



## Sacred Heart Religious Education 2020-21 Guidelines



### **Religious Education Program**

The purpose of this program is to provide teaching in the doctrines, traditions, and practices of our Catholic faith. We help our young people, along with their parents, to better understand their Catholic faith and encourage an active participation in their journey of their Catholic education.

**Parents have the first responsibility for the religious education of their children.** Parents are asked to volunteer to help with the program as a teacher or substitute teacher, and to work with their children to help them learn their prayers, take their children to weekly mass, and accompany them when they attend holiday masses and religious education functions.

### **COVID-19 Considerations**

We will be following the guidelines set forth by the Diocese, SD DoH and the CDC, including encouraging hygiene, social distancing and the wearing of a mask (face covering) where maintaining social distancing is not possible. Face masks will be provided in the RE and church lobbies for any student who doesn't have one with them upon arrival, please pick one up on your way to class. Hand sanitizer will be available in the classrooms and main areas, and all are encouraged to practice frequent hand washing and social distancing.

**Please do NOT send your children to RE if they are feeling under the weather or running a temperature!** We have two electronic thermometers for checking temperatures upon arrival or if there is a concern. Any student with a temperature over 99.9 will not be permitted to join class and/or will be released from class if they are already present, and parents will be expected to come and pick them up. Room 1 in the Religious Ed building has been designated as a Waiting/Wellness Room in the event that a student is running a temperature or requires a parent to pick them up for health reasons.

There will be NO in-person classes in the event that the Gettysburg school is closed due to a COVID-19 related issue. In that case, materials will be sent home for the younger grades to study on their own with a parent, and the older grades will continue to do their online classes, but group meetings will be suspended.

*If your child has tested positive for COVID-19, or if they have been tested and have not yet received their results, we ask that they do NOT participate in any in-person religious education activities until they have been cleared (tested negative).*

***If you are concerned about sending your child(ren) to Religious Education classes during a pandemic, please consider teaching them at home. We will provide you with the books and access to our online Religious Education portal if you would prefer to teach your children at home this school year.***

### **Attendance and Arrival Times**

Students in grades 1-4 will meet on Wednesday afternoon from 3:45-5:00 pm. All students should go directly to their assigned classes. To maintain order and safety, students should arrive no earlier than 3:30 pm, even on days when Gettysburg school lets out early. All students are expected to arrive on time, and not leave the building until class is dismissed. Students are not allowed to play outside the church or RE building before or after class.

Grades 6 through 9 have weekly classes online on Wednesdays from 7-8:15 pm, and will meet once a month with their group leaders to discuss the material they learned in the previous 3 weeks. Fall semester class dates are as follows: **September 23, October 16, November 18, and December 16**. Spring semester class dates will be posted in January.

Grades 1-4 meet weekly from 3:45-5 pm on Wednesday afternoons; grade 5 will meet weekly on Wednesday evenings from 7-8:15 pm. Students are expected to arrive on time with their facemasks, sanitize their hands at the building entrance and then proceed directly to their classrooms. For the online classes, students should log in on time and be sure to comment on their class group/thread so that the teacher knows they attended. Workbooks and/or online quizzes should be completed each week and brought in to the monthly meeting for review.

Any student arriving after class begins will be marked late for their attendance record. Chronic tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

Note: The Gettysburg school calendar has early release dates on some Wednesdays during the school year. Parents are expected to pick up their children after school on those days and deliver them to their class by 3:45 PM.

### **Absences**

If for any reason your student will be absent, please let us know by calling the Religious Ed office at 765-2359 or texting Roberta Dutenhoeffer at 769-1953. To ensure the safety of our students, attendance is taken at the beginning of class. If a student is not in attendance and we have not heard from you to let us know that he/she is not coming, we may text or call you to let you know that your child is not in class. Please indicate your preference on your student's information sheet, along with your cell phone number or the best number to call you on.

### **Communicating Cancellations and Changes**

If there is no school or school is dismissed early due to bad weather there will be no RE classes. Also, even if school was not dismissed, classes may be cancelled at the last minute if inclement weather causes poor visibility or other hazardous driving conditions. Please check the web site [www.getshc.org](http://www.getshc.org), our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/sacredhearted](https://www.facebook.com/sacredhearted)), the street display sign in front of church, and church bulletin for schedule changes and special events. To receive an automatic notification of class cancellations, please text **SACRED** to **97000** (this is a free service; your cell phone carrier's standard messaging rates may apply). Please like and follow us on Facebook for notifications of schedule changes, announcements and special events.

### **Online Portal**

We are providing a secure online portal for students to access their weekly religious education lessons and to communicate with their instructors and each other in a private education setting. Each student who is enrolled in our program will receive a unique username/password combination to access their home page on the portal. Usernames and passwords are to be kept private and not shared. The Sacred Heart Religious Education portal is to be used for religious education only, and students are asked to maintain a level of communication (content and language) on the portal that is commensurate with its purpose. Misuse of the portal will result in disciplinary action, including possible account termination.

### **Food and Snacks**

Students are permitted to bring a water bottle to class, and there are water cups available in the bathroom and in the Hall. Afternoon classes will be provided with hermetically sealed snacks. No other food is permitted during class without prior permission from the DRE.

## **Discipline**

Every person is to be treated with respect and kindness as made in the image and likeness of God. This is expected both in and out of the classroom. Since our catechists have a short period of time to teach the students, they should not be expected to spend a lot of time on discipline. Courtesy and respect for the teacher and fellow students is expected; behavior which disrupts a productive learning environment will be addressed as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Verbal correction by the teacher. This may include having the student stand up in class to read a passage from the Bible. Teacher may, at his/her discretion, hold some or all of the kids after class to complete a lesson if the class session is disrupted by one or more students.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Removal from class and sent to the office for the remainder of the class period. Parent(s) may be contacted at DRE's discretion.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Removal from class and parent contacted. The student will be allowed to return the following week, with a parent attending class with them.

If the problem persists, the student and parents will meet with Father Kopel to discuss disciplinary issues and a behavioral agreement will be signed before the student may return to the classroom.

## **Cell Phone and Electronics Policy**

Cell phones, tablets, smart watches and other electronic devices are NOT allowed in class. All devices are to be powered off and deposited in the electronics box before class and picked up after class. If a student violates the policy, the following steps will be taken:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Teacher will take it and the student will pick it up in the office after class.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: The student's phone will be held in the office for a parent to pick up.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Student's phone will be given to Father who will return it personally to you and your parent during a disciplinary meeting.

## **Mandatory Program**

The Diocese requires us to teach a two week curriculum (either *Circle of Grace* or *Made in His Image*) to each grade every year. These programs will be taught in person during the afternoon or evening classes in January/February. These programs reinforce the message that we are created by God with Love and that we should respect and love others and ourselves. The Circle of Grace lessons teach that a Circle of Grace surrounds us and that we work to allow only positive, healthy, safe and respectful people into our Circle of Grace. Made in His Image lessons seek to instill in the students a greater sense of God's love for them, and the inviolable dignity that each and every person enjoys since they are made in the image of God. Contact our offices to learn more about the content in these programs, or to opt your child out of participating.

## **Special Programs**

Special programs, including Altar server training, First Communion preparation and Confirmation classes are handled directly by Father. Program announcements are posted in the bulletin, and on the electronic sign and church website at [www.getshc.org](http://www.getshc.org).

*We look forward to another great year helping your child(ren) grow in their Catholic faith. Thank you for your help supporting a learning environment that is conducive to that goal.*