



St. Catherine of Siena Parish

Children's Formation Parent/Sponsor Handbook

Train up a child in the way he should go;
even when he is old he will not depart from it.

- Proverbs 22:6

WELCOME

It is a privilege for St. Catherine of Siena to have your children in our RE program.

RE Handbook

The Children's Formation staff and volunteers are here to assist you in your role as primary educator of your child. It is our intention that this handbook be a source for information about religious education classes here at St. Catherine's.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (#2223) states:

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues...

Attendance

Parents are asked to make a serious commitment to see that their child attends each scheduled class. Should your child need to miss a class, please contact their catechist so it will be marked as an excused absence. Since attendance is one of the indicators of readiness for receiving a sacrament, missing class during sacramental preparation may require make-up work or meeting privately with a team member to review the lesson.

Fees

\$85 per child

The yearly fee helps to cover the expenses of RE. Fees can be paid in installments throughout the year. Discounts are offered for early registration as well as the children of children's formation volunteers.

Please let Lauren Ellis know if you are having financial difficulties and St. Catherine of Siena will be happy to assist you. If you are writing a check, we ask you to make it out to St. Catherine of Siena with a notation in the memo area that it is for RCIA C&Y with your child's name. We assure you that we will be good stewards in using this money wisely.

Length of Process

St. Catherine of Siena requires two years of instruction for sacramental preparation of children. Exceptions are only granted when the pastor of St. Catherine of Siena obtains or gives approval.

Attendance at Mass

All children are required to attend Mass each Sunday. The parent that is Catholic or preparing to become Catholic is also required to attend Mass each Sunday with their child. Weekly Mass attendance is the most important religious education for your child. If you are in the Sunday session and will have no other time to attend Mass that weekend, please keep your children in Mass rather than bring them to class. Simply let the catechist know, and it will be an excused absence. If you are finding it difficult to attend Mass each week, please pray for the discipline needed.

Benchmarks

At St. Catherine of Siena, all RE children by 5th grade should know the following prayers:

- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory Be
- Apostles' Creed
- Act of Contrition
- Grace before Meals

In addition, children should be familiar with the following:

- How to pray the Rosary
- Reciting the Ten Commandments

Parents are asked to give the assistance needed. If you need an extra copy of the above, please let us know. Remember we are here to assist you in any way needed.

Inclement Weather

Potential "bad" weather is always hard to call. School day cancellation decisions are made 12 hours away from RCIA C&Y class, so we may not follow the CFBISD school district exactly, depending on the circumstances. If we feel that we need to cancel RCIA C&Y for the evening because of the existence or prediction of bad weather, we will try to notify you. Please watch your e-mail as well as the church website or call Lauren Ellis at the church office (extension 23) for details.

Parish Registration

Please note that filling out registration forms for your child to enter RCIA C&Y does not automatically register your family in the parish. A child prepares and receives sacraments only in their own church parish so it is very important that you fill out a parish registration form. If you are in need of a parish registration form, you may pick them up in the Narthex at all Masses or in the front office during business hours. If you are not sure if you are registered in our parish, anyone in the office will be happy to check for you.

Parent Active Participation Form

Every parent with a child in the RCIA C&Y process will be asked to sign an active participation form. One is included in this handbook for your convenience to review periodically. Due to the limited time that we meet with your child, it is necessary for you to assist us in reinforcing what is taught in the classes and to help with any memorization that is required.

RCIA C&Y Team

The RCIA C&Y team pledges to be faithful in our commitment to teaching and forming your child in the Catholic faith. We thank you for sharing your children with us. It allows us the privilege of sharing and teaching our Catholic faith.

Partial Text from a homily by Our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI

(Given to parents of First Communicants and others gathered on September 11, 2006)

Dear Parents,

I ask you to help your children to grow in faith, I ask you to accompany them on their journey toward Holy Communion, on their journey toward Jesus and with Jesus. Please, go with your children to Church and take part in the Sunday Eucharistic celebration! You will see that this is not time lost; rather, it is the very thing that can keep your family truly united and centered. Sunday becomes more beautiful, the whole week becomes more beautiful, when you go to Sunday Mass together. And please, pray together at home too: at meals and before going to bed. Prayer does not only bring us nearer to God but also nearer to one another. It is a powerful source of peace and joy. Family life becomes more joyful and expansive whenever God is there and his closeness is experienced in prayer.

Pope Benedict XVI