

ST. DENIS

Mission Statement

"The Religious Education Program of St. Denis seeks to assist families in passing on our faith by providing children, youth, and adults with the knowledge, experiences and skills needed to become true and faithful disciples of Jesus. We enthusiastically support the ministries, which will help to build up our community and proclaim the Kingdom of God."



HANDBOOK

St. Denis Religious Education
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Dear Parents:

Welcome to the St. Denis Faith Formation program. This handbook is designed to inform you and your child of the procedures and expectations here at St. Denis Parish. We also wish to inform you about the curriculum for each grade and the **importance of attending each year**. All of our students are expected to observe and respect the procedures set forth in this handbook.

The Second Vatican Council states that **“Parents are the first and primary teachers of their children in the way of faith.”** Teachings are based on the authority of the Catholic Church and the materials, books, videos, activities, etc. are approved and recommended by the diocese of Worcester. **The faith formation program of St. Denis seeks to assist families in passing on our Catholic faith by providing children, youth and adults with the knowledge, experience and skills needed to become true and faithful disciples of Jesus.** We believe that a partnership between our pastor, coordinator, teachers, parents, students and the community will create the team effort that is so important to achieve this goal. A grade syllabus will be provided to assist with this endeavor.

As members of the parish, it is vital for all of our parishioners to become involved through the many activities, programs, ministries and volunteer opportunities available. It is a way to share more fully in the life of your church while setting a very positive example for your child. With everyone’s participation, the parish grows spiritually and a powerful sense of community is cultivated.

A lot of time and effort goes into forming the classes for our students. **We will work to accommodate the requests of families who register on time first. Those whose registrations arrive after the deadline will be placed into classes where there is room.** If your schedule cannot be accommodated, you do have the option to homeschool your student in a **non-sacrament year**. You would need to work with our Home School coordinator and check in each month until your student is able to attend their class. Please keep in mind, however, that a lot of how and what the students learn is through group discussions and projects. This is an important part of community building.

The parent/student agreement form MUST be completed, signed and returned by the deadline. There are THREE areas on this form that we need you to sign off on. A meeting for all grades is held when classes resume and important information will be given. In a non-sacrament year there is a one hour meeting for parents to attend usually during the second semester. If you have any further questions or concerns you are welcome to call me in my office at (508) 476-2002 or send me an e-mail at [**karchambault@saintdenischurch.com**](mailto:karchambault@saintdenischurch.com).

We look forward to sharing this experience with your family. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Kathy Archambault
Coordinator of Religious Education

Religious Education

Catholic Religious Education is progressive and every year is important. If a year is missed, remedial work will need to be done to catch students up. This may cause a delay in receiving Sacraments. If your family is ever experiencing some difficulty with class attendance, please contact the rectory so that we can work together.

Our teachers are volunteering their time to teach the children of our parish about their faith. They all have other commitments and most have families of their own. Parents, you are the primary teachers of your children in the way of faith and you promised at the baptism of your child to be the best of teachers. We are here to assist you, but it is your responsibility to have the contact information for your child's teacher in the event that you need to reach them. You need to keep yourself informed about scheduling, and anything else that is happening within the religious education program for your child's grade.

Classes are held in the rectory, or Church basement depending on the grade your child is in. Some classes meet weekly while others meet every other week. This schedule can vary due to holidays, school vacations, or teacher availability. Be sure to **save** and **check** your schedule for the correct week of your child's class and read the Church bulletin each week at Mass for updates. Notices and updates are also posted on our web-site and notices for certain events are sent home with students. **It is not up to the teachers to make sure you are aware of all events!** They will help with reminders, but it is your responsibility to keep updated through the resources made available to you. If your child misses a class, the teacher should be contacted to find out what information may have been missed.

Group classes have also become a very important part of your student's Religious Education experience. These classes have become one of the events that the students remember most so please be sure they attend and sign in to every group class. If they are missed, a make-up assignment will be given for them to complete, but it can't compare to being there and experiencing it for themselves.

The St. Denis web site is a valuable resource with many materials that can be downloaded. Check this weekly at: www.saintdenischurch.com for all Parish information.

"Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work." ~Vince Lombardi ~

That is also what makes our Religious Education program work and we need our parents and students to make the commitment to be involved in their parish community.

All Grades – Weekly worship at Mass and participation in the Sacraments is the most important expression of our faith. As members of the Catholic Church, it is essential for students and their families to attend Mass weekly and on Holy days throughout the entire year. When Mass is missed, we miss the prayers of faith, God's word as told in Sacred Scripture and we miss receiving Holy Communion. The Eucharist is a privilege and is essential nourishment for our body and soul. Worshipping at Mass each week will help the entire family deepen their relationship with God.

The Eucharist also strengthens us individually because in it Jesus himself, the Word made flesh, forgives our venial sins and gives us the strength to resist mortal sin. It is also the very channel of eternal life: Jesus himself.

In John's gospel, Jesus summarized the reasons for receiving Communion when he said: **"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food, and my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever"** (John 6:53–58).

Reconciliation is a wonderful sacrament given to us by Jesus and when we celebrate it, we are given the chance to re-establish and deepen our relationship with God. This is a sacrament that should be celebrated whenever it is needed, not only when it appears on the Religious Education schedule.

COURSE DESCRIPTION BY GRADE

Grades 1 – 6: We use the “Blest Are We” series of books to provide students and their families with a thorough understanding of our Catholic faith. Every year there is a spiral thematic curriculum that is based on the four pillars of the catechism of the Catholic Church. Each year as the children’s understanding and faith grow, topics are revisited and new elements are added to continue their faith development. With this approach, children learn all aspects of our Catholic faith at an age-appropriate level, therefore, every year is important. ****Skipping grades will require remedial instruction and could delay the reception of sacraments.***

Pre-K & Kindergarten – Classes are optional although the children really enjoy learning about their faith through art, song and storytelling. Classes are held in the new addition classroom in the Church Hall and run weekly starting at 10:10 and ending at 11:20. This time affords parents the opportunity to worship at the 10:15 Mass. Check the schedule provided and the weekly Church bulletin for updates. **All** children must be accompanied by an adult during drop off and pick up. (Approx. 22 classes, plus special events)

PRIMARY

First Grade – this is ***not*** an optional program as preparations begin for Second Grade when they will receive First Reconciliation and First Eucharist. Students will be introduced to some basic teachings that the Catholic Church teaches about the Blessed Trinity. They will put together a booklet titled “This Is My Church” (both home and class work) as they learn about their church through field trips. They will focus on the prayers they need to know by Second Grade and will learn the “Lord’s Prayer” and “Hail Mary” to music where they will have the opportunity to sing it for the parish during their Christmas show, Grade Mass and May Procession. ***Practicing prayers at home is essential since our time together is limited.*** Classes are held in the rectory basement starting at 8:30 and ending at 10:00. Check your schedule for the correct week and time of class and the Church bulletin and web-site weekly for updates. ****Remedial instruction is necessary in 2nd Grade for any student who missed our 1st Grade program.*** (Approx. 14 classes, special events, field trips, group class, community service, parent meeting & grade Mass)

Second Grade – this year your second grader will be introduced to some of the basic teachings about the sacramental life of the Catholic Church as they discover what it means to belong to the Christian community. This is a ***very important*** and wonderful year for the children as they concentrate on the preparation for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation and of First Eucharist. ***Special projects are also a part of this program such as the Time Capsules and Prayer Partners. You will receive all of this information, but downloadable forms are on the web-site should you misplace anything.*** Attendance and parental involvement is imperative and ***missed classes or meetings will need to be made up.*** (See the schedule for make-up dates.) **Three parent meetings** are a part of this program and **must** be attended by at least one parent or guardian. A three-hour retreat will take place before the First Holy Communion celebrations. Children, accompanied by at least ***one*** parent or guardian **must** attend the rehearsal on the evening prior to the First Eucharist ceremony. Information will be given during the year to keep you updated. Classes are held in the Church basement and run every other week from 8:30 to 10:00. Many classes involve the students getting together as a whole group so please try to have them at each class. Check your schedule, church bulletin and web-site weekly for the correct time and date of all events. (Approx. 14 classes, plus special events, group classes, community service & grade Masses)

Third Grade – the focus of Grade 3 is the Church and the kind of community the Church is called to be. The mission, message, prayer, and actions of God’s special family will be explored. They will learn about the Saints and participate in our Saints project. **(Downloadable “Saints” form on the web-site if yours is misplaced)** Students will form a procession of Saints for their family and friends into the church before their 3rd Grade Mass. This occurs on the Sunday closest to “All Saints Day. Prayers should continue to be practiced at home and classes are held in the Church basement every other week from 8:30 to 10:00. Be sure to check your schedule for the correct time of your child’s class. Also check the Church bulletin and web-site weekly for updates. (Approx. 14 classes, special events, group class, community service, parent meeting and grade Mass.)

INTERMEDIATE

Fourth Grade – will learn about the Church’s rich tradition of moral example and teaching that will provide motivation and direction for your child’s moral growth. Students explore the Sacrament of Reconciliation in greater depth focusing on forgiveness. They begin to learn the devotion of the rosary. Prayers should continue to be practiced at home. Classes are held in the Church basement and run every other week from 8:30 to 10:00. **Some of these classes will involve the students getting together as an entire group, so it is important that they attend all classes.** Check schedule for the date and time of class as well as the Church bulletin and web-site weekly for updates. (Approx. 14 classes, special events, group class, parent meeting, community service and grade Mass.)

Fifth Grade – the students will study the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. Your child will learn that the Church is the sacrament or sign of Christ in the world. They will come to appreciate the difference Jesus makes in our lives. Students will continue to learn about the Rosary and will be introduced to the Way of the Cross and how we can apply those reflections to our lives today. Prayers should continue to be practiced at home. Classes are held in the Church basement and run every other week from 8:30 to 10:00. Check your schedule for the correct date and time of class as well as the Church bulletin and web-site weekly for updates. (Approx. 14 classes, special events, group class, community service, parent meeting and grade Mass.)

YOUNG ADOLESCENT

Sixth Grade – the focus is on the Bible and students will be presented with their own Bibles at Mass in September. A workshop will help them navigate through the Bible as they study the Old and New Testaments and explore the Gospels. Classes are held in the Church basement on Sunday morning. **(Students should bring their bibles with them to every class.) Check with your teacher, the Church bulletin, and web-site weekly for updates to schedule.** Classes run in two, approximately six-week segments with a break in between. A Grade Mass, group class, special events, parent meeting and community service are also a part of their program.

GROUP CLASSES: We hold at least one group classes with grades 1 – 6 and they are a very powerful way to reach students with music, videos and activities pertaining to a pertinent theme. A lot of planning goes into each group class. Students are expected to be there and will need to complete a make-up assignment if they miss. These assignments cannot possibly capture the spirit of these classes, so every attempt should be made to get students there.

7TH & 8TH GRADE PROGRAM

<i>Plan To Attend</i>					
SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.
1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13

Our 7th and 8th Grade Faith Formation classes meet on Sunday evening from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. The students will meet together as one large group in the church hall. Each class will begin with prayer followed by an introduction to that evening’s main theme. Students will view theme-related educational videos and engage in smaller break-out sessions to discuss the topic under the guidance of a facilitator. Activities related to the theme will be explained by the facilitator to further reinforce the lesson. Each group will collaborate to prepare a brief oral presentation describing what was learned during the break-out session and deliver the presentation to the class as a whole. Additional discussions will follow, and the class will conclude with prayer and fellowship.

BENEFITS OF THIS PROGRAM FORMAT

- **Delivery of standardized lessons in a large group setting**
- **Opportunities to hear inspiring faith-sharing stories**
- **Use of eclectic teaching methods**
- **Engaging, interactive activities in a safe environment**
- **Improved retention of class material**
- **Increased involvement in the St. Denis Church community**
- **Better transition into the High School Faith Formation Program**

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

(9th, 10th or 11th Grades)

Students are preparing to make the decision to live as a disciple of Christ and become an adult member in the Catholic Church. As it is with anything important that we do, a commitment is necessary for this to happen. Classes, weekly Mass attendance and service within the parish community are all a part of this program.

Two years (Approximately 10 classes total per year) needs to be completed in either 9th, 10th or 11th grade. Since there are so few classes, if more than two are missed in one year, that year is incomplete. Students do have up to three years to complete the required two. Student's, NOT parents need to take responsibility for this commitment by following the schedule, contacting the teachers, and completing any missed assignments.

High School – students all meet as a group on Sunday evenings in the church hall from 6:00 – 8:00 pm once...sometimes twice a month. Since the number of classes has been cut, occasionally a class may need to be extended to 8:30.

Students are required to complete two years of the high school program according to the Diocesan framework. ***Students who attend all classes in the 9th & 10th grades, worship weekly at Mass and participate in service to the parish community have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the fall of their Junior year.*** If they miss any of those components, they have the opportunity to continue in the 11th grade and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the fall of their Senior year. (12th grade)

A Discernment Orientation is included in January for High School Year II since students are preparing to make a mature, faithful decision about the Sacrament of Confirmation. **At least one parent is expected to attend this two hour Discernment Orientation with their student.**

Discernment Interview – students who are actively participating in their Catholic faith and who have completed the material in their Confirmation Discernment packets will receive a date and time for their Discernment interview. They will meet at the rectory with the Discernment team and once it's been determined that they are fulfilling the necessary requirements, and desire to live as a disciple of Christ as well as a full, active, adult member of the Catholic Church, they will enter our one day, six hour Immediate Confirmation Prep Program that spring.

Immediate Confirmation Prep (ICP) – students who have completed the Religious Education program through two years of high school and who have met with the Discernment Team and who have been deemed ready, will enter the ICP program. This program consists of a special Mass that they will participate in and one 6 hour class. Once that is completed, students will be ready for the fall Confirmation retreat and Confirmation Mass.

C.L.I.M.B.

Continue Living In My Beliefs

Once students have received the Sacrament of Confirmation, they are considered adult members of the Catholic Church. Our Young Adult Program (C.L.I.M.B.) will give them the information about the various ministries in the church and ways for them to become involved. They will have the opportunity to share their ideas as valued, adult members of their faith community. Fun activities, movies, guest speakers, outreach will be a part of this group's mission.



CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD (C.L.O.W.)

Children in Grades PK – 4 have the opportunity to worship at an age appropriate level. C.L.O.W. mirrors the worship experience of the larger community, with a style that is engaging and interactive. It is not religious education or a time to play. It is a chance to help and guide the children to become alert, active listeners of God's Word. They will experience God's presence in scripture and have a better understanding of the message. They will return back to their families in the church to celebrate the Liturgy of the Eucharist with the main assembly.

MASS / READINGS

Talk with your student about the importance of volunteering to read or bring up a gift at their grade Mass. Actively participating in the Mass is an important part of our faith. If your child is selected to do a reading or petition at their Grade Mass they will be provided with a copy at least one week in advance. **Please be sure they practice at home. They are proclaiming the Word of God and this needs to be taken seriously. Time should be spent preparing for each reading through prayer and practice.** Readers in Grades 5 and up should be seated in the front pew by **9:55 a.m.** The Deacon will be there to help them practice again so they are comfortable reading before the congregation. Students in Grades 1 – 4 will read at the Children's Liturgy of the Word (C.L.O.W.) in the new addition upstairs. Gift Bearers in Grades 1-4 will sit with their parents until CLOW begins. All students in Grades PK – 4 are strongly encouraged to attend the CLOW when it is offered. Gift bearers in Grades 5 and up should arrive no later than **10:10** and should sit in the second pew. An adult will be seated with them throughout the Mass. If volunteers are unable to be there, please contact the teacher as soon as possible.

RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation is offered **every Saturday, from 3:15 – 3:45 before Mass.** We also offer it at special times to all of our students (grades 2 – 12), teachers and parishioners during Advent and Lent. Please check your schedules for the dates and times. "Reconciliation" means coming together again. By receiving this wonderful Sacrament, we are offered a chance to reestablish or deepen our relationship with God. The church teaches that everyone receive the sacrament every year, but this sacrament should become a regular part of your life or during the seasons of Advent and Lent at the very least.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Service within the parish is an important part of every student's Faith Formation experience and the type of service they will be involved with is age appropriate. Every year provides students with a different experience. Sometimes there are opportunities for field trips or chances for students to use their time and talents helping various organizations and people in need. You will be notified of any events in which your child is expected to participate. **Parents are invited to join in as well!**

CODE OF CONDUCT

RESPECT

St. Denis Religious Education students at all times will:

- † Treat others in a civil, respectful, and courteous manner.
- † Respect and do not break, damage or deface any Church property.
- † Respect the personal property of others.
- † Be honest in their words and deeds and use respectful language.
- † Behave in a way that does not disrupt learning.
- † Behave in a quiet, respectful manner in Church.
- † Turn off all electronic devices. **Cell phones will be collected if necessary.**
- † Remove hats while inside.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Schedules, events, parish happenings, community & diocesan events can be found in the weekly bulletin. Our web-site and Facebook has also become a valuable resource to find the most updated information. www.saintdenischurch.com. Please notify us if you find something outdated.

TARDINESS AND ABSENCES

There are not that many classes during the year and students should try to attend them all. **Every grade is another important step in your student's faith formation.** Make up lessons are e-mailed or sent home for classes missed. Completed assignments are expected at the next class. Arriving late to class is disruptive to the student and the class. Classes only last 1 ½ - 2 hours, please try to be on time. Whenever a student is absent, please e-mail or call the teacher. **These teachers are volunteers** and work hard to plan their classes for a certain number of students around already busy schedules. Prompt pick-up from class is also essential as these teachers have families and obligations of their own to get back to.

CANCELLATIONS (parents need to check the following resources)

When classes are cancelled due to inclement weather, check the rectory answering machine, our Facebook page or our web-site. Teachers are notified personally, so you can also try to call them. **We do not e-mail everyone.**

If we have not cancelled, but you feel it is a danger for you to make the drive in, please use your discretion. We don't want anyone to be unsafe.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

All students **must** provide us with an emergency number on the registration form in the event that we can't reach you and need to contact someone else. We will always try to contact the parents first. It is essential that this information be kept up to date. Registration forms contain areas for cell phone and e-mail information. E-Mail is the primary way that we keep in contact.

If there are any changes, the rectory should be notified immediately.

(All information is kept confidential; for office use only.)

NUTRITION

Students should eat a nutritious meal and be well rested before class. Although many teachers or volunteer parents provide a snack, it ***is not*** required and shouldn't be considered the students' meal. Please don't send students into the classroom with their dinners. This is even more disrupting than arriving late.

PARENT/CHURCH PARTNERSHIP

Families come in all shapes and sizes. But whatever the configuration, it is in the family that we learn our first lessons of life. Parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to become involved with your child's Faith Formation. There are many ways to achieve this by volunteering some of your time to the program, discussions at home, reviewing materials from the lessons that your child brings home, family prayer, receiving the Holy Sacraments (Eucharist and Reconciliation) and most importantly, **weekly worship at Mass.** All of this will send the message to your child that you are interested and practicing your faith is an important part of your life. Everyone's faith journey is unique, but our children do learn from our example. The Church is here to assist families in the best way we can with the volunteers who help us. ***Whatever we do in our parish faith formation program can only supplement what is happening at home.*** God invites us into a personal relationship of love, but it is up to us to respond. When we say "Yes" we begin a journey of faith that lasts a lifetime. Becoming an active member of your parish will bring you and your child closer to God and to your community.

Please check the volunteer/ministry form for all the different ways in which you can help. There is something for everyone and together, we help the program and the parish thrive. Blessings.

†SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION†

Each sacrament is an encounter with Christ that strengthens and nourishes our faith.

Preparation for and reception of a sacrament is based on readiness and desire, not on age or grade. Although here at St. Denis we do celebrate the sacraments in particular grades, much depends on the individual's readiness. Each grade is another step towards preparing a candidate for a sacrament and deepening their faith.

Students who are enrolled in Catholic schools are expected to receive all of the Sacraments with their parish community.

Anyone who has missed receiving any of the sacraments may enroll in our delayed sacramental program. Please contact the rectory for further information.



†First Eucharist – is generally celebrated at age 7 or 8 in grade 2. Candidates must have a good understanding about the importance of receiving The Eucharist and also about the life of Jesus. Students who are enrolled in Catholic schools are expected to receive this Sacrament with their parish community. Parent meetings and retreats must be attended and these Catholic school children are also invited to join in on any of our classes throughout the year.



†First Reconciliation – We received a letter from Bishop McManus in June 2004 concerning this sacrament. In keeping with the Code of Canon Law the Bishop would like us to ensure that the first communion of children is always “preceded by sacramental confession and absolution.” (Canon 914, RS #87) We will therefore, provide age appropriate instruction for this sacrament during the 2nd grade. All candidates will understand the importance of the sacrament and the gifts that it offers. Students enrolled in Catholic schools are expected to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time with their parish community. Parent meetings must be attended and these Catholic school children are also invited to join in on any of our classes through out the year.



†Confirmation – a sacrament of initiation that celebrates the presence of God's special strength and gifts in a baptized person to help them become a better Christian. The sacraments give us the grace to help us do Christ's work. In the Sacrament of Confirmation we experience an extension of our Baptism. Through it, we make a stronger bond with Jesus and the Holy Spirit gifts us with special strength to spread and defend the faith. But as it is with any gift, you need to accept it and use it. ***Students will receive an invitation for Confirmation in the winter or spring of grade 10 or 11 after they have completed two years of our High School program, shown that they are weekly Mass attendants and have become involved by participating in service to their parish community.*** Once students receive the invitation for Confirmation, they will meet with our Discernment Team and then enter our Immediate Confirmation Prep program. (details within this handbook)

SPECIAL EDUCATION SITUATIONS

The St. Denis Faith Formation program is composed of volunteer parents and parishioners. They will do what they can to provide assistance to those children facing special needs, such as creating a “safe” classroom environment, but if a student’s situation is severe, parents may need to stay with them in the classroom or choose the home schooling option.

FOOD ALLERGIES

1. Student’s may bring in their own snack and control the areas they touch by bringing in disinfectant wipes.
2. Parents may pick students up 15 minutes early to avoid snack time altogether.
3. Parents may choose to home school the student with the guidance and support of the religious education coordinator.

If the student’s allergy requires them to carry an EpiPen, the student or parent would need to be responsible for administering it, not the teacher.

LEARNING OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

We do not always have extra volunteers who can stay one-on-one with a student. If your student requires this type of individual attention, you may need to find someone who can help your child, or you can stay yourself. Anyone over 14 years old who volunteers to work with children, would need to complete a C.O.R.I. review and Safe Training course.

If your child has a special situation that you need us to consider, please contact the rectory in advance so we can discuss the options available. The Diocese does offer some programs to assist families who have special needs. We will be happy to direct these families so they may obtain information about these programs.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING AND CURRICULUM

In the wake of the 2002 crisis, the bishops signed a *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. To fulfill that pledge, the Office of Healing and Prevention at the Diocese of Worcester requires that “all those working with minors or associated with minors or who have the potential to be associated with minors must have a CORI check, Safe Environment Training and sign the Code of Conduct for the Diocese of Worcester.”

In addition, Article 12 of the *Charter* also calls for Safe Environment Education for all children in our parishes, and Safe Environment Education for all parents.

In an effort to comply with Article 12 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and young People*, every year we will present the latest Safe Environment Educational information from Worcester to our First Grade parents. A DVD containing a special message from the Bishop along with a booklet titled “About Child Abuse” will be presented at the end of the first parent meeting.

More detailed information about Safe Environment Education can be found within this handbook, on our web-site and in the pamphlet display in the church. **Parents must sign the section of the agreement form that they have read the information about the Safe Environment Education.**

The protection of children entrusted to our care has always been of paramount importance and we thank you for sharing in this vital ministry in the Church and helping to put the needs of the children first.



St. Denis Church

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SAFE ENVIRONMENT CURRICULUM GOALS

St. Denis Parish will work in cooperation with the Office of Healing and Prevention for the Diocese of Worcester to provide a safe environment for the children enrolled in our Religious Education Program. A Safe Environment curriculum will be implemented into the existing instruction to ensure the safety of our students while in our care, as well as enable them to remain safe from the dangers of any type of abuse, including sexual abuse. This curriculum is based on six standards:

- **Appropriate Behavior based on Personal Dignity and Respect for Others**
- **Personal Safety and the Necessary Skills to Remain Safe**
- **Appropriate Boundaries**
- **Assertive Responses in Potentially Dangerous Situations**
- **Identify Trusted Adults**
- **Abusive Situations**

These six standards will be implemented into the teaching/learning strategies within our program in the hopes to succeed in the following goals which are age-appropriate for the grades listed below:

PreK through Grade 2:

- ***Acting & Playing Cooperatively**
- ***Avoiding argumentative & Bullying Behaviors**
- ***Being Peacemakers**
- ***Achieving Personal Confidence**
- ***Trusting their own feelings**
- ***Knowing who to trust**
- ***Achieving a Sense of Self-Worth**
- ***Being Grateful of the many Gifts of God**
- ***Knowing that they are Loved by God**

Grades 3 through 5

- ***Achieving Self-Confidence / Positive Attitudes**
- ***Respecting Themselves & Others**
- ***Knowledge of Keeping Oneself Safe/ Trusting instincts**
- ***Being aware of unsafe situations / places to avoid**
- ***Knowing Boundaries / Personal Space**
- ***Building Communication Skills / Confidence in their own judgment**
- ***Being Honest with themselves & others**
- ***Awareness that their Bodies are created by God and are a gift to us by God**

Grades 6 through 8

- *Respecting All Life / Personal Dignity**
- *Self-Respect in their Relationships**
- *Appreciating Other's Gifts**
- *Avoid Bullying Behavior**
- *Developing Appropriate Trust / Trusting instincts/feelings**
- *Awareness that all are called to be Chaste**
- *Virtues of Chastity**
- *Living Catholic Values takes Courage**
- *Praying helps strengthen us to do the right things**
- *Learning that the Gospels are a guide to help us follow the teachings of Jesus**
- *Making Moral Decisions in light of Catholic Teaching**

Grades 9 through 12

- *Dignity and Respect are cornerstone themes of Catholic Social Teaching**
- *Recognizing One's Actions have an impact on the Life of Others**
- *Demonstrate the importance of Virtues which aid in Habits of Good Behavior**
- *Recognize and Describe the Characteristics of a Healthy Person Regarding His/Her Personal Boundaries**
- *Respecting One's Own Body**
- *Respecting the Bodies of Others**
- *Respect for All Life**
- *Distinguish between Rights and Desires**
- *Describe Cause/Effect of Social Sin**
- *Recognize the Message of Jesus to encourage Discipleship**

If there are any questions or concerns about these goals, please feel free to call at any time and we will be happy to discuss the teaching / learning strategies and resources that may be of assistance to you. As always, the protection of the children entrusted to our care is important and with your cooperation, we will do all we can to assure their safety and empower them with the skills they need to be safe, not only here, but at home, at school and within the community.

ALSO

Other Resources are available by calling:

**Office of Healing and Prevention
Diocese of Worcester
49 Elm Street
Worcester, MA 01609
508-791-7171**

Or through the Diocesan Website at:

www.worcesterdiocese.org

ST. DENIS CHURCH HALL

RULES AND REGULATIONS

With so many people using the church hall, it is imperative that we all share in the responsibility of keeping it clean. We need to teach our students the importance of respecting church property, picking up after themselves and also having respect for the people who have to clean and maintain the church.

1. Classes generally run for only 1½ hrs – 2hrs maximum. Students should not have to make multiple trips to the restrooms as it is very distracting, especially to the classroom nearest the restroom.
2. Use the trash receptacles. Do not stuff paper towels into the toilets or urinals! Keep restrooms clean!
3. There is absolutely **“NO SMOKING”** of any kind (including e-products, hookahs or the like) anywhere inside the church or the hall.
4. If you drop anything (snacks, papers, pencils, etc.) on the floor, pick it up. Don't leave a mess for someone else to take care of.
5. **NO GLITTER IS ALLOWED!** It is very difficult to clean and we have found it months after it was used for a project. Glitter glue may be used.
6. **DO NOT** tear tablecloths or break pencils. These items cost money and should not have to be replaced so frequently. **DO NOT** write on tables.
7. Only authorized adults are allowed to touch the room dividers. These are easily broken if not moved carefully.
8. Students need permission to be on the stage and to use equipment. If you are helping a teacher, ask for assistance if you don't know how to use the copy machine. Be careful with all equipment (pencil sharpeners are routinely being replaced because people are burning them out!)
9. Students, **DO NOT** open and close the curtains on the stage or pull on them. There is no reason to go near the curtains if you use the side doors to the stage.
10. If you help your teacher with their box, please put it back in the section for their grade (LOOK AT LABELS) with the **names facing out**. These boxes can also be quite heavy so ask someone to help you carry it. Sometimes there are notices for the teacher on top of their box. Be careful that these papers don't fall off.
11. Please put things back where you got them. The stage is in constantly in need of being cleaned and organized because people are just putting things wherever there is a space. Volunteers work hard to organize the stage over the summer every year spending several hours of their time. This year it needed to be done at least 4 more times through-out the year!

We do not have a full time janitor. This parish belongs to all of us and we need to take pride in its appearance. Please be sure to take the extra few minutes to follow the rules that are outlined on this page.

Thank you for caring.



DISCIPLINE POLICY

***Please review this policy with your student every year**

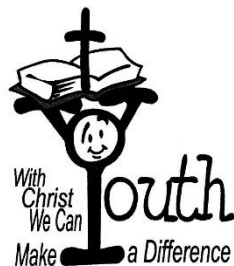
We have had some terrific classes and wonderful students, and overall we are very proud of the respect they have shown our teachers. Unfortunately, in past years we have experienced some problems with excessive disruptive behavior and disrespect from a few students. This cannot be tolerated, so we have implemented a 1 - 2 - 3 discipline.

If a student becomes excessively disruptive or disrespectful we will move their seat if necessary and they will be asked to stop. **That's 1.** If it continues they will be taken aside by their teacher or Mrs. Archambault and given a final warning. **That's 2.** If it still continues we will call parents and ask that they pick their student up. **That's 3.**

If parents need to be contacted for any reason a meeting will need to be set with the student, parent, teacher and Mrs. Archambault before students are allowed to come back to class. We haven't had many issues, but there have been some and the situations have been unpleasant for everyone involved.

Grades **PK - 5:** the **1 - 2 - 3** discipline policy will be handled according to the age of the student by changing the seating arrangement, implementing time outs or sending a note home to parents if it becomes necessary.

Please discuss this policy with your student **every year before classes begin and remind them that our teachers volunteer their time and deserve respect. Students should not be carrying on other conversations while the teacher is talking and trying to teach. Appropriate language should be used at all times and students should treat others the way they would want others to treat them. They need to participate in class and work on the lessons that the teacher asks them to. Cell phone use is not allowed in class. All we ask is that students come to class with an open mind and heart and be respectful of our volunteer teachers and to each other.*



We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future. ~Franklin Delano Roosevelt

DISMISSAL & PARKING POLICY* (please read!)
GRADES PK - 6

Due to the size of our program, a dismissal procedure needed to be implemented. We apologize for any inconveniences, but student safety is a priority along with respecting those around us. Please adhere to the following:

- 1. Please be on time when picking up your student.** Many of these teachers are trying to get up to the 10:15 Mass. They are also volunteers with their own families to get home to. If you are running a bit late someone will bring your student up to Mass and you can find them there.
- 2. Please wait in the new addition upstairs until 10:00 before going down into the hall.** It's difficult for teachers to finish with their class and keep students focused when parents are standing around waiting. It's also a fire hazard for to wait in the stairwells. This is one of the reasons the new addition was built.
- 3. No parking on Caswell Court or Manchaug Road.** There are many people walking to and from the rectory and church parking lots and it is difficult to see around cars that are parked along the roads, especially in bad weather.
- 4. No parking along the back driveway to the rectory or along the side of the rectory parking lot and garage.** This driveway also needs to be kept open for people who are trying to pull in and out of the rectory parking lot. It also becomes very dangerous in the winter.
- 5. Parents must send a note to the teacher if someone else is picking up their student.** Teachers will ask for identification if they don't know the individual.

There is more than enough space to accommodate all cars in our parking lots.

The basement of the rectory gets extremely crowded during pick up and drop off times, so we ask that you wait outside (dress accordingly for weather) until the teacher either brings students out to you or is ready to have you come in.

PK & Kindergarten - class is dismissed at 11:20 to give parents a chance to get there after Mass.

1A & 1B - drop off is at 8:30 and dismissal at 10:00.

2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th - class begins at 8:30 and ends at 10:00. Please wait in the new addition until 10:00 before going down to the hall.

GRADES 6

6th - Sunday morning classes begin at 8:30 and end at 10:00. Students are allowed to come to class and leave on their own at dismissal time.

We have set up our schedule so that classes revolve around Mass times. This allows for families to attend the 10:15 Mass together after classes are dismissed at 10:00.

There really is truth and wisdom to the saying...

Prayer is so very powerful and the Catholic Mass is one, big prayer. When you offer your Mass for someone in need of prayers, it is one of the most powerful things you can do.



REGISTRATION DATES FOR 2018/ 2019

(3/25 & 4/8 After the 10:15 Mass Only!)

Due to the size of our program, it is necessary to hold early registrations.

- ✦ More convenient for families if classes are still in session.
- ✦ Dates are coordinated with Holy Week, Easter, School Vacations and First Communions.
- ✦ Summer spent working on schedules, updating computer & paperwork, ordering books & supplies, distribution of books & supplies, recruiting & training teachers, substitutes & volunteers, forming & organizing classes, and much more.

All of this depends on **how many students** are enrolled in the program.

In March every year we...

- ✦ Mail a registration packet with the Student Handbook.
- ✦ Ask that you take a few minutes to review and complete the stapled packet using the provided checklist.
- ✦ Include multiple ways for you to return that information to us by mail, the collection basket at Mass, or by bringing it to one of the registration dates. This year we will also have a registration box set up in the church for you to drop your registration in at your convenience ***before the April 8th deadline!***
- ✦ Send reminder notices home with students about registration dates.
- ✦ Make announcements at Mass, put dates in the bulletin and on our website and bulletin boards in the church.

In August every year we...

- ✦ Mail out the schedules which include the registration dates for the following year.
- ✦ Ask that you mark those dates on the calendar, highlight and register on time.

No one is ever denied due to the inability to pay, but the \$20.00 late fee was put into effect to:

1. Discourage families from registering late.
2. To compensate for the additional time and work that it takes to send extra mailings, e-mails, phone calls and processing each late form individually when the other registration forms were all processed at the same time.

Sooooo...



*** Any registration received after **April 8th 2018** will be subject to a \$20.00 late fee. *All you have to do to avoid this fee is to register on time, or contact us before the deadline.*

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. It is greatly appreciated.

Faith Formation Registration dates and times for 2018/2019 school year:

3/29 & 4/12/15, after the 10:15 Mass only!

***First time registrations for families entering the parish after the deadline are not subject to late fee.