

**SACRED HEART CHURCH
RELIGIOUS FORMATION
PARENT HANDBOOK**

SACRED HEART CHURCH
21599 PARKE LANE
GROSSE ILE MI 48138
734-676-1378
sacredheartgi.org

Cheryl Reynolds, Director of Religious Formation:

cheryl@sacredheartgi.com

Daytime office hours: 676-1378, Ext. 206

During class times: 676-1378, Ext. 213

Pat O'Hara, Middle School Faith Formation &
Confirmation:

pohara@sacredheartgi.com

676-1378, Ext. 205

Sacred Heart Mass Times:

Saturday: 5:00 PM

Sunday: 8:30 AM & 11:00 AM

Summer Mass times

(Memorial Weekend through Labor Day):

Saturday: 5:00 PM

Sunday: 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM

Welcome to the Sacred Heart Religious Formation Program!

Arrival Times: The children should arrive no earlier than 15 minutes before class time.

Absenteeism: If your child is absent 3 or more times, the class sessions must be made up. Attendance is especially important for students who are preparing for a sacrament.

If your child cannot attend a session, please notify the Religious Formation Office during office hours at 676-1378, ext. 206 or ext. 213 during class times. For 7th and 8th grade, contact Pat O'Hara at 676-1378, ext. 205.

Weekly Mass Attendance: Students are expected to attend Mass each weekend. It is virtually impossible to expect a religious formation program to succeed if the central act of worship is ignored.

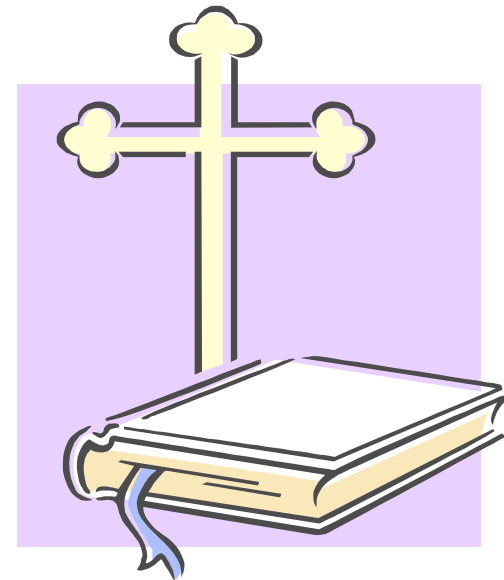
Early Dismissal: We discourage early dismissal. However, sometimes this is necessary, so please come directly to the Religious Formation Office to sign your child out. The catechists will not dismiss any child unless the director comes for the child who is leaving early.

Dismissal: Please note the ending times of the session. We ask that you please enter the building to pick up your child. The parking lot can be dangerous for children. Please advise us by phone if another person other than you will be picking up your child.

The role of parents as catechists

“Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child’s earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another 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.”

(CCC 226)



Sacrament of Confirmation: Parents are required to attend the Confirmation orientation meetings in 7th and 8th grade.

Students preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation are expected to have completed the following:

- Must have received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Eucharist, and Reconciliation
- Completed Religious Formation classes through 8th grade
- Attend weekly Mass
- Discern his/her own choice to be confirmed
- Attend all scheduled preparation sessions, including the Called To Serve workshop
- Participate in a ministry service program: 7th grade - three service experiences; 8th grade - 3 service experiences; summer prior to 9th grade - one service experience.
- Complete an interview in the fall of 9th grade with Fr. Mike.
- Attend the Confirmation retreat. The retreat is an essential component of the Confirmation process. All students preparing for the reception of the sacrament must attend the retreat. If you are unable to attend the retreat due to scheduling, please let Pat O'Hara know and we will attempt to find another retreat for your student to attend.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Pat O'Hara, Director of Youth Ministry/Confirmation & MS Faith Formation at 676-1378, ext. 205 or pohara@sacredheartgi.com.

All Monday and Wednesday students must enter and exit through the south door closest to the church. Access to the building on Religious Formation evenings is not available from the front circular drive for the safety of all the children. All parents are asked to park in the back church parking lot and enter the building to drop off and pick up their child. If your child is in grades 1st through 5th, you must come into the building to drop them off and to pick them up. This is for the safety of your child.

Parent Participation: Parents are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the Religious Formation program. We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have. You are encouraged to make appointments with your child's catechist to speak with him/her about your child's course of study or about opportunities to visit the classroom.

Cell Phones: Cell phones must be turned off and put away when entering the building. If the catechist needs to take the phone away from the student, it will be given to the director and a parent must pick it up.



IMPORTANT: If Grosse Ile Township schools are closed **due to adverse weather conditions,** Religious Formation classes will be cancelled. **Please be aware** that even though GI schools may have specific days off such as staff development days, end of semester, etc. **it does not necessarily mean Sacred Heart will cancel classes.** Sacred Heart will not have classes during the winter break, mid-winter break or spring break.

Behavioral Policy: In order to nurture good Christian behavior, we have adopted a “three-warning policy.” Warning one, the child will be asked politely to stop the inappropriate behavior. Warning two, if the child still continues this behavior, the teacher will again ask him or her to stop and correct whatever behavior needs correcting. Warning three, if the child still continues to cause problems and the behavior is not corrected, he or she will be taken directly to the Religious Formation Office. We will then listen to the student privately and the parents will be contacted to take the child home. These warnings allow for the student to correct their mistake on his or her own. It helps them to grow and develop a greater sense of responsibility.

Being Prepared for Class: Each child is expected to come to each class prepared with their textbook or bible. If a textbook and/or bible is lost, it will be replaced by the parent at full cost.

Volunteers: All volunteers who work with children in the Catholic Church in the United States must pass a criminal background check and must complete the “Protecting God’s Children” training. For more information, please contact one of the directors.

Home Study families: The families in our Home Study program are required to attend all home study meetings throughout the formation year. A lesson schedule is to be submitted for each group, or an individual schedule for those doing Home Study as an individual family. This is required by the Archdiocese of Detroit for all home study programs.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION

Sacrament of First Eucharist: Students preparing to receive First Eucharist are required to:

- Have completed first grade Religious Formation classes
- Attend weekly Mass
- Know the Our Father and Sign of the Cross
- Have no more than 3 excused absences from class
- Be prepared for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and celebrate the sacrament prior to reception of First Eucharist

Parents of students entering the First Eucharist program must:

- Provide a copy of your child’s baptismal certificate if he/she was not baptized at Sacred Heart
- Attend scheduled meetings and activities
- Complete the Reconciliation prep sessions and the First Eucharist prep sessions with their child
- Work on and complete the Eucharist Family Book at home with their child. This book will be provided by the Religious Formation program
- Attend the First Eucharist Rehearsal