

**NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
CCD HANDBOOK**



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PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK – this handbook seeks to inform parents and students about important policies and aspects of the religious education program. In order to better understand our CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) program and support the policies and requirements of the CCD program, it is important that you thoroughly read this handbook.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary CCD Program is to foster within an educational environment the teaching and values of Jesus Christ and the Roman Catholic Church through Scripture and Tradition. Through the promotion of these teachings and values, a Catholic community is created where students are accepted, cherished, and challenged. **The Nativity CCD Program recognizes that parents are the primary religious educators of their children in faith development, and assumes a mutual responsibility to enhance this development.**

PHILOSOPHY

The Nativity CCD Parish Program exists to provide its parish children a basic, yet firm foundation in our Catholic beliefs and practices. The Nativity CCD Program respects the uniqueness of each child and the diversity of needs within its Parish family. The CCD Program Coordinator, under the guidance of the Pastor and the Diocesan Office of Religious Education, devises a Religious Education program to meet the needs of its students-challenging them to grow in the knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, its teachings and practices, and striving to inspire a relationship of friendship and lasting love with Jesus. **The ideals of this philosophy can only be fulfilled through a spirit of cooperation shared by each of the three major groups of our CCD family-staff, parents, and students.**

GOALS

Nativity Parish CCD Program exists to provide its students with a basic, yet firm foundation of religious education that is developed and nurtured within a faith-filled environment. This is accomplished when these goals are achieved:

1. To proclaim the message of Jesus Christ, by providing a religious program based on Scripture and Tradition.
2. To encourage reception of the Sacraments by preparing students to understand and appreciate their importance and necessity in their life.
3. To foster growth in a faith community by providing valuable experiences of shared prayer and worship.
4. To encourage a spirit of charity and service, by promoting positive Christian attitudes to one's responsibility toward God, others and self.
5. To encourage students to take responsibility for their learning.
6. To foster cooperation and communication among staff, parents, and students.
7. To continually review and update curriculum needs and materials.
8. To offer staff opportunities to improve teaching methods through in-service, professional magazines, and further education.
9. To evaluate each student's strengths and weaknesses through testing in order to evaluate the effectiveness of our program.
10. To promote certification of our catechists to insure retention of quality educators.

ADMISSION

All Catholic students living within the boundaries of Nativity parish, as well as students who live outside the boundaries and are registered at Nativity parish, are eligible for entry into the Nativity religious education program.

Students registered at another parish within our cluster, who have a scheduling conflict or other special situation, can be admitted to our program by contacting the cluster priest and Nativity CRE.

REGISTRATION

Registration for students new to the program (first graders who were not in the preschool program or families new to the area) is held in August. Please call the CRE.

Students who have already attended our preschool or grades 1-12 programs do not need to re-register each year.

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE

All students entering the parish religious education program are required to submit a **copy** of their baptismal certificate to the CRE.

FEES

A fee of \$40.00 per child for the first three children shall be paid by all parents/guardians. A maximum of \$120.00 shall be paid by a family. If a family does not want to pay the total fees at the beginning of the year, a payment plan can be set up. Please notify the CRE. No child will be turned away due to non-payment.

To help fund our CCD program, tickets are sold in September for a monthly raffle drawing with all proceeds going toward our CCD program and fuel for our buildings. The CCD board spearheads this raffle and tickets are sent to each parish family. The raffle operates on the philosophy that “It takes a village to raise a child”.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

There will be no discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, or handicap.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

To insure an atmosphere conducive to learning, a child may need special assistance while attending religious education classes. Parents are always welcome to attend, or the parish will provide an aide to assist the child in the classroom. It is the parent’s responsibility to notify the teacher if their child has an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) implemented at school, so special arrangements can be made in the classroom.

ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Church documents state that the parents are the primary educators of their children. The role of parents/guardians in the religious education of their children is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute. The religious education program and religion teachers are there to assist the parents in giving their children a systemic, comprehensive education in the Roman Catholic faith. Parents/guardians are expected to pray with their children, attend Mass with their children, and provide encouragement and support for the religious education program. **No amount of training in school can supplant the example of regular (weekly) family participation in the Mass.** Frequent confession and reception of Holy Communion should be encouraged both by the home and CCD Program.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT'S RIGHTS

The Religious Education Coordinator needs to be informed by the custodial parent of the rights of a non-custodial parent.

TEACHERS – a list of teachers is sent with each student packet at the beginning of the year. All teachers are required by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to attend the Decree on Child Protection training, be fingerprinted, and an FBI background check is required.

CLASS DAYS AND TIMES

Religious education classes for grades 1- 6 are held on Wednesday evenings from 6:45pm–7:45pm. Class time for grades 7–12 is 8:00pm.–9:10pm.

PRE-SCHOOL CCD

Nativity parish has a preschool and kindergarten CCD program. Classes are held on Wednesday evenings during the first session of CCD, 6:45-7:45. Classes are held twice a month beginning in October. There is a \$10 fee to help offset the cost of craft supplies. Watch the bulletin for registration details.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

ARRIVAL - Students of the first shift should be dropped off in the church parking lot or CCD hall parking area. They are to go directly to class and not to a neighbor's house. Students are asked to arrive no more than 10 minutes before class.

DISMISSAL—Parents should pick up students of the first shift using the West Side church parking lot. Grades 5-8 will walk to the parking lot. Students should wait on the grass, sidewalks, or on the parish center porch. **Please remind children and the older students who may be arriving to be very careful!!!**

CLASS CANCELLATION

If Marion Local schools are closed for the day, CCD classes are also canceled.

ATTENDANCE

Regular, participating attendance in classes is vital if students are to move forward in the knowledge and appreciation of their faith. Out of respect, it is important for all students to be **present and on time** for each session.

ABSENTEEISM

Students will be held responsible for all missed work. Parents/guardians should make necessary arrangements with their child's teacher if an absence occurs.

Families requiring an excused pattern of absences need to make this known to the Coordinator

REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

If your child is ill and unable to attend CCD class, please call either their teacher, or the CRE. The Nativity parish office phone number is 419-925-4630. A signed note may be sent with another child. If a parent has **NOT** called the teacher or CRE prior to an absence, then the Coordinator may contact the parent after the missed class.

DRESS CODE – Modesty is of utmost importance. Parents are to remind the child of their dignity and dress accordingly. Jeans and shorts are permitted. Shoes must be worn.

HOMEWORK

A teacher may assign homework. Parents/guardians are expected to see that their children complete assignments. Homework should **NOT** take more than one hour per week.

PERFORMANCE TESTING AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Students in grades 1-8 will receive a progress report three times a year. Grades 9-12 will be evaluated twice a year.

The national NCEA ACRE Assessment test will be given to all eighth graders in January each year. This test helps evaluate the effectiveness of our CCD program, and the general knowledge of our students. Test results are compared to other programs in the archdiocese and national averages. Parents may review the test results in April after the Confirmation Kick-off meeting.

OFF-GROUNDS ACTIVITIES

All classes shall be held in the assigned classroom. All exceptions must be approved by the Coordinator. If an exception is granted, students will be required to return an Archdiocesan approved permission slip signed by their parent/guardian before they will be allowed to participate in an activity outside of the classroom. If a class is held at another location in the area, the parents may be asked to transport their child to and from that location.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

A current medical/emergency information form will be kept on file with each teacher at all times. These forms will be updated yearly.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In case of a minor illness or injury, the student will be treated and the parent/guardian will be notified when they come to pick up their child. If a child becomes ill while at CCD, the CRE will assess the child's illness, and will attempt to notify the parent/guardian to come to pick up their child. If there is a severe illness or injury, an ambulance will be called for the child and the parent/guardian or persons designated by the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.

FIRE

A fire drill will be held yearly to familiarize students and teachers with safety procedures and exit plans.

CHILD ABUSE

The Coordinator of Religious Education is required by the Ohio Revised Code and Archdiocesan Policy on Child Protection to report suspected or actual child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

OBEDIENCE

All students will respect and obey all instructions of the Coordinator and teachers.

DISCIPLINE

In general, students are asked to be respectful to themselves, to others, and to their own property and the property of others. Any student who interferes with a teacher who is teaching or interferes with other students who are learning will be notified by the catechist of their inappropriate behavior...this constitutes a **FIRST WARNING**. Any student who continually interferes with a teacher or other students who are learning, will be removed from the situation. This constitutes a **SECOND WARNING**. If there are continued behavioral problems, the parents/guardians will be contacted and may be called to pick up the child. If, after this, the behavior is repeated, the parent/guardian will be asked to sit in class with their child until the behavior is corrected.

EXPULSION

A student may be expelled from the religious education program for the following, non-inclusive reasons:

1. When a student's behavior is of a serious nature, or constantly disruptive.
2. When the student resists all attempts at correction by the teacher, Coordinator and the parent/guardian.
3. When the student has a negative impact on the learning environment of the classroom so as to diminish the other student's opportunities to learn.

RE-ADMISSION

When the problem that caused the expelled student's unacceptable behavior has been resolved and there is an assurance of cooperative behavior, the student will be welcomed back into the classroom.

The time of this re-admission will be determined by the Coordinator of Religious Education and the Pastor.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Religious education programs have no Constitutional restraints on the use of search and seizure. If a student is suspected of having weapons, drugs, or alcohol in his/her possession, the Coordinator of Religious Education may conduct a search or contact the Sheriff's Department. An adult staff member will be present during the search as a witness. If the student refuses to cooperate, his/her parents/guardians will be contacted to assist in the search.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

If a parent/guardian has a complaint, they should follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Communicate first with the person with whom there is a problem.
2. Communicate with that person's most immediate supervisor.
3. Communicate with the Coordinator of Religious Education.
4. Communicate with the Pastor.

CHANGES IN HANDBOOK

Changes in this handbook will be announced in the church bulletin.