

# **Saint Benedict Church**

## **Parish Religious Education Program**

### **Catechetical Policy**

#### **2017-2018**

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**Our Mission: “In Jesus we Live, Learn and Love”**

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## GOAL

The goal of our **Parish Religious Education Program** is to strengthen one's faith and love of God, through Christ Jesus our Lord, by way of a greater knowledge, appreciation and acceptance of the Gospel message, as taught through the Sacred and Living Tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. Our Religious Education Program for children aims to assist parents, who are primary educators of their children, in fostering the children's growth in faith.

## FAITH

"Faith is a gift of God which calls people to conversion". The faithful Christian is one who accepts Jesus' values and attitudes toward life as his attitudes, and Jesus' teachings as his norms in life. As a faithful catholic, he accepts the Catholic Church as his home and as his teacher. Faith involves knowledge, but knowledge is not faith. The more we know what God did for us, the more we love him and act upon our faith. Faith is a gift that needs to be nourished in order to grow and accompany us through our life time until one day we will fulfill our belief in eternity. Growth in faith is a dynamic process, which goes on throughout life. It does not reach fulfillment in a year or eight years or twelve years, but it **is a life-long process**.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We believe that Religious Education involves more than knowledge. Quality of Religious Education is a balance of information, formation and transformation. Through it, we can shape and change attitudes and behaviors to reflect the mind and mission of Jesus Christ. **In our classes**, we strive to **inform** our students about our faith; **in our homes** we do our best to **form** our students minds and hearts to share the gospel message of being responsible for our brothers and sisters less fortunate than us; **in our Church** we celebrate the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, as well as Adoration, Prayer Service, Stations of the Cross, Rosaries, etc.....all geared toward the **transformation** of our children's mind and soul.

## ADMISSION POLICY

Our **Parish Religious Education Program** is open to all children in Grades 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, who are registered with St. Benedict. To complete registration, the parent must present a copy of his/her child/children's Baptismal Certificate. It is also required that all pertinent health information of any unusual condition be brought to the attention of the Director.

## REGISTRATION

Registration for **new students** is held during the Spring and Summer. Forms are available by e-mail or may be obtained at the [www.churchofsaintbenedict.com](http://www.churchofsaintbenedict.com) and should be returned with a copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate and the Registration Fee. We don't register by e-mail, the form needs to be printed and sent to the PREP office.

Families of students who **currently attend** our Parish Religious Education Program will receive a Registration Update Form in the early Spring. This form should be returned **before** the close of our PREP, usually at the end of April. It will give us sufficient time to find enough teachers, order books, and make class rosters.

## **FINANCIAL**

A PREP fee will be assessed to each student annually, and is *payable upon registration*. Please note that a discount fee is given for families that register early, within the time frame allowed for the early registration.

## **SESSIONS**

Classes are scheduled Thursday evenings from 6:15 PM to 7:30 PM for children in 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **SUNDAY MASS**

Sunday Mass is our central act of worship, our “peak experience” as a community of faith that nourishes us and gives us the strength to love and serve one another for the rest of the week. **It is therefore, our privilege to participate in Mass every Sunday.**

A child acquires a sense of belonging to St. Benedict’s Parish as a Roman Catholic community of faith by coming to Sunday Mass, participating in parish activities, and attending PREP. Although, PREP attendance doesn’t replace Mass on Sunday or Saturday 5:00 PM.

Youth who come to Church with their peers, by their presence and behavior, can be a wonderful example to young children and an inspiration to their parents and other adults.

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Dress needs to be modest, neat, and in good taste. All extremes in attire should be avoided and good judgment should prevail. If students come to class from the sports field, please make sure that your child will change their muddy shoes before they enter the building.

## **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

We will follow the example of Jesus when we gather together. Our expectation is that everyone gathers together with a spirit of welcome, caring and cooperation.

The catechist is in charge of the session and is responsible for maintaining an orderly environment favorable to learning; and each student is responsible for fostering a good learning environment by their own behavior.

Respect and courtesy are required from all students. In case of misbehavior or use of inappropriate or abusive language by any student, the director, catechist and parents will counsel with the student to achieve a code of conduct conducive to a good learning situation.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

In order to cover required material, the catechist needs to begin and end all sessions on time. **Students are expected to come on time and parents are expected to pick them up on time.** Excessive tardiness will be brought to the attention of the parent and dealt with on an individual basis.

## **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL**

Please have your children here on time. Classes start promptly at 6:15 PM inside of the church with our open prayer as a group. Families should use our church front door for entering the building at all time. Our educational wing doors will be locked at 6:25 PM. After this time, arrivals will be limited to the educational door for students only. Parents, without clearances filed in our office, will not be allowed to enter the building while students will be in session. Children will be allowed into the building starting at 6:00 PM and directed to wait inside of the church until their teacher arrives.

Dismissal time for all of our 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Levels will be from inside of the church at 7:30 PM and parents should wait at the gathering area. All other graders will walk toward the gathering space of our church and meet their families there or outside at the parking lot. Please note that we will not allowed any child to exit from the educational wing door.

## **ATTENDANCE**

All children of the Parish who do not attend La Salle are invited to participate in our PREP from 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. Regular attendance is important at each level, since new material is introduced during each class. If a child is ill or unable to attend class, *an e-mail, or phone call (to the Director 610-856-5146)* stating the reason for the absence is appreciated. If the child's illness causes excessive absences, please notify the Director so that alternative lessons may be implemented.

## **HAND HELD DEVICES**

**NO hand held devices are permitted in the building during PREP session, and if the student brings these devices with them, teachers will collect them at the beginning of class.** This includes cell phones, mp3 players, iPod, or iPhone, etc.....

This is to ensure the integrity of the program, as well as, the privacy of all students. Students and parents may use our office phone at all times 610-856-5146.

## **PRAYERS**

Each student will receive a prayer sheet at the beginning of the year to ensure prayer continuity. Parents are the child's first and most consistent teacher. Therefore, the best way to ensure that children learn the required prayers is for the parent to pray with them daily. This will help with the memorization of prayers as well as cultivate a prayer life within the child and the family.

## **HOMEWORK**

Children are expected to spend a reasonable amount of time reviewing the material covered in class. Parents are asked to ensure that the children complete all tasks required of them.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Each student should come to class prepared with their textbooks. Pencils will be provided and book bags. *Sixth, seventh and eighth graders are to bring their Bibles to each class.*

## **RELIGIOUS CURRICULUM**

1<sup>ST</sup> LEVEL – God is Good: God made me and I am special

2<sup>nd</sup> LEVEL – God Cares for Us: He feeds us with the Bread of Life, himself.

3<sup>rd</sup> LEVEL – We Believe: The Catholic faith

4<sup>th</sup> LEVEL – God Guides Us: Ten Commandments and Beatitudes

5<sup>th</sup> LEVEL – We Worship: The Seven Sacraments

6<sup>th</sup> LEVEL – God Calls a People: Old and New Testament

7<sup>th</sup> LEVEL – Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life: The person of Jesus Christ

8<sup>th</sup> LEVEL – The Church, Then and Now: The Holy Spirit/Church History

## **SACRAMENTS**

First Penance – 3<sup>rd</sup> Level – Every year during Advent

First Holy Communion – 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Preparation – Every year in May

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be received in the 8<sup>th</sup> Level for all students – Every year in the Fall. Please see the Director for Dioceses Policy.

## **CANCELLATION/EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

Occasionally it becomes necessary to cancel classes due to the weather. In case of inclement weather, the following policy will be in effect:

- If Public Schools cancels or has an early dismissal, there will be no Religious Education classes that evening.
- Check your e-mail: we may email the lesson of the day for you to do with your children that evening.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Parents are invited and encouraged to assist at PREP. Volunteers are welcome in the roles of teachers, teacher aides, substitute teachers, hall monitors, and for special projects. All volunteers must have completed our List of Clearances in order to be eligible. Please call the Religious Education Office if you wish to help in any way.

## **HANDBOOK REVISIONS**

St. Benedict's PREP Office reserves the right to amend this Handbook for just cause. Revisions were last made on February 15, 2017.

*This program voluntarily complies with the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Non-custodial parents will be given access to unofficial copies of student records, and catechists will be available to discuss the student's progress **unless** a court order providing otherwise is filed with the Director.*

**Welcome to St. Benedict's PREP.**