

**PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**  
**RELIGIOUS FORMATION PROGRAM**

# Welcome to the Assumption Religious Formation Program

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## Our Mission Statement

The aim of the Assumption Religious Formation program is to assist our parish families in understanding, participating, and believing in Jesus and the Catholic Faith that Jesus gave to us.

## Our Admission Policy

All families must be registered in the Assumption parish in order to register for the Religious Education program. Our program encompasses levels K through 8, and Special Needs students. For new Registration, we ask to see the student's Baptismal certificate. If an older student is being registered and has celebrated other sacraments at another parish, we ask for proof of those sacraments by a letter of transfer from that parish. **All paper work must be completed before a student is placed in a class.** Students who have been adopted must have a copy of the finalized adoption papers on file with the Catechetical Leader (C/L).

Students, who are not registering for their current school grade, will be placed by the (C/L) in an appropriate level of study, depending on whether Sacraments have been celebrated, or grade levels have been skipped. Students, who were previously registered and skipped a few levels, will be placed in their proper current level, plus attend a separate catch-up class. Older students, who have not celebrated the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist will be placed in a Sacrament Preparation class, during their second year of study.

The parish expects tuition to be paid in full at registration. We can work with you if a budget plan is needed, but all bills must be paid by May of the school year. Our registration fees\* per student, per family, are billed by family name.

Additional fees are added for Sacrament level classes, and catch-up classes.

\*Fees are subject to change (2011)

## Arrival and Dismissal

All students should be dropped off and picked up by their parent/guardian. If another person has been chosen to drop off and pick up, a letter must be on file with the C/L stating their name, relationship and picture. This is for the safety of all students, especially those who may have custody issues or other family matters.

Orders of Protection must be submitted to the C/L and a current picture must accompany the order, with a notarized signature of the Parent/Guardian. If the Catechist or C/L sees the person referred to by the Order of Protection, the police will be called immediately. The Parent/Guardian who may be involved in an Order of Protection dispute may walk to the office and pick up the student, but should then exit the building. All students will be walked outside to the parking lot for dismissal by the Catechist. All students are to be picked up in the designated area, on the East side of the Parish Center/school building. The Crown Acres Road entrance should not be used. No unauthorized persons will be allowed in the classroom unless they have been previously authorized by the C/L. Any visitors to the building should report directly to the R.F. office or designated waiting area.

### **Attendance, Lateness, Early Dismissal, Cancellation**

Students are expected to attend class on a weekly basis. If a student is going to be absent, a call should be made on or before the day of absence. If a student is frequently absent, a parent is expected to complete all work at home. No more than 3 absences per year are acceptable. If there is a medical problem, please call the C/L with an explanation.

Lateness is to be avoided, except emergencies. If lateness becomes a problem, the parent will be called.

Early dismissal should be avoided, unless an emergency arises. Both lateness and/or early dismissal disrupt the Catechist and the class. Your student may miss the opening announcements, part of the lesson, and/or handing out of important materials that should be brought home.

The process of catechesis is a cooperative effort of the Parent/Guardian, Pastor, Catechist, the C/L and the entire parish community. We encourage parents to be in communication with the child's Catechist. The R.F. office will communicate with Parent/Guardian by mail or sending material home with the students.

The Diocese requires that students attend 24 hours of class per year (minimum scheduling).

Class cancellations will be announced on TV News 12, and Radio WALK 97.5fm. Days that are pre-scheduled as no class, will be listed on the Religious Formation calendar, [www.abvmcentereach.com](http://www.abvmcentereach.com). We follow the schedule of Middle Country schools for scheduled days of class and closures. Please use your discretion if a snow day occurs on a weekend. Please follow the suggestions for class cancellations above.

## **Home Teaching**

If a parent desires to teach their own child at home, it is permissible if parish requirements are followed. Home Groups are not permitted. All parents are their child/ren's first teachers, and as such Religious Formation should begin at home before your child enters school. To qualify for home teaching, parents must attend a monthly class led by the C/L. An age appropriate test will be sent home periodically to be completed by each home taught student. Sacrament level classes are in the parish, not at home. The National Directory for Catechesis states that "all parents/guardians have an obligation to involve their children in the life and mission of the church. Since their children are being initiated into the life of the Church, which is fundamentally realized in the local parish, parents who provide catechesis for their children in their homes should participate fully in the life of their parish. They should celebrate the Sunday Eucharist in the parish, involve themselves in its charitable works, and attend appropriate training and formation sessions the parish or diocese provides." (NDC#3 pp.259/260)

## **Homework**

Homework is not required for all grade levels. This does not mean that homework can never be suggested or required by an individual Catechist. For example, specific grade levels, in order to complete requirements for reception of a Sacrament, will be expected to do homework or other requirements.

Parents are responsible for teaching their child/ren the required prayers, which should be done at home.

## **Conduct and Discipline Policy**

We expect courtesy and respect from all, and at all times. At no time is physical contact to be used as a form of discipline by anyone. Inappropriate conduct should not be tolerated by Catechist or student. Verbal or physical bullying will not be tolerated.

In the event of student disruption, the Catechist will first speak to the student privately, but in a public area e.g., the hallway. In the event of a second problem, the Catechist will call the parent and calmly explain the situation and ask for the parent's assistance. A call will also be made to the grade level coordinator and the C/L, for their information. Any further disruptions should be handled by the C/L.

If the C/L feels that the misconduct is serious, the parent will be called immediately to pick up his or her child. The C/L may determine that it is necessary to remove a

student from the program entirely. The final decision must be approved by the Pastor. Student discipline records will be kept confidential.

## **Electronic Devices/Toys**

We have a policy stating that all electronic devices should be left at home, so as not to be a distraction during class. Catechists have been instructed to take any item and place it on their desk and return it at the end of class. If a student uses an electronic instrument, the child will be corrected and the parent informed. If the child continues to disregard the policy, the child will be removed from class. Parents are asked not to call or text their child while they are in our buildings. If a parent needs to reach their child, please call the office and we will relay the message. 631-588-6408.

## **Substance Abuse**

Substance abuse is defined as the possession of, use of, selling or distributing any unauthorized, illegal drug, chemical, alcohol, or tobacco-like substance, which can be introduced into the body through ingestion, inhalation, or injection. Any student found in possession of an illegal or unauthorized substance on parish property or at parish sponsored events will be immediately suspended from the program. A conference with the student, parent, the C/L and the Pastor is mandatory for re-admittance into the program. Any student selling or distributing will be turned over to the police.

## **Dress Code**

Appropriate clothing must be worn at all times. Students will be reminded of the following guidelines once. If the student continues to disobey the rule, the student and parent/guardian will meet with the C/L. Students attending mass or a parish celebration should be dressed appropriately.

- No clothing may be worn with suggestive or questionable language or drawings.
- No bare midriffs or any shirt/top that exposes cleavage.
- No sports jerseys with see through mesh unless a T-shirt is worn underneath.
- No sagging pants that expose undergarments.
- No pajamas, bedroom slippers, shower shoes or flip-flops, which may cause tripping. No Heelies. (Diocesan guidelines)

- Hats, hoods, coats, should be removed indoors, either in the parish center or the church.

## **Bathroom Facilities**

Parents are asked to see that their child/ren use the facilities at home or just before class. If your child has a physical condition that might require multiple trips to the facilities, please notify the C/L or Catechist. A notation will be made on the attendance sheet. Catechists may not refuse a student use of the facilities.

## **Snacks/Food in Classroom**

Because many students have food allergies, we ask that no snacks be brought into the class. With limited class time, snacking isn't necessary. Exception will be made for a small Christmas party. Please give your child/ren a small snack to eat before class. Parents are asked to check with the Catechist before sending snacks into the classroom. This will avoid the problem of allergic students who are unable to eat or possibly be in the room with the offending food product.

## **Medical Conditions & Accidents**

Parents/Guardian, are asked to inform us of any medical conditions your child/ren may have, such as allergies, asthma, auditory or visual impairment, seizures, etc. The Catechists will be informed and all information will be kept confidential. We are not legally allowed to administer any medications. Parent/Guardian will be called immediately, if a situation arises. If the Parent/Guardian cannot be reached, and the C/L feels it is an emergency, an ambulance will be called, and the C/L will accompany the student to the hospital until the Parent/Guardian arrives.

A parish incident form will be completed by the Catechist and the C/L.

An exception has to be made to administer an EPI Pen. The parent must provide the C/L with a "Food Allergy Action Plan" authorizing the C/L or the Catechist to administer the EPI Pen. A photo of the student must be attached to the "Food Allergy Action Plan". All EPI Pen administrators must be trained in accordance with law.

The Parent/Guardian will be called immediately to pick up their child and see to further medical treatment.

The same policy applies if a student has an accident in the building. The parent will be called. If the event is minor, e.g., a small bump (ice) or small cut (a band-aide), it will be taken care of by the C/L or office staff.

## **Permission Slips/Forms**

Sometimes events warrant a form to be filled out for permission to attend an event off parish property e.g. the Confirmation Retreat day. All forms must be returned to the R.F. office promptly. Students will not be permitted to attend the event if all paperwork is not completed. Sacraments require information forms to be completed promptly as do registration requirement information. Photographs/Videos require separate permissions from each family in the class, if a Catechist wishes to take pictures/videos. If a Catechist requests that a Parent/Guardian provide a picture for a class project, it is at the discretion of that Parent/Guardian.

The Pastor and/or C/L Faith Formation program reserves the right to amend the Parent Handbook for just cause. Parents will be notified if changes are made.

Abbreviations used in the program: R.F.- Religious Formation, C/L-Catechetical Leader-director of program, M/H-Main Hall (the lower level of the Parish Center), C/H-Church Hall (the lower level of the Church), S/R-Staff Room, Lib.-Library (lower level of the parish center at the South end of the building) Lv.-level (the grade of the student), Rm.-classroom number,

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