum to be used for each grade level
- Will handle any medical or behavioral problems that may arise

Parents

- Will ensure that their children attend classes regularly and on time
- Will communicate to catechists and staff any special needs or circumstances that may affect their child in the classroom
- Are encouraged to be an active part of their children's learning at home as well as be involved at the catechist's request (e.g. help with special programs and projects)
- To be a Catholic Christian example attending Catholic Mass weekly

Students

- Will behave in a Christian manner at all times
- Will be respectful of and cooperative with any adults helping with the program
- Will participate in classroom activities and discussions
- Will attend class regularly and complete any homework given
- Will honor the code of conduct
- Will not swear, degrade, or use any offensive language on the church grounds

Catechists

- Will provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the classroom where children can learn
- Will prepare for class and teach the designated curriculum
- Will provide a Christian role model for the children and help them feel they are special children of God
- Will communicate with parents about their children and involve them in the learning process

Discipline and Problem Solutions

Students are expected to share in the faith learning experiences of our program. We understand that discipline problems are usually caused by needs that aren't being met. However, if a child's behavior continuously disrupts the learning process for him/herself or for others, the following steps will be implemented.

1. At the first incident, the child will be verbally reminded of expected behavior and consequences of misbehavior.
2. After the second incident, the child will be sent to the office for a discussion of appropriate behavior with Director of Religious Education.
3. After returning to class, if inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be sent to the office to do their classwork for the duration of the class time. The child's parent will be called to pick up the child and discuss the situation.

If the child's behavior continues to disrupt learning, it may be necessary for the parent to instruct the child at home.

After working through steps 1-3, the child may be allowed the opportunity to rejoin the class if an understanding can be reached as to how all those involved may best continue to learn and grow in faith.

Note: Students are expected to exercise care in use of classroom furniture and supplies (pencils, art supplies, tables, chairs, etc.). Should a student cause destruction to any classroom materials, the parent may be asked to replace those materials.

Medication and Health Concerns

Any medication or health concerns should be brought to the attention of the director or assistant at the time of registration. This includes identification of ADD, ADHD, ASD, OCD, anxiety, and chronic illnesses (e.g. diabetes, heart condition, severe allergies, epilepsy, etc.). It is our policy **not** to administer any medication to students because of the relative brevity of classes. If a child is diagnosed with any medical condition after registration, please inform the director or CCE assistant as soon as possible. This information will be kept confidential between the office staff and the child's catechist.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Please help us maintain a safe environment for our children by following these procedures. Please check your calendar before bringing your child to class.

Little Church

All Little Church children should be brought to the classroom by an adult and signed in. Children will only be released to an authorized person listed on the Pick Up Authorization form. The person picking up the children will be asked to sign a dismissal form.

CCE and Sacrament Classes

Please make every effort to have your child arrive on time. They should be in the classroom when the session starts. **If your child arrives more than fifteen (15) minutes late, they will be marked absent.** Late arrivals are disruptive to the class.

Children in grades 1-5 must be accompanied into the CFC building. Children **must be signed in by a parent** or trusted adult. Please have your child sit outside the classroom door until the catechist calls the class in. **Children are not to wander the halls.**

Elementary age children **must be picked up inside the CFC building by an authorized adult.** Please make sure all such persons are listed on the Pick Up Authorization form. We will not allow children to leave the building without an authorized adult with them. If you need someone other than an adult listed on the form to pick up your child, you must submit a note to the CCE office ahead of time. The adult picking up your child may be asked to show photo identification.

Under no circumstances will parents be allowed in the second floor of the CFC building during CCE

Please do not open classroom doors or take your child from the classroom until the class is dismissed. Children leaving early are disruptive to the class.

Parking

PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE CLERGY PARKING SPACES OR THE FIRE LANES.

Parking in front of the fire lanes is a violation of fire code. The church can be fined for this as it is a safety hazard should an emergency occur. There are three parking lots at St. Justin as well as space to park in the street. Please arrive with enough time to find an appropriate parking spot and walk your child to class.

Please do not drive around the cones. The cones are in place for your child's safety. Please drive carefully and courteously.

Inclement Weather

St. Justin religious education classes will follow Alief ISD closures unless specifically notified otherwise.

Please check email, text, and social media if you are unsure about whether class will be held during inclement weather. You may also call the parish office at 281-556-5116. Heavy rain does not automatically cause cancellation. Please use your best judgment about whether or not to bring your child. Do not risk personal safety to make it to CCE classes.

Fire and Weather Emergency

A fire alarm must be taken seriously. It is imperative that all students, staff, and catechists depart from the facility in an orderly manner and meet at a safe, appropriate place outside. We will remain outside until the "all clear" signal is given. Exit routes are posted in each classroom. We will conduct at least one fire drill per class day during the CCE year.

In the unlikely event of a weather emergency (such as a tornado or a hurricane) during class hours, students and catechists will be asked to move to the hallway and away from windows.

Attendance

It is important for children to be present at each class. **If a child's attendance drops below 80% during a first or second sacrament preparation year, a meeting with the director will be necessary to determine whether the child is ready to progress or receive a sacrament.** We will not deny a sacrament but may delay the reception if deemed necessary.

If a child is sick or must inevitably miss a class, a doctor's note or a handwritten note from a parent must be provided in order for the absence to be excused. **Sports practices, sports events, scout trips, camping trips, or other extracurricular activities are not excuses to miss classes during sacrament preparation years.** We ask that you put your child's faith first during these short but vital days.

Regarding holidays and other off days – please note we follow the Alief School Calendar.

Parental Consent

This page is to be signed and returned to the CCE office.

I acknowledge that I have read and agree with the expectations and procedures listed in the St. Justin Martyr Religious Education Handbook. I agree to abide by all parent and student expectations, including attendance, arrival and departure, parking, homework, care for classroom materials, and behavior.

I acknowledge that any behavioral infraction—disrespectful conduct toward the teacher or other students—will result in the parent or guardian coming into the office to pick up the child and discuss the situation. Further infractions may result in the child being instructed at home by the parent.

I acknowledge that I have received a hard copy and /or accessed a copy of the Religious Education Handbook, online at **www.sjmtx.org**

I hereby acknowledge and agree to make payments as per payment plan (3 payments within 3 months upon registering my child).

Parent Name (printed): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

From time to time staff at St. Justin Martyr, will take photos and/or videos during CCE and/or church activities. We would like your permission to post these photos and/or videos on our Website, Facebook page and/or CCE Newsletters. Photos and/or videos would be selected to highlight activities during Sacrament preparation classes, Retreats, CLOW, Vacation Bible School, etc. We will never reference your child by name or provide any specific information regarding your child. The photos and/or videos will only be used by St. Justin Martyr to show the many ways our children & youth flourish while participating in our Parish!

Please take a moment to let us know your preferences regarding our use of photos and/or videos of your children:

YES, I grant permission

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NO, I do not grant permission

Child Name: _____ Grade: _____ Day: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

