

Rosary Cathedral Parish

Religious Education & Sacrament Preparation Handbook

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Rosary Cathedral Parish

Our Mission: **To be the Body of Christ**

The center of our parish life is the Mass and the opportunity to receive the Eucharist to become more perfectly the Body of Christ. St. Paul tells us that we are the Body of Christ as the Church and that in our many talents and abilities we constitute the different parts of that body. As a rich community of faith, we continue Christ's ministry by representing him to the world in sharing the Gospel and serving others.

Our Vision: **To become a vibrant catholic parish forming missionary disciples**

A vibrant catholic parish is a parish that makes Christ's presence obvious to others by living the whole Gospel. It is a parish where people are challenged to love better and learn what it means to be a Christian. Missionary Discipleship is closely following Jesus and trying to conform your entire life according to Christ's teachings. This discipleship includes sharing your faith with others.

Our Strategies:

Discipleship - We recognize that there is more to our faith than just showing up. Discipleship emphasizes that the Christian walk is a lifelong journey of following Christ by continuous learning, growth in virtue, and reaching out to others.

Worship – Worshiping our Lord is the center of our parish life. Through the Sacraments and especially the Eucharist we are nourished by God's grace and sent out to help others.

Community – We strive to form a community that is in the Image and Likeness of God. Community done well both forms its members in Christian love and is an attractive example of the Gospel lived.

Compassion – Compassion is more than just a handout. We are called to recognize the dignity of every person, and to do our best to provide for their needs physically and spiritually.

Parents are the Primary Catechists

The Church teaches that the parents are the primary Catechists, or faith teachers, of their children. Everything we offer at Rosary Cathedral Parish is designed to be a supplement to this primary formation in the faith that happens at home. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, a summary of the Church's doctrines and beliefs, 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. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery—the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the ‘material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones.’ Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2223*)

“Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 2226*)

To Summarize

- “Parents have the first responsibility for educating their children
- The home should offer an “education in the virtues”
- “Parents have a grave responsibility” to be good examples
- Start as young as possible
- Family catechesis comes before and is more important than Parish Religious Education

Best Practices (Highly Recommended Ideas)

- Attend Mass Every Week and on Holy Days (attend week day Mass to commemorate special dates, birthdays, baptism dates, etc.)
- Pray with your children every day: teach them the prayers you know (pray from the heart out loud so your child can hear how you express yourself to God)
- We are never done discovering God. Parents should continue to learn about the faith themselves (consider ALPHA, Bible Studies, or the FORMED app parish# 8XNPNZ)
- When your children have screen time, direct them to faith-based programs (Go to FORMED.org or app and use the code 8XNPNZ for your free account)
- Discuss the faith at home (Read and discuss the upcoming Sunday readings as a family)

Journey of Faith Policies

“Journey of Faith” is the parish faith formation program for children from preschool ages (4 - 5 years old) to eighth grade or the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The following are the policies and expectations of the program (the signed expectations form at the end of this handbook is required for participation):

Registration: Please turn in the registration form on page 11 of this handbook and the handbook acknowledgement form on page 15.

Drop Off/Pick Up: Classes run Sunday Mornings from 9:00 am to 9:50 am. Please drop off your children from 8:50 – 9:00 am. Classrooms are not open prior to 8:50 am. Mass at Rosary Cathedral is at 10:00 am. We hope that the class time makes it convenient for you to attend Mass as a family. Since our catechists will also be attending Mass, children not picked up by 10:00 am will accompany a catechist and can be picked up at Mass. No children will be allowed to stay in the parish school after 10:00 am.

Attendance: Please inform your catechist if your children will miss a week of class at least a week ahead of time so class materials can be sent home. If your child is preparing for a sacrament (Baptism, First Communion, or Confirmation). Missing two class sessions in a semester without making up the work will lead to their reception of the sacrament being delayed.

Dress: Please bring your children ready to attend Mass. If you are attending Mass at another time during the weekend, ensure that your children are dressed appropriately for the educational environment.

Cost: The cost of Journey of Faith is subsidized by the generous offertory contributions of Rosary Cathedral Parishioners. Please consider registering as a parishioner and giving regularly to the parish. If you are a member of another parish, please consider a donation to help offset the cost of the program. The first copy of a text book is provided for free. There is a \$10 fee for the replacement of a book.

Behavior: We expect everyone involved in Journey of Faith to act in a respectful and appropriate manner that reflects the teachings of the Catholic Church, including students, parents, catechists, and parish staff. If students become disruptive during class time, the catechist, parish staff, and parents will discuss a plan of expectations for the child.

If you believe any adults involved in the program have violated this policy, please report them to the Parish Manager or Pastor/Rector by calling the parish at 419-244-9575

Safe Environment: The safety of your children is our highest priority. All staff and adult volunteers involved in Journey of Faith are required to complete a three-part safe environment

program that includes Safe Environment Training, Background Checks, and an agreement to the Diocesan Boundaries and Standards of Behavior Policy. For more information on the program or to report any suspected abuse go to <https://toledodiocese.org/page/protecting-youth-victim-assistance>

Children will have a class period which includes lessons on safe environment. Lessons are adapted to be age appropriate and cover themes like safely using the internet, how to say “no” to an adult who is acting inappropriately, how to report, safe and unsafe adults, and boundaries. You may choose to opt your children out of these lessons. Please see the opt-out form on page 14 of this handbook for more information

Weather: Class cancellations due to unsafe driving conditions will be announced by 7:00 am the morning of class. In the case of a Level 2 or 3 snow emergency in Lucas County as designated by the county Sheriff at 7:00 am, class will automatically be cancelled. Other situations will be considered on a case by case basis. Cancellations will be announced on the parish website at rosarycathedral.org, on parish social media @rosarycathedral on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and by email/text message to the contact information provided on your registration form.

Sacrament Preparation

Children who are preparing for the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation) are required to receive at least a school year or catechesis prior to the reception of the sacrament. This catechesis can take place in three contexts: Parish Religious Education, a Catholic School, or Homeschooling. When registering for Sacrament Preparation (see form at end of handbook), please specify which method of catechesis you will be employing (note that children that are homeschooled or attend a catholic school are welcome to additionally attend religious education classes but are not required to). Parents who choose to homeschool should specify the curriculum being used on their registration form (p.12)

Notes about Baptism: Children younger than the “age of reason” (generally Kindergarten and younger, although each child should be discerned individually) can be Baptized as an “infant” based on their parent’s profession of faith. Children who have reached the age of reason will be become a part of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults adapted for children. These children will be required to attend a year of class with their same age peers. At the end of this first year they will become Catechumens in a Rite of Acceptance. The following school year, they will attend special RCIA sessions that will prepare them to receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation at the Easter Vigil the following year. Applicable additional requirement as follows are also required.

In addition to the year of Catechesis the following are required:

1. Attendance at the Parish Sacrament Preparation Retreat or equivalent retreat.
2. A parent will attend a parent preparation session.
3. First Communion/Confirmation – Sacramental Confession (preparation for this sacrament is done during the first semester of Journey of Faith)
4. Baptism/Confirmation - A Godparent/Sponsor application completed and turned in (see the form at the end of the handbook)
5. Confirmation Only – selection of a Confirmation Name, performance of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, and a conference/interview with the Pastor/Rector or his delegate.
6. Mass attendance

Policy Statement on Gender-Related Matters

The Catholic Church has always believed that her first mission given her by Christ Jesus is the salvation of souls. The Church must be true to her own identity and mission. Thus, the teachings of the Catholic Church must permeate all aspects of her activities. As a result, the Catholic community has a responsibility to be a witness to truth, charity, and justice based on the Gospel; and must always strive to be respectful of persons and understanding of the struggles present within and among the people of God. It would be inconsistent with the Church's mission to teach, promote, or encourage anything that is contrary to the teachings she has received from God and which the Magisterium has clearly and consistently articulated. For this reason, the Church cannot, and may not, sponsor, endorse, facilitate, or host such organizations, events or activities that would promote such views, in any form or format whatsoever.

With specific regard to the human person, the Catholic Church has always and everywhere affirmed her belief that each and every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. As such, every person deserves respect, dignity, and freedom from discrimination. By remaining true to what Christ has taught concerning the human person, the Church encourages individuals to accept their own bodies and gender as they were created¹, and seeks to help all people to recognize that the current attempts in modern culture to redefine gender and social institutions, as well as alter the nature and purpose of human beings, are misguided and not in accord with the truth. Therefore, it would be morally unacceptable for the Catholic Church, including the Diocese of Toledo, its parishes, schools, or ecclesiastical organizations to provide accommodations based on anything which in itself is contradictory or antithetical to the teachings of Christ and his Church, including notions of gender and sexuality that are contrary to Catholic teachings. For a fuller catechetical treatment of this topic, see Catechesis Regarding Human Dignity and Gender-Related Matters in the Appendix.

In Catholic parishes, schools and ecclesiastical organizations of the Diocese of Toledo, all activities and ministries are to be rooted in, and consistent with, the principles of Catholic doctrine. Therefore, in every parish, school and institution, all paid employees and unpaid volunteers will:

1. Treat all persons with sensitivity, respect, and compassion.
2. On a case-by-case basis, consider in a compassionate way any specific request sensitive to the physical and psychological needs of a person. The basis of the consideration will be on the following questions:
 - i. What is the specific request of the adult, student and/or parent(s)/guardian?
 - ii. Is the request in keeping with the teaching of the Catholic Church?
 - iii. Is the parish, school or ecclesiastical organization reasonably able to provide for the request?

3. Require that names and pronouns be in accordance with the person's biological sex.
4. Maintain names in records according to the person's biological sex.
5. Confirm that uniforms and gender specific dress, bathrooms, locker rooms, showers, and sponsored activities will all be according to biological sex.
6. Require that participation on athletic teams and extra-curricular activities be according to biological sex.
7. Consult the Office of Marriage and Family Life with extenuating circumstances.

¹ Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia* 56.

Catechesis Regarding Human Dignity and Gender-Related Matters

The Catholic Church has always and everywhere affirmed her belief that each and every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. As such, every person deserves respect, dignity, and freedom from discrimination. Indeed, there is an inescapable duty to make ourselves the neighbor of all people, no matter who they are¹. Further, the Church is obligated to hand on to every generation all that she has received from Jesus Christ, her divine founder, especially as it relates to our understanding of the human person in these present times.

The witness of Sacred Scripture is clear: God created human beings male and female (Genesis 1:27). From the dawn of creation as depicted in the Book of Genesis to the closing pages of the Apocalypse, Scripture presents the human race as consisting of only two (2) sexes. Both sexes, male and female, are created in the image of God and are equal in dignity and destiny (Genesis 2:21-24). God created Adam and Eve out of love and for love. One's gender is therefore determined by one's biological sex.

The entirety of divinely inspired Scripture affirms the male and female forms of human nature *as reality*. They are not mere cultural phenomena or subjective constructs. Although wounded by the entrance of sin into human experience and its far-reaching effects on our bodily nature, man and woman continue to image God in both their uniqueness and complementarity. Scripture is clear on the necessity of respecting God's order and commands for human beings to experience the fullness of life he intends.

As articulated by Pope Francis, the clear and constant moral teachings of the Catholic Church have always envisioned a connection between our highest human happiness and our willingness to embrace the biological sex given us at birth². Our bodies teach us profound truths about ourselves and our purpose in life. Our bodies signify that we are called to and gifted for relationships that are complementary in nature, open to new life, and destined for eternal happiness and joy. Our bodies are God-given means of deepening our human generosity and communion with both God and each other.

Pope Saint John Paul II affirmed in his teaching known as the *Theology of the Body* that in our given biological complementarity, *as distinctly male and female*, God clearly intended us to live in loving communion with him and with each other. Through mutual self-giving and interdependence, he invites us to share in his own act of creation, as well as his own eternal happiness and joy. Therefore, our God-given maleness and femaleness clearly make visible our calling to love and co-create with God in bringing new life into the world. This is what Pope Saint John Paul II called the “sacramentality of the body.” Our bodies are “icons” that reveal the deepest essence of who we are in the moral, spiritual, emotional, and physical dimensions of life.

Catholic teachings envision biological sex as neither a politically defined nor socially constructed reality. It is an objective reality, a cornerstone of our createdness, and an invitation to enter joyfully and generously into what we believe to be the central mystery of the Christian faith, namely, that God is himself an eternal exchange of love emanating from the love shared between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit³.

The Catholic Church recognizes that there is much confusion regarding human sexuality and gender in today’s society. Knowing that this confusion touches the lives of many people very personally, the Catholic Church is committed to walking with each individual on the path towards a more integral understanding of their human dignity and their unique vocation in the Creator’s plan for salvation history.

¹ *Gaudium et Spes* 27.

² Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia* 285.

³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 221.

Journey of Faith Registration

Preschool – 8th Grade Religious Education

Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Cell Phone: _____ Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Emergency Contact Name & Phone: _____

Child 1: Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

My child has: Been Baptized? _____ Received First Communion? _____

Child 2: Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

My child has: Been Baptized? _____ Received First Communion? _____

Child 3: Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

My child has: Been Baptized? _____ Received First Communion? _____

(Please attach another form for additional children)

!– Include a signed Handbook Acknowledgement Page -!

Please provide any additional information that will be helpful for us to know about your children to serve them well (i.e. food allergies, learning difficulties, etc.):

We will use your email for regular communication and your cell phone number to announce class cancellations due to weather. Please specify if you wish to abstain from either form of communication

My children may attend religious education classes at Rosary Cathedral Parish

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Sacrament Preparation Registration

Family/Parents' Names: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Custodial Parent, if different from above: _____

Is the Mother Catholic? Y _____ N _____ Is the Father Catholic? Y _____ N _____

Is your child baptized? Y _____ N _____ Are you parish members? Y _____ N _____

Child's Name: _____ Birthdate: _____ Grade: _____

Circle the Sacrament(s) you would like your child to receive:

Baptism

Confession

First Communion

Confirmation

Location of Baptism and/or 1st Communion (if applicable): _____
(Please provide a copy of a **Baptismal Certificate** with this form)

My child will be receiving catechesis at: Journey of Faith, Religious Ed. _____

A Catholic School _____ Name of School _____

Homeschool _____ Name of Curriculum Used _____

I have received a copy of the Rosary Cathedral, Journey of Faith Handbook. I acknowledge that I have read and reviewed the Handbook. I understand the policies and procedures of the Handbook, and I agree to adhere to these policies and regulations. I further understand that Rosary Cathedral has the right to change, modify, and/or revise any of the policies set forth in this Handbook at any time.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

Godparent/Sponsor Application

Name: _____

Name of Candidate: _____

Phone: _____ Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Are you Catholic? Y _____ N _____

Do you attend Mass regularly? Y _____ N _____

Are you older than 16? Y _____ N _____

Are you able to receive sacraments in the Catholic Church? Y _____ N _____

If you are married, were you validly married in a Catholic Church? Y _____ N _____

Church of Baptism	Year
_____	_____

Church of First Communion and Confirmation if different	Year
_____	_____

!- A sponsor may not be the parent of the sponsee -!

Please provide a copy of a **Baptismal Certificate** with this form.

(Optional) Do you have any concerns about being a Godparent/Sponsor?

I attest that the information on this form is accurate,

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Opportunity to “opt your child out”

of the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program

Journey of Faith will present a sexual abuse prevention program, the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program as a part of one class session by the end of October. The creators of the *Protecting God’s Children*® program developed the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program. This program is provided to us by the Diocese of Toledo and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain a safe environment for children and to protect all children from sexual abuse.

The scheduled lesson is being offered to all school age students at Rosary Cathedral. As a parent, you have the right to choose whether your student participates. Go to <https://www.virtusonline.org/educators/Teaching-Boundaries-and-Safety-Guide-English.pdf> for an overview of the program so you’ll be aware of the nature of the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program. If you have questions about the program or the lesson, please contact Andrew Reinhart at 419-244-9575. If you determine that you DO NOT want your child to participate, please complete the “opt-out” form at the bottom of this page and return it to your child’s teacher no later than 9/20/19.

For more information on the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program, visit the VIRTUS Online™ website at www.virtus.org.

Opt-out form for use with the Touching Safety program:

Rosary Cathedral does not have my permission to present the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program, to my child whose name is

_____.

Parent’s name (printed):

Parent’s Signature:

Date:

Handbook Acknowledgement Page

I have received a copy of the Rosary Cathedral, Religious Education & Sacrament Preparation Handbook. I acknowledge that I have read and reviewed the Handbook. I understand the policies and procedures of the Handbook, and I agree to adhere to these policies and regulations. I further understand that Rosary Cathedral has the right to change, modify, and/or revise any of the policies set forth in this Handbook at any time.

Print Full Legal Name

Signature

Date