



Christ the Servant Catholic Church
8700 Havens Drive, Woodridge, IL 60517
www.ctswoodridge.org

Handbook for Families with Children Enrolled in Religious Formation Classes 2017-2018

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Christ the Servant Parish is a welcoming Catholic faith community gathered together to gratefully share and live the Eucharist, the inspiration of the Gospel, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and to follow Christ's example in service of others.

RELIGIOUS FORMATION COMMISSION MISSION STATEMENT

We are dedicated to bringing God's Reign to this world by developing disciples of Jesus Christ who will continue to grow in their own faith as they spread the Good News to others through their words and example.

Religious Formation is a life-long process and your family is **PRIMARY!** Church writings call the family, "the domestic church." The parish experience, for children, is an extension of the religious formation that is received in their family. The Religious Formation program partners with families in the passing on of the Catholic faith. A formalized, systematic program of children's religious formation is available from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

It is important that children continue their formation each year so that they come to understand and experience their faith along each of their developmental levels. Our ability to learn, understand and practice our faith changes along our life journey. Having the faith and understanding of a second grader is not sufficient to face the challenges and opportunities of the world as a middle school student, teenager or an adult.

TUITION AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Those registering for religious formation classes must meet these criteria:

- The family must be **registered as parishioners** of Christ the Servant.
- All forms must be filled out completely.
 - Registration Form (both sides)
 - Medical Permission Form
 - "Sharing of Gifts" Form
- A copy of each child's **baptismal certificate** must be on file at the parish or included with your registration.
- Tuition or payment agreement is expected at time of registration.
 - Regular Tuition Fees (for the 2017-18 year):
 - One Child: \$180.00
 - Two Children: \$240.00
 - Three or more children: \$300.00

While paying tuition in full at the time of registration is preferred and helpful to the parish, we will accept a payment agreement. Payments may be made by credit card by clicking the "Donation" icon on the parish web-site: www.ctswoodridge.org. Then select the "Religious Formation" button.

A family will not be turned away because of an inability to pay for RF. If you have a need for tuition assistance, please contact the Religious Formation Director.

Families new to the RF program are asked to make an appointment for a meeting in the RF Office.

Enrollment for the upcoming school year begins in June. Registration forms are available in the Narthex and on the parish website. While best efforts are made to honor class placement requests, class sizes are limited and placement will be made on a first completed registration, first placed basis. Once classes begin, it will not be possible to change assigned class days or times.

SACRAMENTS

The Diocese of Joliet requires that children complete a minimum of two consecutive years of religious formation before receiving sacraments. In 2nd grade, our children normatively receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the late fall and the Sacrament of Eucharist in the spring. Children must have participated in RF in first and second grade.

Sacramental preparation includes parent & child retreats for 1st Reconciliation (in the Fall) and 1st Eucharist (typically in February.)

In 6th & 7th grades, our youth have the opportunity to begin preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation, which will be celebrated in the fall following 8th grade. These years are designed to be a time of inquiry, study, prayer, service and reflection. Confirmation is a sacrament which requires the student to make a personal choice to be Catholic. This begins their young adult journey of faith. All parish requirements must be completed and the students must have been enrolled in Religious Formation on a regular basis in previous years to be eligible to celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Weather and Other Emergency Closings

If a class is cancelled due to an emergency, a volunteer will attempt to call the number listed on the Registration Form for this purpose. You may also call 630-910-0770 x103.

Change of Information

Please notify the Religious Formation office if you should move or change any of your phone numbers, including your emergency contact number and email address.

Custody Issues

It is the responsibility of the parents to inform us of a change in status of the marital situation or a custodial situation. Normally, it is presumed that both parents have equal access to a child. If this is not the case, the custodial parent must inform the RF Director in writing, and with adequate documented evidence, that the other parent cannot have unlimited access to the child.

Newsletters, etc

Prior to the first class, a class schedule and class rosters will be mailed to all parents of registered students. Important information about the RF program may be mailed later in the year.

Newsletters may be sent home with the students. Please check your child's folder after each session for any such communications.

Parent Concerns

The Religious Formation office number is 630-910-0770 x103. If you have any questions or concerns, please call.

POLICIES

Abused and Neglected Children

CTS Religious Formation personnel are required by law to conform to the *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (P.A. 81-1007)*. Personnel working with your children have been provided with this information.

Attendance & Absences

Attendance is expected for the full class each session. Leaving early or arriving late is for emergency purposes only and must be cleared with the Religious Formation Office.

Each class builds upon the preceding class. If your child must be absent from class, please call 630-910-0770 x103. Class work must be made up.

Children will not be allowed to attend sessions other than their assigned session.

If a child misses more than three classes in grades K through 7 (or misses two classes in grade 8), the Religious Formation Director will discuss the student's future participation in the RF program with the student's parents/guardians.

Carpooling

A "Carpool Permission Form" needs to be completed before RF staff will allow your child to be picked up by anyone other than a parent or legal guardian.

Cell Phone Policy

If your child carries a cell phone, it must be turned off during class time and be kept in a jacket pocket or purse.

Conduct

Good conduct, cooperation, attention and courtesy are expected from all students. This also means showing respect for other participants, catechists and church property. Any student who continually fails to cooperate with the catechist and other students shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include:

- Sending the student to the RF Director's office
- Calling the student's parents for a conference with the RF Director
- Requiring parents to attend classes with the student until the student's behavior improves
- Expulsion from the program

Serious misconduct includes fighting, stealing, cheating, and possession/use of drugs, weapons and/or alcohol, gang involvement, vandalism, aggressive behavior, threats, and disrespect to staff.

Please remember that catechists are unpaid volunteers and are not specifically trained to handle classroom problems.

Food

The RF Commission has established a strict "No Food" policy for RF Sessions. There are some children with life-threatening allergies, so children will not be allowed to come into the building with food. Snacks in sealed packages may be allowed to be brought home and consumed only with parent permission.

Service Projects

Students in 6th & 7th grades have one less class session than the K through 5th grades. In lieu of the time spent in class, they are expected to complete two service projects during the year. To get credit for the projects, they need to complete a **Service Project Report Form** which includes a reflection on how their work puts their faith into action.

Special Needs

In the space provided on the registration form, indicate any special needs your child may have regarding health concerns, allergies, hearing or visual impairments, educational needs, etc. Please feel free to contact the RF Director to discuss your child's special needs.

Student Drop-off and Pick-up

In order to provide adequate supervision for the health and safety of each child, we ask the following:

- Do not drop off a student earlier than 10 minutes prior to the session
- Please be prompt in picking up your child at the conclusion of the class.
- Because of Parking Lot safety concerns we ask you not to come to the door to pick up your child(ren). There have been too many close calls as parents and children cross the car pick-up line. Please stay in your car and your child(ren) will be called out so that they can meet you curbside for loading by a catechist. If you must come to the door, your child will be dismissed **after** the car pick-up line is finished.
- If a child has not been picked up beyond 10 minutes after the class has ended, a staff member will call you. If you do not respond, your emergency contact will be called.
- No child will be allowed to walk or bike home alone unless the parent has provided written permission to the RF director.

Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to running a successful RF program. Please call the RF Director if you are able to give time to help during the year.

All catechists and others who work with children are required to attend a program called *Protecting God's Children* and fill out a background check release form.

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS

Religious Formation begins with the family. The parish experience, for children, is an extension of the religious formation that is received in the family. As such, parents should practice their faith with their families. Parents should:

- Worship with your children weekly at Mass.
- Help your children learn their prayers. Pray with your children.
- Make sure your children are prepared for class and that they bring their books and folders to class.
- Review what has been sent home from class and help children with any homework assignments.
- Make sure that religious formation classes are a priority for the whole family.
- Talk to your children about your own faith and values.
- Be examples of Christian service in the parish and the community.
- Be responsible stewards in sharing of time, gifts and talents.