

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Religious Education
Parent Handbook
2011-2012**



Welcome to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Religious Education Program. This handbook was designed to give parents and guardians basic information about our program. If at any time you have a question or concern, please contact the Director of Religious Education, Sr. Ellen Licavoli, IHM at 734.847.1725 ext. 21.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are the faithful Catholic family of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, a diverse and growing Christian community, empowered by the Holy Spirit. We share God's Word through joyful worship, lifelong learning, compassionate service and responsible stewardship. We strive to live the Gospel message.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Sunday	5:45 – 7:15 PM	Grades 1 – 8 and Pre-School
Monday	6:30 – 8:00 PM	Grades 1 – 8 and Pre-School
Tuesday	5:00 – 6:30 PM	Grades 1 – 8 and Pre-School
Tuesday	7:00 – 9:00 PM	Confirmation

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF

Religious Education Office 734.847.1725
Sr. Ellen Licavoli, IHM - Director of Religious Education (DRE) Ext. #21, srellen@mountcarmeltemperance.org
Kelly Schmidt - Confirmation & Youth Ministry Ext. #22 kelly@mountcarmeltemperance.org

REGISTRATION

Registration for classes may be done on-line. Just go to our web-site at www.mountcarmeltemperance.org "Religious Education Registration". Classes are filled on a first come basis. New families will need to submit a Certificate of Baptism for each child registering dated within the last 6 months. This will need to be submitted before October 31st.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:

One child	\$ 85.00
Two children	\$120.00
Three or more children	\$140.00
Lost book fee	\$ 20.00
First Reconciliation & First Communion Retreat Fee	\$ 10.00
Confirmation Retreat Fee	\$ 10.00

Confirmation students will be charged \$50 (plus the \$10 retreat fee) if they are your only child in the program.

No one will be denied religious education for financial reasons! Payments can be arranged with the Director of Religious Education.

NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Religious Education admits students of any race, color or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition we will not discriminate in administration of educational policies, fees, fee waivers or educational programs. Our Lady of Mount Carmel will provide quality religious education for all students.

ARRIVAL

It is important that students arrive on time for religious education class. **Please do not drop students off any earlier than 10 minutes prior to class start time.** Please make sure your student is able to get into the building before you leave. If the weather is questionable, please contact our office or website before dropping off your child (See "Class Cancellations", p. 3)

ATTENDANCE

You have asked us to help you with the religious education of your child. Their attendance is of utmost importance for their ability to grasp this very important material.

When a student is going to miss a class, the parent should contact the Religious Education Office. If you know of the absence in advance, please send a note with them prior to the week they will miss. If the child is ill or it is a last minute absence, call the office at 734.847.1725 before class begins. *Letting us know that the child will be absent and why will help us to keep them up to date with the rest of their class.*

If too many absences occur (more than 5), it may mean that your child will have to repeat the year in order to get a full understanding of the material. (This does not apply to preschool.) We will take into consideration the reasons for the absences and what has been done to catch up with missed lessons.

Confirmation students are expected to be at every class. Contact Kelly Schmidt (734.847.1725 ex.22) if there is a situation, which prevents the student from being here.

If a child misses a class for whatever reason, he/she is expected to make up the work (except for preschool.)

CLASS CANCELLATIONS

If Bedford schools are canceled, it DOES NOT mean that we will also be canceled. Decisions for class cancellations will be determined by 4:00. In the event of inclement weather or emergencies, families should listen to local TV stations or **check our website at www.mountcarmeltemperance.org**.

If you are in question of a cancellation please call the Religious Ed phone 734.847.1725. ***In the event that we have not cancelled class and you feel that the roads are not safe, please keep your child home.*** (Please call the religious education office and let us know they are not coming.)

The stations that are called are:

TV STATIONS

Channel 24
Channel 13
Channel 11

CHILD ABUSE

It is the policy of the Archdiocese of Detroit that all employees and volunteers, report all forms of abuse (i.e. physical, mental, psychological, emotional, etc.) against any minor, even if the person is no longer a minor, perpetrated by any person. **If a child discloses any information that leads us to believe the child is unsafe we will report it to the proper authorities.**

The Archdiocese of Detroit also requires that any employee or volunteer who may have contact with children must submit to a Criminal History Background Check before beginning their volunteer assignment and also attend a "Protecting God's Children Workshop" within 6 months of assignment.

COMMUNICATION/CHILD'S FOLDER

We are here to serve the Religious Education needs of our children, youth and adults. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to share them with your child's Catechist or call the Religious Ed office at 734.847.1725. Weekly electronic communication will be sent to your home through your email address. This mail will keep you up-to-date on all religious education happenings. In addition, each teacher may send work home with your child. Please check your child's folder regularly for homework or notes from their teacher.

CURRICULUM

All classes (pre-school – grade 8) will use Sadlier “We Believe” texts. This program utilizes a spiral learning method. Each year students grow in their knowledge and understanding of the four pillars (Creed, Sacraments, Morality and Christian Prayer) of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* because the timeless truths of our faith are taught every year on every grade level. Sadlier has a wonderful website with helpful material for your child’s grade, games for students and information for parents. Please check it out at www.WeBelieveWeb.com.

We are using consumable textbooks, which means the students can write in them and keep at the end of the year. The book is the property of the student and he/she is responsible for it. If a child forgets his/her book, he/she can use the classroom copy that week but may not write in it. If you have lost your book, please contact the religious education office immediately. A \$20 replacement fee will be charged and you will be given a new book.

DISCIPLINE

Please go over the discipline policy with your child. If their behavior disrupts the learning process for him or others, the steps listed below will be followed to ensure that class participation may continue.

1. When a student is sent to the office for breaking a rule or for any other conduct unbecoming a Christian student, the person on staff will speak to the student and retain the student for at least 10 minutes during class time in the office.
2. If the student is sent to the office a second time for breaking one of the rules, a parent will be notified.
3. If the student is sent to the office a third time for breaking one of the rules, a parent will be asked to come in for a conference with the DRE and/or Catechist.
4. If the student is sent to the office a fourth time for breaking one of the rules, measures will be taken which were decided upon by the DRE, catechist and parent per their previous discussion.

If a child is threatened by another student or threatens others or brings weapons to class, the catechist will call down to the office immediately. Authorities may be called, depending on the circumstances.

DISMISSAL

After Class Time

Please pick your child up promptly after class.

We are very concerned for their safety.

Pre-School and Grades 1 and 2

Parents of pre-school children and Grades 1 and 2 are asked to park in front of the Parish Office, and enter there, taking their child to their classroom. After class, your child’s teacher will escort the children to the parish office lobby to be picked up there.

Please note that the children in pre-school are dismissed 15 minutes earlier than the rest of the students. If you have a child in an older grade, please arrange to meet them in the parish office lobby when they are dismissed from class. **Please note that they are dismissed at the usual time and are expected to stay in their class until the teacher dismisses the class.**

Grades 3-8

Students in Grades 3-8 are dropped off and picked up in the Parish Hall/Gym area of the parking lot. They will enter through the Parish Social Hall door and leave through the Gym door (see Parking Map). There is no parking in this area. Parents will enter the parish grounds through Donna Drive, then drive around the perimeter of the parking area to the Parish Hall/Gym area, and drop off and pick up their child there. Upon dismissal, your child will be waiting for you at the sidewalk near the Parish Hall entrance. Just drive up to pick up your child when it is your turn. If a parents needs to come into the building, please park in the parish office parking lot area.

Again, if a parent has a pre-schooler or child in Grades 1 and 2, the parent **will park** in the Parish Office parking lot area.

Anyone picking up children other than their own must bring a note from that student’s parents, and turn it into the office.

We ask that parents instruct their children in proper behavior when leaving the building.

Please inform anyone who is picking up your child of our policies.

Early Pickup

If your child needs to leave early, please send a note with them. When you arrive, stop in the office and we will call up to their classroom and have them sent down.

DRESS CODE

The dress code for class is casual. Jeans and T-shirts are fine. Please dress according to the weather. Please no short shorts or skirts. Students who come in inappropriate clothing, including foul language or clothing with inappropriate pictures will be sent home. No hats are to be worn in the building.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency procedures and evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. Fire drills and tornado drills will be conducted once a year to acquaint the children with the procedures.

HOMEWORK/FAMILY PAGE

Some teachers do assign homework. Please ask your child about what they are learning and if they have any homework. You are encouraged to supervise the completion of homework. Additionally, a family page is sent home each week for parents to review with their child. Please take the time to reinforce your child's lesson by reviewing the family page with them.

MEDICATION

The religious education office will not dispense any medication without the parent's written permission and a signed note by the child's doctor. Contact the Religious Ed Office for the appropriate forms and procedures.

Students may not have medication in their possession during religious education classes *except* for metered dose asthma inhalers, epinephrine auto-injector (epi-pen) or epinephrine inhaler. If your child needs to carry an asthma inhaler or epi-pen, please contact the religious education office prior to the beginning of classes. Written approval from their physician and a parent is required for the student to possess and use these devices. We will also need to have a written emergency care plan.

PARENT'S ROLE IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

"Parents are the first and foremost catechist of their children. They catechize informally but powerfully by example and instructions. They communicate values and attitudes by showing love for Christ and his Church and for each other, by reverently receiving the Eucharist and living in its spirit, by fostering justice and love in all their relationships. Their active involvement in the parish, their readiness to seek opportunities to serve others and their practice of frequent prayer, all make meaningful their profession of belief. Parents nurture faith in their children by showing them the richness and beauty of lived faith."

(Sharing the Light of Faith—National catechetical Directory for the United States)

You must be your child's primary example in matters of faith. Church authorities have helped us by developing positive laws called Precepts of the Church to ensure our growth in our love of God and neighbor. We are obliged as Catholics to meet these minimum requirements of our faith (CCC 2041-2043.) As parents, we need to pass these precepts on to our children. This can make a big difference in their spiritual journey.

- 1) Attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from those works and activities, which would keep us from going to Mass on these days.
- 2) Confess our sins at least once a year.
- 3) Receive Holy Communion at least during the Easter Season. (If you have committed any mortal sins you should not receive Holy Communion until you go to confession.)
- 4) Observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
- 5) Provide for the needs of the Church according to your ability.

Prayer is also a tremendous gift from God that will aid our children's spiritual journey. God hears and answers our prayers. When we are in a tough situation we often pray the prayers we memorized as children. We need to pass on these traditional prayers so our children have them to fall back on as well. At the end of this handbook there is a list of prayers that students should know at each grade level. **Parents are responsible for helping their children memorize these prayers.** Catechists will periodically test the children on their prayers. Please work with them on memorizing their prayers.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND TESTS

Students will be tested periodically. Test scores along with the Catechists observation of classroom participation will be used to assess the student's understanding of the material being presented. A student that does not grasp the material may be retained at the same grade for the following year. (Typically this will only happen if the student misses too many classes and does not make an effort to make up the missed assignments.)

Progress reports will be sent home two times per year. They will include your child's attendance record and comments from the Catechist. Please read the progress report and contact the religious education office if you have any questions or concerns.

RECONCILIATION

Students are provided the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent. (These may be rescheduled or cancelled if classes are cancelled due to weather.)

RIGHTS OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, we will provide the non-custodial parent with unofficial copies of records if requested. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the Religious Ed Office with an official copy of the court order.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

First Confession and First Communion

Children who have *completed* first grade religious education (or equivalency) will be catechized for the celebration and reception of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist upon entering the second grade. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is received prior to the reception of First Eucharist.

Age appropriate instruction is provided to lead children to an understanding of the Church's teachings about the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. This includes classroom instruction, retreats and parental involvement. The Pastor determines whether a child is sufficiently prepared and has the right intention for the reception of First Eucharist based on information given from the Catechist and the religious education staff.

The parish also offers instruction to parents who have children preparing for the reception of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. These parent meetings are provided to assist you in fulfilling your primary role for nurturing the faith of your child. It is very important that you attend. There will be 2 meetings, one before each sacrament.

Verification of the child's baptism must be received prior to receiving First Eucharist. If your child was baptized in a Christian denomination other than Catholic, they must make a profession of faith prior to receiving First Eucharist.

Confirmation

Upon entering the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, youth are expected to have completed the following:

1. Reception of the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist.
2. Religious Education through eighth grade (or equivalency.)
3. To be a registered member of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel or at an area Parish.

Teens entering the Confirmation Program will be expected to:

1. Discern this is his/her own choice to be confirmed.
2. Attend an orientation meeting with the parent.
3. Attend weekly Mass.
4. Attend ALL scheduled preparation programs, including retreats.
5. Participate in a ministry program. During this time the candidate will be actively involved in various parish and community activities learning about ministry to others first hand. If the ministry is not

completed the candidate could be asked to delay reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Pastor will determine whether the student is sufficiently prepared and has the right intention for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation based on information given from the Catechist and the religious education staff.

More information will be given to the Confirmation candidates at the orientation session.

T.A.G. (Teens Associated with God)

Our youth group nights or T.A.G. nights, offer a variety of settings for high school kids. These range from service ministry (in and out of the parish), catechists/religious education, social and worship. We are a Catholic Christian program open to anyone in high school or just out of high school whose Christian values are important to them and they are living them out. Anyone Catholic or non-Catholic is welcome on any Tuesday night 7:00 – 9:00 pm or to any T.A.G. sponsored activity or program. Our T.A.G. program is led and planned by both teens and adults who have been to Christian leadership training and are open to anyone's ideas and suggestions. Confirmation students also have the opportunity to participate in T.A.G. during the 9th Grade.

SPECIAL NEEDS

"All baptized persons with disabilities have a right to adequate catechesis and deserve the means to develop a relationship with God." (National Directory for Catechesis) This statement includes all learning disabilities.

If there is any information you can provide to help us better work with your child, please call the religious education office. Together we can create a plan for their faith formation including their strengths, difficulties and any accommodations that they may need.

VISITORS

All parents and visitors must check in with the office upon entering the building. Parents and guardians are always welcome to attend a class. Most catechists would like to have prior notification.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Our program is only possible through the help of many volunteers. Here are the areas for you to consider helping out:

- Catechists (teachers): Introduce students to Jesus and our wonderful Catholic Tradition by allowing them to witness your love for Christ and the teachings of the Church. Training is available through the Archdiocese of Detroit. Classes are offered in Monroe County on a regular basis.
- Substitute Catechist: lesson plans will be provided
- Parent Aide: Help the primary catechist
- Hall Monitors: Monitor activity in the hall during class time.
- Office Help: Occasional projects
- Snacks for your child's class: please let their Catechist know you are interested
- Parking Lot Monitors: Assist children in the parking lot to maintain a safe environment

If you are interested in any of these volunteer positions, please contact the religious education office.

Please be aware that all volunteers who have contact with children must:

- Submit to a Criminal History Background Check before beginning their volunteer assignment
- Attend a "Protecting God's Children Workshop within 6 months of assignment
- Adhere to the practices stated in the Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Review the Safe Environments Policy set by the Archdiocese of Detroit
- Sign and return the "Confirmation of Receipt" in the "You're Invited: Help us Build Safe Environments" Brochure prior to beginning their volunteer assignment

Our Lady of Mt Carmel Classroom Rules

1. Please make every effort to be in class on time. If there is difficulty with getting to class on time, speak to the catechist or a person on staff.
2. If you are absent, you are responsible for making up missed work.
3. No candy, gum or drinks are to be brought to class. Hats are NOT worn in the building.
4. Proper manners and Christian behavior are expected at all times. Inappropriate behavior will not be allowed. There will be no improper language or comments.
5. Students will not talk when the catechist is talking.
6. Students will respect the property of others. Students will treat each other with respect.
7. Good grooming is encouraged but should not be done in class.
8. No toys or other items of entertainment are to be brought to class without permission of the catechist. Additionally, use of cell phone, texting or other forms of communication are not allowed during class time. If they are, they will be confiscated and returned at the end of class.
9. If a child must leave a class early, the parent or guardian must send in a note with the child at the beginning of class. The adult must come to the office. We will then call the child to come to the office. This is a safety precaution implemented to protect your child and us.
10. There will be no use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs. No weapons will be allowed on the premises.

Prayers

First Grade: Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be

Second Grade: All prayers above PLUS Grace Before Meals, Act of Contrition and Guardian Angel Prayer

Third and Fourth Grades: All prayers above PLUS Morning Prayer

Fifth and Sixth Grades: All prayers above PLUS The Apostle's Creed

Seventh Grade: All prayers above plus The Nicene Creed

Eighth Grade: All prayers above PLUS Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Our Father: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Grace before Meals: Bless us, O Lord, and these, your gifts, which we are about to receive, from your goodness, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Act of Contrition: O my God, I am heartily sorry for all my sins. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace, never to sin again. Amen.

Guardian Angel Prayer: Angel of God, my guardian dear to whom God's love commits me here. Ever this day be at my side, to light and guard and rule and guide. Amen.

Morning Prayer: Dear God, as I begin this day keep me in Your love and care. Help me to live as Your child today. Bless me, my family, and my friends in all we do. Keep us all close to You. Amen.

Apostle's Creed: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

Nicene Creed: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in being with the Father. Through Him all things were made. For us men and our salvation He came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit, He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered, died, and was buried. On the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the scriptures: He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son, He is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit: Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created and You shall renew the face of the earth. Oh God, who does instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Holy Spirit, a love and relish of what is right and just, and a constant enjoyment of His comforts. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

CIRCLE OF GRACE

Keeping our Children Safe—A Program of the Archdiocese of Detroit and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Dear Our Lady of Mount Carmel Religious Education Parents,

Out of concern for all God's people and in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, we have implemented a program, which began two years ago (2009/2010) for the safe environment education of children and young people, supported and mandated by the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Dioceses/eparchies will establish 'safe environment' programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.

Article 12—Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

This program is called ***Circle of Grace***. It is meant to be supplemented and integrated into the excellent programs and curricula for the formation of children and young people in our religious education program. ***Circle of Grace*** aims to equip our children and young people by arming them with essential knowledge and skills grounded in the richness of our faith. This program helps children and young people to understand their own (and other's) dignity in mind, body, and spirit.

What is a Circle of Grace?

The Catholic Church teaches that God has created each of us as unique and special. Genesis 1:27 tells us that we are created "male and female in God's image" and that God saw this as "very good." In that goodness, we are meant to respect ourselves and everyone else as persons created and loved by God. Adults assist children and young people to recognize God's love by helping them to understand that each of us lives and moves in a circle of grace.

Why is it important to help our children understand the Circle of Grace?

God intends our relationships in life to be experiences of divine love. Respectful, nurturing, loving relationships increase our understanding of our own value and help us to love others. It is never too early to help children and young people understand how very special they are and how relationships in life are called to be sacred. Understanding this can help them to protect the special person that they are and to be respectful of others. Adults, especially

parents, as they strive to provide a safe and protective environment, hold the responsibility to help children and young people understand and respect their own dignity and that of others. A truly safe and protective environment is one where children and young people recognize when they are safe or unsafe, and know how to bring their concerns, fears and uncertainties to the trusted adults in their lives.

How is the Circle of Grace Program different from other protection programs?

According to research, one in four girls and four in seven boys will be sexually abused by age eighteen. Many protection programs focus on "stranger danger"; however, up to ninety percent (90%) of the time the perpetrator of abuse is known to the child or young person such as a relative or family friend. ***Circle of Grace*** goes beyond just protection by helping children and young people understand the sacredness of who they are and how to seek help through their relationships with trusted adults.

The ***Circle of Grace*** lesson will be taught to all students during the month of October. Please feel free to contact the Religious Education Office if you have questions or want more information about ***Circle of Grace***.

God's peace,

Sr. Ellen Licavoli, IHM
Director of Religious Education

Rev. Stephen Rooney, Pastor
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish