

# *Parent Handbook* *2011 - 2012*

## ST. ISAAC JOGUES OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

†  
A.M.D.G.

September 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of the entire parish of St. Isaac Jogues and especially the Office of Religious Education, I would like, once again, to welcome you and your children to our program. It is our privilege that you have chosen us to assist you in the raising of your child in the Catholic Faith.

Pope John Paul II continually called for a new evangelization for the second millennium of Christianity. Our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, encourages us to go forward with this mandate. The primary way of affecting this is through sound catechesis. In the spirit of our patron, St. Isaac Jogues, and in conformity with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, we in the Office of Religious Education are determined to offer our students a quality religious education which incorporates both traditional and modern methods of classroom management which is firmly grounded in the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Based upon universal and local church directives, we continue to work to develop a program that will raise the academic standard in our classes. Utilizing the catechism and the scriptures we hope to form our youth in a way that they will know the "what" and "why" of their religion in the hopes that each student will be enriched in their relationship with Christ and remain practicing Catholics, in good standing, the rest of their lives.

We hope that this year will be a valuable one for you and your families and that all of us may find salvation in our work for the glory of God. Let us pray for each other always.

Yours in Christ,  
Louis M. Valenti, M. Div.  
Director of Religious Education

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2011-2012 Calendar Enclosed

CONFIRMATION: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2011 2:00PM

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# THE ST. ISAAC JOGUES RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

## GOAL

Our goal, as catechists, is consistent with the Spirit of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Isaac Jogues. That is, to work for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls. Specifically the souls of the students in our classrooms. We will effect this by trying to reach the minds and hearts of our students that they may grow in their knowledge of God and His Catholic Church.

## METHOD

Catechists are called to teach the students, entrusted to our care, their Catholic Faith as presented by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Parents send their children to us to learn the teachings of the Church. Catechists must be positive that they are teaching in line with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. We are directed in this by the guidelines published for catechesis by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

- These Archdiocesan guidelines have been incorporated, as much as possible, into lesson plans for each year in order to meet the specific needs of our parish and program.
- We have updated the children's catechism in order to assist us in relating the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to the level of our students ability and understanding.
- To ensure that Catechists in our program are fully qualified to relay our Catholic Faith, to our students, they are required to complete the Archdiocesan Catechist Program and, in addition, our own parish catechism classes (four parts). Catechists do not have to do this all at once but, must make an effort to complete these requirements in a methodic way during their time in our program.
- New catechists must complete the Religious Education Catechists Classroom Management Training Program, at St. Isaac Jogues, which consists of two classes. One class is conducted in September, the other in March.
- It is mandatory that each catechist also attend the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Program, "Protecting God's Children", an awareness program for adults.
- In addition, catechists are asked to take part in the sacraments, sacramental preparation programs, days of recollection and all things related to their individual classes.
- Catechists are encouraged to participate in the Archdiocesan Certification Program for Catechists.

## PARENTS

The duty of parents to try to secure the Eternal Salvation of their children is a most important role. No greater achievement is humanly possible, than, with the help of God, to lead His children to their Eternal reward.



## **ADMISSIONS POLICY AND TUITION**

All families who live within the boundaries of St. Isaac Jogues Parish are eligible to register their children in the parish Religious Education Program.

Families of neighboring parishes may also register their children in our parish program. A letter of permission is required from the pastor of the home parish and sent to Father Harris for his permission.

Tuition fee for the 2011-2012 school year:	One Child	\$100.00
	Two Children	\$170.00
	Three Children	\$200.00
	Four or more	\$250.00

### **ACTIVITY FEE**

Additional fees are assigned for children preparing for Sacraments during the year. For further information, see "Sacramental Preparation," page 8.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE**

All classes meet once a week for an hour and fifteen minutes.

<b><u>SESSION A:</u></b> Sundays	9:00AM - 10:15 AM	(Kindergarten – 6th Grade)
<b><u>SESSION B:</u></b> Sundays	10:30AM - 11:45 AM	(Kindergarten – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade)
<b><u>SESSION C:</u></b> Wednesdays	6:00PM - 7:15 PM	(Kindergarten – 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade)

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**If your child will be absent from to class, we ask that you contact the Office of Religious Education via our email address: [SIJCCD@gmail.com](mailto:SIJCCD@gmail.com) before the start of class** so that we may record the absence and inform your child's teacher of the absence. Please note that at times no one will be available to take calls prior or during class. You may also report an by leaving a message on our voice mail, (610) 687-2481 extension 4

Absences will be noted on your child's report card. Excessive absence can result in failure of the course and the need to repeat the grade.

The Director will initiate follow-up with parents of children who have accumulated three (3) unreported absences.

When the student returns to the class, a note explaining the absence should be presented to the teacher. If your child must leave class early, a note from a parent is also required.

Our weekly time for religious instruction is very limited. We ask that parents not compromise this time by allowing excessive absences and/or by regularly bringing children to class late, or, by repeatedly picking children up before the scheduled dismissal time. Unnecessary interruptions and absences by a few students lower the quality of education for all. Please make your children's weekly religious education time a priority, arranging extra-curricular and social activities so that they do not conflict with Religious Education.

**CCD FAMILY MASSES ARE MANDATORY AND ARE COUNTED TOWARDS  
ATTENDANCE.**

**SNOW DAYS AND CLASS CANCELLATIONS**

Parents who supplied an email address on the students 2011-2012 Registration Form will be notified by email of all class cancellations.

**PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT THE RECTORY FOR CCD INFORMATION.**

**DISMISSAL POLICY**

**GRADES K – 4**

Parents (and those they have authorized) are to come directly to the classroom to drop-off or pick-up the student.

If you are registering a child in grades K through 4, you must complete the section on the back of the registration form entitled “List of Authorized Adults to Pick Up Children”. Catechists of children in this age group will be given a copy of the information, while the original form is kept in the office. For ease of dismissal, please take the time to introduce yourself to the staff and catechists, and inform the persons you authorize to pick up your child to do the same. A written authorization must be sent to the Office of Religious Education, prior to class, if another individual, not listed on the form, is to pick-up your child on a specific day. A telephone call will not suffice.

**PLEASE DO NOT CONGREGATE IN THE HALLWAY AT DROP-OFF OR PRIOR TO STUDENTS’ DISMISSAL – IT IS A DISTRACTION TO STUDENTS AND CATECHISTS ALIKE WHO MAY NOT HAVE YET COMPLETED THEIR CLASS.  
YOU ARE WELCOME TO WAIT IN THE VESTIBULE UNTIL CLASSES ARE DISMISSED.**

**GRADES 5 – 12**

Students will be dismissed from their classrooms and asked to leave the building in an orderly fashion. They may meet their parents directly outside the vestibule’s doors.

If a student has parental permission to walk home, the Office of Religious Education must be notified in writing. If for one day only, the date must be specified. If the request is for the entire school year, that fact must be stated. All requests will be kept on file.

**SPECIAL HEALTH CONDITIONS**

The back of the registration form includes a section entitled “Special Health Conditions.” In this section, please notify us of any officially diagnosed physical, mental, or emotional health problems that might affect your child’s participation in the program. If the problem requires a detailed explanation, please provide one on an extra sheet of paper, or attach a medical description of the problem from your child’s physician. If no special health conditions exist, you may leave this section blank. Your signature at the bottom of the form will indicate to us that you have left the section blank intentionally, however, all registration forms must be signed to verify the complete information submitted is correct. The medical information will be provided to the Catechist. All information is held in the strictest confidence. If you wish a meeting with the director, please contact the Office of Religious Education for an appointment..

## DRESS CODE

Religious Education classes for children and young adults are a part of each student's formal education. Each student's dress should reflect this and be a source of pride in who and what they are, young Catholic gentlemen and ladies. All students are to dress appropriately. Please help your children refrain from wearing shorts, tank tops, cleats, mesh shirts, t-shirts with advertisements, baseball caps, sports uniforms. Boys are not permitted to wear jewelry other than a cross or medal, nor should girls wear excessive jewelry. Boys and girls should be properly groomed and neat at all times. Boys should have their hair above their collar. Skirts for girls should not be above the knee.

N.B. (regarding older students). Tattoos are implicitly forbidden by the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment and are not to be displayed during class. Any student to whom this applies is required to keep their tattoo covered at all times during class.

## CURRICULUM & ASSIGNMENTS

Our curriculum is designed to follow the guidelines for Religious Education drawn up by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. To cover the material designated by the Archdiocese for each grade level, we use various texts and resources.

### Textbooks/Bibles

Students are provided with a Theology textbook, a workbook, (in grades 2, 6/7 a catechism book is also provided to further prepare for the sacraments received in those classes) and a folder for use in classes throughout the year. In addition, **students are required to bring a notebook and writing utensils.** Students should bring all materials to class each week. **If a book is lost, a fee for the cost of each book lost will be assessed.** All classrooms are equipped with a catechism and bible to be used by the catechist and the students. At times the students may be requested to each bring a bible to class for a special project.

### Home Assignments

Students in Grades K -- 12 will receive weekly home assignments to correspond with the lessons covered in class. These brief assignments provide parents with the opportunity to follow up on material covered in class, foster discussion, and review previously taught material or assist their child in preparing for a new lesson.

### Objective Testing

Students, K through 12, will be tested/quizzed, orally or in writing, each week. Students are expected to study at home for these tests/quizzes. Please help your child prepare.

As part of their home assignments, students are expected to learn by memory the common prayers and formula(s) which the Archdiocese has assigned for their grade level. These prayers and formulas of our faith will be presented to the students together with proper catechesis to ensure that they have a good understanding of the subject.

Since catechists do not have time to repeat lessons for absentees, parents are asked to be responsible for covering the missed material at home. Please contact your child's teacher or the Religious Education Office for missed material.

## **REPORT CARDS**

The grading system used was established by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. It is required that it be utilized as stated, no changes, additions, or deletions may be added.

**Only the grading system required by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia: A, B, C, U. may be used. A plus (+), or minus (-) may not be added to the grade. If unable to grade due to lack of attendance, the grade is U for unsatisfactory (U = Progress not presently demonstrated).**

As in all formal educational processes, the students will be tested on the material taught and studied. Report cards will be issued on a trimester schedule in November, March and May. The report card grades will be based on the following: test/quiz, home assignments, knowledge of religion, classroom participation, attendance, and display of Christian behavior. The reason for a report card is not to discourage students or parents, but to help them determine what areas, in their religious education, might need extra assistance or to give a deserved pat on the back for a job well done. **Report Cards are copied for students permanent file and need not be returned.**

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Good conduct is expected from every child who attends our Religious Education Program. Disruptions are unfair to both the catechists and the other students who are present.

Serious breaches of discipline such as constant interruption of the class, destruction of property, fighting, continued ignoring of reminders, etc., are cause for a child to be dismissed from class and sent home.

Students are expected to respect parish property, inside and outside, as well as the property of other students. CCD students may not use the Preschool Playground. The equipment is not built to withstand the weight and enthusiasm of older children, it is constructed for children 3 and 4 years of age.

If it becomes necessary, and only after consultation with the catechist, a meeting with the parents of the student may be requested by the Director BEFORE the child may return to class.

Complete failure of the discipline policy can cause suspension and/or expulsion.

**ANY** fighting, obscene language, possession of drugs/alcohol, weapons, matches, blatant disrespect and gross insubordination will be met with immediate expulsion from the program.

## **COMMUNICATION**

If your address, telephone number or email address changes during the year, please notify the office immediately.

**PARENTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO CHECK THEIR CHILD'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOLDER FOR NOTICES OF IMPORTANCE.** We encourage you to regularly read the church bulletin, this is a major method of our communication with you. Also please maintain email correspondence with our office.

Occasionally, a catechist may feel the need to contact a parent with regard to a child's progress in class (ex. homework, behavior, class participation, etc.) In these cases, the Director of Religious Education will be consulted prior to the contact and either the Director or Catechist will speak with the parents. Parent communication is encouraged to resolve troublesome issues and catechists have been encouraged to involve parents at the earliest sign of concern.

Parents are encouraged to contact the DRE whenever questions or problems arise.



## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

In our formal preparation for the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, it is presumed that we are training our students to receive these sacraments for the first of innumerable times throughout their lives. These are not “one and only” events! The student’s preparation will be thorough and practical. Symbols and Ceremonies will certainly be covered, but the reality of the sacraments will be the main focus of our sacramental preparation. It is our hope that our preparation and provision of these sacraments will be the beginning of a rich life of grace that each of our students will live, on a regular basis, all their lives.

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION - GENERAL PREREQUISITES**

- 1) Following the Archdiocesan mandate and guidelines, any student preparing to receive a sacrament should have had two (2) years of prior preparation.
- 2) More than 3 absences during the year may jeopardize the reception of the sacraments.
- 3) Parents of students preparing for sacraments will be asked to submit a photocopy of the child’s Baptismal certificate. (NOTE: Unless the certificate is already on file in the Office of Religious Education.)
- 4) N.B. Although circumstances may arrive that prevent your child from receiving these sacraments on time (i.e. lack of required knowledge, excessive absence, sickness,) every opportunity will be made to supplement the preparation and allow the student to receive the sacrament in a timely manner.
- 5) Parents are requested to assist their child in reviewing the necessary material, especially in the memorization of all required prayers and essential information, and, most importantly the student’s understanding of the essential data.



### **First Penance and First Holy Communion**

There will be a combined fee of \$75.00 charged for each child preparing for First Penance and First Holy Communion. The fee is collected during the fall semester and helps to cover the retreat, certificates, programs, and flowers for both sacraments, as well as the First Holy Communion video.

Students will prepare for both of these sacraments in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade although they will begin memorization of required prayers in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade. While much of the preparation will be done during class time, parents will be asked to help the students memorize the required prayers and definitions. All the “required information” will be provided in a parent “Penance Booklet” dispersed in September and the “First Holy Communion Booklet” distributed in January.

There will be Penance practice and First Holy Communion rehearsals. Each sacrament will present a Parents Evening of Reflection. First Holy Communion will also provide the students with a Retreat and Prayer Service prior to the sacrament of the Eucharist.



## **Confirmation**

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia determined that the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Isaac Jogues Parish will be conducted every two years. St. Isaac Jogues will provide the sacrament during each consecutive odd number year, i.e. 2011, 2013 etc.

Parents are asked to attend an introductory meeting with their child prior to the spring and fall confirmation preparation classes. Student classes will be held on Sundays during their regular CCD class time with double classes as required.

Parents are also encouraged to attend a “Night of Reflection” a preparation program preceding their son/daughter’s Confirmation.

Each candidate for Confirmation must arrange to have a sponsor according to archdiocesan guidelines. Sponsors are required to obtain verification (a Letter of Eligibility) from their home parish stating that they are Catholics in good standing and eligible to serve as a sponsor. More information regarding this requirement is provided during the introductory Confirmation Meeting.

Students are required to choose a saint they admire and see as a role model, and choose his or her name as their Confirmation Name. They may also select the name of a family member as long as it is not contrary to the Catholic Faith.

A fee of \$125.00 is charged each student preparing for Confirmation. This fee helps cover the cost of special texts and workbooks, binders, folders, retreat, supplies, certificates, programs, donation to the Bishop, robe, video, and church flowers. The fee is collected during the spring semester and should be submitted to the Office of Religious Education along with the appropriate forms received during the Parents Meeting.



**CONFIRMATION  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2011**

**THE MOST REVEREND LOUIS A. DeSIMONE  
CELEBRANT**

## **ROLE OF PARENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**



It is ordained by Almighty God that parents are the primary educators of their child. Husband and wife have the honor of sharing in the miracle of Pro-creation and the duty to raise their child to the best of their ability. When parents go before the Throne of God, they are judged on how well they have tried to make their children successful in the eyes of God and the practice of their Catholic Faith and morals.

Pope John Paul II called for a new evangelization for the second Millennium of Christianity. The Church is promoting an age of renewed catechesis. Aware of the deficiency in catechesis for the past thirty years, and a sometimes frustrating inability to pass on the tenets of the Catholic Faith to our children, the St. Isaac Jogues Office of Religious Education is committed to assisting parents and godparents in their role as primary catechists and helping them by providing the fundamentals of a formal Catholic Theological education for their child.

Although many parents are thankful for this opportunity, they must remain committed to helping us, to help them, in religious education. Parents should take an active role in assisting their child to learn and appreciate the catechesis that their child receives in an all too brief class each week. Parents should use the opportunity of their child's religious education as an occasion to re-focus and re-evaluate their own relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.

The best way parents can help, after assisting with homework and study, is by providing a good example and by making the sacraments, especially weekly Mass and confession, available to their child. **All actions speak louder than our words ever could.**

### **PARENTS AS PRIMARY TEACHERS**

- 1) Be examples of lived faith.
- 2) Discuss weekly lessons with your children.
- 3) Assist in homework assignments.
- 4) Be sure that the child is prepared for class.
- 5) Communicate with child's Catechist and DRE.
- 6) Supervise attendance and participation of your children.
- 7) Attend Mass on Sunday's, and Holyday's and participate in other devotional activities within the parish.
- 8) Pray with your child and as a family.
- 9) Continue your own Religious Education.
- 10) Make sure your child arrives on time, make this one of your commitment's to our Lord.

***“LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME;  
DO NOT PREVENT THEM;  
FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE.”***

Mark 10:14

MARY, OUR BLESSED MOTHER



HAIL MARY, FULL OF GRACE,  
THE LORD IS WITH YOU.  
BLESSED ART YOU AMONG WOMEN  
AND BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF YOUR WOMB, JESUS.  
HOLY MARY, MOTHER OF GOD,  
PRAY FOR US SINNERS  
NOW AND AT THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH. AMEN