

St Henry Church
Religious Education Program
Parent Handbook
2023-2024

Beth Holzapfel, Director of Religious Education

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Dear Parents,

We welcome you to our St Henry Church Religious Education Program. We look forward to another year. Our hope is that each child will have transforming experiences of God's love at home and in class.

Children learn to pray by seeing others pray, whether those are prayers of petition or thanksgiving. Children learn the meaning of love of neighbor by hearing people speak of others with respect and compassion and by watching people show mercy and generosity to those in need. Therefore, in very real ways you catechize your child each day in each experience.

It is a sacred responsibility and a great act of love and grace from God that enables you to live out your Baptismal commitment, as well as accept being the primary religious educator and role model for your children. We ask that you strive to attend weekly Mass together as a family.

We live in a busy and complicated world today and it is easy sometimes to put aside our responsibility as Catholic Christians to attend Mass on a weekly basis. Please remember that although our Religious Education Program is an important part of your child's education, as parents, you are the primary educators of your children in all things but most importantly their faith formation.

We hope to help you prepare your children for a way of life that will be permanent, rooted, and everlasting.

In Christ,

Father Mark Beckman
Pastor

Beth Holzapfel
Director of Religious Education

Religious Education Mission Statement

St Henry Church, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, will strive to bring parents and children of our parish into a deep, personal communion with Christ and His Church. The Mission of our Religious Education Program is to provide quality Catholic Christian education for our students. Instruction in doctrine, tradition, ritual, morals, and family values prepares our students to become active, informed, and devout members of the Body of Christ. It is our mission to assist in preparing your child for a life in Christ and instill a desire to serve others in accordance with the Gospel message.

Parent/ Catechist Partnership

“Parents are the principal and first educators of their children” (CCC1653). The home is where the child should first experience the Catholic faith. Parents can assist their child during our Religious Education Program in many ways such as reviewing lessons, asking questions, being interested in and aware of what is happening in the classroom, making sure any work sent home from class is completed and returned the next class; volunteering in the classroom and for any special events; and by attending any Parent Meetings if their child is preparing to receive a sacrament. Also, parent attendance with your child at liturgies or other parish activities will be a source of unspoken encouragement to both your children and your child’s teacher. We welcome and encourage parent involvement in every way.

*Students must register to attend the Religious Education program. They must attend the class for which they are registered.

*Families must register as members of our parish for children to attend classes.

<https://www.sthenry.org/registration>

**St. Henry Church Religious Education
2023-2024 Class Calendar**

September 10	First Day of Class
September 17	Catechetical Sunday during 9am mass
September 24	
October 1	
October 8	
October 15	No Class -Fall Break
October 22	
October 23	1st Penance Parent Meeting 7pm Fellowship Hall
October 29	
November 5	
November 12	
November 13	1 st Penance at 5:30
November 19	
November 26	No Class-Thanksgiving
December 3	
December 10	
December 17	
December 24	No Class-Christmas Break
December 31	No Class-Christmas Break
January 7	Classes resume
January 14	
January 21	
January 22	Confirmation Parent Meeting 7pm Fellowship Hall
January 28	
February 4	
February 11	
February 18	No Class- Winter Break
February 25	
March 3	
March 10	No Class- Spring Break
March 17	
March 18	1 st Communion Parent Meeting 7pm
March 24	
March 31	No Class- Easter

April 7
April 14 Confirmation at 3:30pm
April 21
April 28 First Communion 2pm
May 5 Last Class

Sacrament Dates and Meetings

First Penance Parent Meeting
Monday, October 23
7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

First Penance
Monday, November 13
5:30 p.m., St. Henry Church

Confirmation Retreat
Sunday, January 21 21 11-4

Confirmation Parent Meeting
Monday, January 22
7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Confirmation
Sunday, April 14 at 3:30
Sagrado Corazon

First Communion Parent Meeting
Monday, March 18
7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

First Communion
Sunday, April 28
2:00 p.m., St. Henry Church

Religious Education Staff

Beth Holzapfel

Director of Religious Education

Grade

Location

Catechist

3-year-olds (9:00)

Room 200

Amanda Lowery

4-year-olds and

Room 201

Jennifer Hannah, Shannon Parker,

Kate Schneider

5-year-olds (9:00)

Room 201

Kindergarten 10:10-10:55

Room 203

Kim Scott
Adair Scott

Grade 1

Room 205

First Year Prep Class for First Penance
and First Communion

Pradeep Pallan

Grade 2

Room 204

Patti Brown

First Penance and First Communion

Shannon St Marie

Grade 3

Room 208

Tracey Doering
Allison Hanlon

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Catechist</u>
Grade 4	Room 209	Kathryn Zeuthen
Grade 5	Room 210	Dan McGugin
Grade 6	Room 211	Monica Balbarada Tim Meyer
Grade 7	Room 212	Carole Donnelly
First Year Prep Class for Confirmation		Lauren Donnelly
Grade 8 Confirmation	Room 217	Thomas Langdon

Religious Education Guidelines

Attendance

Families are required to be registered parishioners of Saint Henry Parish to attend Religious Education classes.

Try early in the year to introduce yourself to your child's catechist and Beth Holzapfel. Attendance is taken each week and parents may be contacted if a child misses two consecutive classes. **If your child must be absent, please contact your child's teacher or the Director of Religious Education, reled@sthenry.org . Be sure your child arrives on time and strive for weekly attendance.**

During sacrament years, it is vital to have regular attendance. Excessive absenteeism may result in your child being unable to receive the sacrament.

Attendance at weekly mass and Holy Days of Obligation is also strongly encouraged.

Drop off/Pick up– Classroom Maps are Posted

A parent (Adult) should accompany their 9am Student to the classroom and remain in the hallway until their catechist arrives for class. **Students are not to be in the classroom until the catechist has arrived.** Some classes (Preschool) ask a parent to sign a child in and out.

Students in classes 10:10-10:55 are free to walk to their classroom with or without a parent at the parents' discretion. They are also free to meet parents after class at an arranged location.

Any student not picked up by 10:00 or 10:55 will be taken to the Director's desk ([located in the school hallway](#)) to wait for their parents.

If you are running late, please call or text Beth Holzapfel's cell at 615-948-0764.

Classroom Visitors

Children not registered in the program should not accompany your child to class. We do not have materials available for "drop-in" visitors, and in case of emergency we would not have important information pertaining to the visiting child.

Communication

Most if not all communication from my office will be done via email. If you are not currently getting any email from reled@sthenry.org please contact me and let me know. I also use the Constant Contact program as does the church to send out information that needs to be shared with all families i.e., newsletters. If you have opted out of receiving these emails your family might miss out on important information.

Cancellations

In the event of severe weather, classes will be cancelled if city officials are advising people to stay home. Please don't leave your child unattended on days with inclement weather until you are sure the teacher is able to arrive. The DRE will attempt to let everyone know of a cancellation via email.

Confidential Information

All information relative to a student's classroom performance or of a personal nature is confidential and will be treated as such by the catechists, office staff, and Parish staff.

New Students

Students transferring from another parish's Religious Education Program may be required to provide a letter of attendance from that Director of Religious Education. If it is a sacrament year, then a letter of attendance is required.

Special Needs

Some children have medical conditions, learning or behavioral concerns. It is our goal to provide a learning environment for all children. Please let us know if your child has any special needs. You may indicate this information on the registration forms so we can provide appropriate care. Parents may be required to attend classes with their child.

Sacrament Preparation

Reconciliation (Confession) and First Eucharist (Communion) are celebrated in 2nd grade.

Confirmation is celebrated in the 8th grade. Students are required to attend class sessions and complete all class assignments in preparation for the sacrament.

For those who will be preparing to receive the Sacraments of First Penance, First Communion,

or Confirmation it is necessary that the Religious Education Office have a copy of their Baptismal Certificate by **October 1, 2023**.

Attendance for one year in the Religious Education Program is required prior to receiving the sacraments.

Safety Program

Our Safe at Last program, which is mandated by the diocese, will be offered for K—6th grades. This program is set up to help students know what to do in unsafe situations and to tell their parents, teachers, coach, or guidance counselor if someone is harassing them or they feel unsafe.

The dates will be shared with families prior to the class.

Safety Guidelines

Fire drills: All classrooms have a Fire Evacuation Plan posted by the door. In case of a fire, teachers will escort the students outside bringing the attendance list so we can make sure everyone is out of the building.

Lock Down Procedure- Teachers have been made aware of our procedure if ever the need arises for us to lock down our building. All classrooms will be locked, and windows covered. Children will remain quietly in their classrooms. Each classroom has a phone, and I can broadcast messages throughout the building. Entrances/Exits will be locked, and the church will be made aware of our situation.

Improved security- I always have my cell phone with me for emergencies. This year I will also have a walkie talkie to stay in communication with the ushers in the church. The entrance from the church will remain open all morning.

The school also has cameras throughout the building recording activity

Classroom Behavior

A reminder concerning basic expectations for classroom behavior.

The Golden Rule: Love thy neighbor as thyself (What does this mean?)

1. Follow directions and classroom rules.
2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
3. No teasing, bullying or inappropriate language.
4. Show proper respect toward teachers, their fellow classmates, and school property.

To facilitate spiritual growth, all the children deserve the most positive classroom climate possible. If a student chooses to disregard one of the listed expectations, or a classroom rule, he or she will receive the following consequences:

First Time: Receive a reminder of rule(s)

Second Time: A warning from the catechist

Third Time: He or she is sent to the director's desk. The incident will be recorded and shared with parents. Student will return to class after apologizing to the person he or she offended.

Fourth Time: Parents will attend the next class with the child and thereafter if necessary.

Severe Disruption: Immediate call for parents to pick up child and discuss the situation.

Altar Serving

Students in grades 5-8 are allowed to be altar servers for the masses here at St Henry. Students must first attend a training session. Please contact Amy DeBusk at 615-352-2259 to sign up. In 8th grade being an altar server earns service hours for Confirmation.

Children's Music Ministry

Any child in grades 4-8 can participate in the choir. Rehearsals are weekly on Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. and the choir sings at one Mass per month rotating between the 5:30 p.m., 9 a.m., 11 a.m. If your child would like to participate, please email Kathy Quarto at kquarto@sthenry.org for additional information or to submit emergency contact info.

St Henry School Extracurricular Activities

Any student enrolled in St Henry Church Religious Education and with good attendance can participate in St Henry School Athletics. One other policy is that they are not on a school team for the same sport for which they are registered to play with SHS. Follow this link to find out more about their sports program. <https://sthenryschool.org/athletics/>

Textbooks

Preschool classes use the “Allelu” series from Our Sunday Visitor.

Kindergarten uses the Gospel Weeklies series called “Promise”

Grades 2 uses “We Believe”, a religious education series published by Sadlier

Grades 1,3, 4, 5, and 6 use the Gospel Weeklies series.

Grade 7 and Grade 8 use Decision Point by Dynamic Catholic

Prayers every child should know by grade

Preschool– Sign of the Cross, I am grateful for... prayers.

Kindergarten– Sign of the Cross, Simple prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and petition

First Grade–Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, A simple prayer before meals.

Second Grade– Act of Contrition, Morning Offering Prayer, Prayer responses at Mass

Third Grade– Apostles Creed, Simple Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love, and How to pray the Rosary with introduction to the Joyful Mysteries

Fourth Grade– Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, Hail Holy Queen, Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Fifth Grade– Nicene Creed, Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Sixth Grade– The Angelus and Memorare

Seventh Grade– Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), Divine Praises, Regina Coeli (for the Easter Season)

Eighth– Twelfth Grade– Maintain all previous prayers.

*Note it is not the sole responsibility of the parish to teach these prayers but should be a joint responsibility shared by the parents and teachers.

Catholic Concepts and Themes

The Diocese of Nashville provides a Common Curriculum guide that includes key themes and concepts that should be learned at each grade level. The textbooks that we provide go along with Common Core. If you would like more details, please go to the Sunday Faith Formation section of the church website. There you will find grade level expectations.

<https://www.sthenry.org/sunday-religious-education/>