

# Religious Education Policies

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## **901 Religious Education Mission Statement**

St. Paul Parish Religious Education Program is available to assist parents in presenting the Catholic-Christian faith to children. The Religious Education Program helps students to grow not only in what their faith involves but also in the practice and celebration of their faith along with their relationship with a loving God.

In our teaching, we are cognizant of the developmental nature of faith, and the developmental level of those whom we serve. The Parish Religious Education Program is the forum for faith formation of children and adolescents. It provides catechesis for children in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Classes meet in the St. Paul Education Center.

Faith Formation is critical to the children (students) of St. Paul Parish. Admission to the Religious Education Program is open to all children. Participants are required to attend classes one year prior to receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

Confirmation students are prepared to celebrate this sacrament by attending formal catechesis provided the Life Teen Program on Sunday evenings. Attendance in Religious Education classes one year prior to participation in the Life Teen Program for Confirmation preparation is required. Students are eligible to celebrate Confirmation during their Freshman year in high school. Therefore, those who wish to prepare for this sacrament must be in class during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year.

Sacramental reception may be delayed for a particular candidate when deemed appropriate by the Pastor due to circumstances unique to the candidate.

A copy of the baptismal certificate for the child is required during the registration process.

## **902 Religious Education Program Policies**

It is the policy of St. Paul Parish that Religious Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or national origin. St. Paul Religious Education accommodates those with physical or mental disabilities. Everyone is welcome.

A Parent Policy Handbook will be made available to at least one parent, (guardian,) during registration. This handbook provides specific information relating to admission, class offerings, fees, loss of textbooks, behavioral/discipline procedure policy, arrival procedure, tardiness policy, traffic dismissal, attendance/absence policy, sacramental policy, weather closing policy, custody policy, abuse procedure, search and seizure policy, health and safety policy, communicable diseases policy, accident/illness procedure, inappropriate language discipline procedure, and

food/treat policy. It also includes the process by which parents may appeal a decision concerning behavior involves their child(ren.)

### **903 Religious Education Instructors**

Given the importance of the youth, it is our belief that the youth be provided the best faith formation experience. This requires that the Saint Paul Director of Religious Education be properly trained and dedicated to providing the best faith formation experience. It is the policy of Saint Paul that the Director of Religious Education be trained to the standards required by the Diocese of Gary.

Saint Paul relies on a volunteer staff and recognizes the instructional talent found within St. Paul Parish. Given the commitment of St. Paul Parish to provide the best faith formation training, it is the policy of St. Paul Parish that all Religious Education instructors, instructional aides, volunteers, and any other staff member whose duties may be associated with the youth of the parish be VIRTUS trained in accordance with Diocesan policy. Appropriate training must be completed and certification obtained prior to any child related event.

### **904 Religious Education Texts**

As Religious Education text change, it is the policy of Saint Paul Parish to utilize an approved Religious Education text. Texts will be chosen from the list of texts approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Religious Education texts utilized by Saint Paul Parish will be reviewed by the Director of Religious Education and the Consultative Education Advisory Board every three (3) years. Recommendations for a change in in text books should be submitted to the Pastor for approval after input is the solicited from the Education Commission.

### **905 Home Schooling Policy**

The Saint Paul Religious Education Department is dedicated to helping those parents that choose to home school the religious education of their children. As an alternative to classroom faith formation method, Saint Paul Parish recognizes that some families may have special circumstances that override the classroom faith formation method.

It is the policy of Saint Paul Parish that all home schooling requests be made in writing to the Director of Religious Education. The Director of Religious Education will review the request and meet with the Pastor or his designee with the recommendation. The Pastor or his designee will conduct thorough examination of facts and determine the suitability of the request. The Pastor

or his designee will provide his decision to the Director of Religious Education who will contact the requestor within five (5) days of the request. Saint Paul Parish Religious Education will provide resources, guidance, and support to make this experience beneficial for everyone. Specific policies relating to Home Study may be found in the Home School Policy Handbook.

### **906 Consultative Education Advisory Board**

St. Paul Religious Education has adopted the use of a Consultative Education Advisory Board. This board, (or commission,) is to be comprised of two (2) parents of students enrolled in the St. Paul Religious Education program; one (1) mature adolescent (16- 19 years of age); one (1) elementary catechist; one (1) intermediate catechist; and two (2) parishioners not related to a student enrolled in the program.

The Consultative Advisory Board members will be chosen and submitted by the Director of Religious Education for the Pastor's approval.

Members will be appointed to serve on the Consultative Education Advisory Board for three (3) years and they may serve consecutive terms.

The Consultative Education Advisory Board is used for the purposes of disciplinary procedures that fall within the scope of the Religious Education program and to review Religious Education policy changes recommended by the Director of Religious Education prior to their promulgation. The Consultative Education Advisory Board will meet at the request of the Pastor or his designee.

Specific rules regarding disciplinary rules, the appellate process, and formal review may be found in the Consultative Education Advisory Board Handbook.