

Sts. Cyril & Methodius
Religious Education Handbook
2017/2018



*“Preparing the children of God
for the Kingdom of God.”*

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Religious Education Handbook
2017-2018

Personnel:

Pastor:

Fr. Bryan Heyer
fbryan@sscmshiner.org

Deacon:

Deacon Joe Machacek
jmachacek@sscmshiner.org

Youth Minister:

Kim Ulcak
kulcak@sscmshiner.org
361-594-3234

Adult Education Coordinator:

Sharon Patek
spatek@sscmshiner.org

Rectory Staff:

Ann Duke
Betty Kosler

Rectory:

306 S Avenue F
Shiner, Texas 77984
361-594-3836
Fax: 361-594-2850

Rectory Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:00am – 5:00pm

All messages can be left at the Youth Ministry Office at 361-594-3234

Religious Education classes are held on Wednesday nights from 6:40pm – 8:00pm. Kindergarten – 8th grade classes are held at Shiner Catholic School elementary classrooms. Grades 9th – 11th are held at St. Paul High School.

Please note that all volunteers and staff must complete required Safe Environment Training in order to work with the children of our parish. Any adult wishing to be in the classroom or campus on a regular basis should contact the Youth Ministry office. **Parents will be notified of places and times for Safe Environment Training classes.**

Registration

Registration is held each year in August. Students who attended the Religious Education classes last year are allowed to register online. All new students will have to register by calling the Youth Ministry Office at 361-594-3234 and set up an appointment.

A Baptismal certificate is required for all students enrolled in the Religious Education program. A First Holy Communion certificate is required if applicable.

Fees

Tuition for 1 student - \$25.00, 2 students - \$50.00, 3 or more students - \$60.00
Payments maybe made online or brought to the Youth Ministry Office by the second day of Religious Education classes. Fees are used to cover the cost of books and materials for the Religious Education program.

Tardiness

The bell rings in both schools at **6:40pm** for classes to begin promptly at **6:45pm**. Students are considered tardy after this time. Students who are tardy **Must Report to The Office** before they are allowed in class. Please make sure that your student, whether you bring them or they drive, is in the classroom by **6:45pm**.

Absenteeism

1. A written note by the parents should accompany the student upon their return to Religious Education. They must first report to the office before entering the classroom.
2. Two absences may result in a phone call to the parents. (This is to help ensure the safety and well-being of your children.)
3. Any student missing on a regular basis will be required to make up work that is missed. Failure to do so may result in your student not advancing to the next grade.
4. Absence due to public school activities should be approved prior to the date of the activity. This will allow the catechist to check with the Religious Education office if it will be an excused absence.
5. *****Students preparing to receive the sacraments of First Holy Communion, First Penance, or Confirmation this year, are allowed no more than 3 absences during the Religious Education year.***

Dress Code

1. Be properly dressed when attending class. No short shorts, short dresses, or short skirts. No undergarments are to be visible at any time. No tank tops or inappropriate wording or pictures on clothing. Despite their popularity, they are not allowed at Religious Education or at Masses.
2. No earrings will be worn by male students and tongue rings are included. Inappropriate chains on any students will not be allowed.
3. Caps are not allowed inside the buildings at all. Any student insisting on doing so will have their caps taken up and returned on the last day of classes.
4. The above guidelines are the same during scheduled Masses on Wednesday night, weekends, holidays and any Parish/Religious Education sponsored event. **No shorts or tank tops are allowed at Mass.**
5. Any student abusing these dress codes will result in a phone call to the parents. A quote to live by, **"The body is the language that the soul speaks."**

Classroom Rules

Each student is asked to be attentive by listening and participating in classroom activities. Be courteous and polite to the catechists, guests, parents, and other students at all times. Students are asked to be ready and willing to share and give the love Jesus has for us all to those we meet.

Discipline

We ask that the students not disturb classes by unnecessary conduct or talking in class. (This includes before, during and after class). In the event this happens the following procedures will apply.

1. First consequence – a Disciplinary form is filled out by the catechist and the student is to speak with Religious Education Coordinator (see attached form stapled at back of this document)
2. Second consequence – a Disciplinary form is filled out by the catechist and the student's parents/guardians are called by the Religious Education Coordinator
3. Third consequence – a Disciplinary form is filled out by the catechist and the student's parents/guardians are called by Father.
4. A student who continues to conduct themselves in a disrespectful manner will have to have their parents attend class with them. If the parents do not want to attend the student may be suspended from Religious Education.

The discipline policy is a continued policy and will not “start” over each Wednesday night.

Pick Up and Drop Off of Students

Students will not be dropped off in front of the St. Ludmila building.

Students are to enter the school at the front of the St. Ludmila building and are to be dropped off in the school parking lot and the parking lot next to the church. **No students should be crossing St. Ludmila Street.**

Drop Off

1. **No curb drop off and definitely no middle of the street drop off.**
2. Student in grades Kinder – 4th are to be let off in the school parking lot by the Janak Music Center.
3. Students in grades 5th – 8th will be let off in the church parking lot next to the church and across from Patek's Grocery.
4. Students in grades 9th – 12th use the school parking lot, entering the parking lot by the gym.
5. Parents with students in multiple grades, please use the rule for the youngest child.

Pick Up

1. **No curb pick up and definitely no middle of the street pick up.**
2. **No students will be allowed to cross the street.**
3. Parents of children in grades Kindergarten – 4th are to go to the school parking lot. Parents can drive through to pick up their child or they may park in the school parking lot and walk to get their child. The children are to be picked up in front of the Janak Music Center
4. Students in grades 5th – 8th will be brought to the church parking lot next to the church. Parents can park there for their child.
5. High school students will be picked up in the High School parking lot.
6. If picking up younger siblings or multiple grades, please use the rule of the youngest child.
7. **All students will walk in designated areas at pick up. No students should be walking through the parking lot without supervision.**

Please remember and remind your child to drive the speed limit in front of the school. A life is a precious thing to lose. The police department will be enforcing the speed limit.

Bad Weather Policy.

If at all possible, we will hold classes. But, if bad weather does occur, announcements will be made at the school or by 6:00pm through Texas Thunder radio.

If heavy rain, pick up on those days will be as follows:

Heavy Rain Pick Up

1. Students in grades Kind – 8th will go through the school parking lot and pick up students at the basement entrance of the Youth Ministry Office.
2. Students in 9th – 11th grade will be picked up at the High School parking lot.
3. Students getting younger siblings, use the Pick Up of the youngest child.

Safe Environment Training & Abuse

Every adult volunteer or staff member on campus working with children at any time is required to take the Safe Environment Training class and have a clear background check. No adult is allowed to work with students in any form without this program being completed by August 1, of the school year. Please check with the office if you would like to take this course. Parents are still welcomed to visit the classroom, but they may not interact with other children without this training protection.

Unfortunately, many young people have experienced the trauma of physical abuse and neglect and/or sexual abuse. Catechists may learn of such abuse from a young person or see the signs of such abuse due to regular contact. When we learn of such situations, we have a moral and legal obligation to take action.

Texas state law states in Section 34.01 of the family code:

A person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall report in accordance with Section 34.02 of this code.

Any case of abuse or suspected abuse should be reported to local or state law enforcement agencies or the Texas Department of Human Services. If you have any questions about whether or not you should report a suspected case of abuse or neglect please contact the Religious Education Office or the Pastor.

In the event the suspected abuser is a priest, deacon or a member of a religious community, or a layperson either employed by or volunteering service to the Diocese of Victoria, you must follow the steps outlined in the diocesan policy is in the Religious Education Office and is available for any adult to view.

Catechists

All catechists, aides and helpers are volunteers and deserve and will get the utmost respect from all people involved. They give countless hours preparing for their classes and attending training sessions. Parents are needed and urged to volunteer in the program. If you are interested please contact the Religious Education Office. Dedication to your faith and a love for children/youth are the key characteristics of those we seek to work in this ministry. Everything else we can teach you.

Catechists will keep information about your children confidential. Please let them or the office know if you have a child that may need modified work or some other accommodations. **Parents are still the primary teachers of the faith.**

If a problem arises with a catechist please seek to solve it by meeting with them privately. If you still have a concern, please contact the Office of Religious Education at 594-3234 and we will work with you for the good of your child.

Expectations

The National Directory for Catechesis states the following: “The catechesis given by parents with the family, “precedes, accompanies and enriches all other forms of catechesis.’ When children are baptized, **parents** accept the responsibility to bring up their children to the **practice** of the faith and to see to it that the **divine** life that God gives them is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in their hearts. At the same time, the Church promises to help parents foster their children’s faith and assists them specifically in their role as catechists of their children, whether they assume complete responsibility themselves or look to the parish school or religious education program for help and support.”

With this in mind, we at the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Religious Education Program want to make sure all is being done to help our parish youth grow in their spiritual lives. One of the most important ways to grow in the faith life is to receive the sacraments **worthily**. With this understanding, we must make sure as parents, guardians, and catechists that the children are going to Mass on Sundays. **This is our most important obligation as Catholics.** Living in today’s culture, we need to make sure our youth are spiritually strong to be able to handle the issues they face in their daily lives and ultimately live in eternal joy with God.

Parents & Guardians

Ensure that their child attends Religious Education classes regularly and on time.

Communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect their child in the classroom.

Be an active part of their child’s learning and be involved in the classroom.

- Attend weekly Mass
- Make daily prayer a part of your home
- Assist child with required prayers
- Attend any parent class that is required
- Talk about your own faith with your child.

Student

Behave in a Christian manner at all times showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students.

Actively participate in classroom activities and discussions.

Attend class regularly and on time.

Show respect for others and other’s property.

No use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs.

No weapons on premises.

Catechists

Be a Christian role model by living the Precepts of the Church.

Provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that every student feels accepted and safe.

Prepare and teach designated curriculum.

Communicate regularly with and involve parents in the faith development of their children.

Attend teacher meetings and training as required.

Have Safe Environment training.

Keep confidential all student information and concerns.

Parent Monitors

You are given the opportunity to help monitor our students before and after Religious Education. It has become increasingly necessary to have someone in the parking lot, yards and hallway from 6:35 to 6:45pm and 7:50 to 8:15pm in order that class preparations are made in the offices and classrooms. We ask that you volunteer your time in this matter. **All volunteers must have Safe Environment Training.** Most other activities your children are involved in concerns volunteering of your time at some point. We cannot do this effectively alone.

If you are interested in a place to volunteer, please call Kim Ulcak at 594-3234. We thank all those who have helped us in the past and thank you ahead of time for being there on your Wednesday night.

Communications

Cell phones may be brought on campus but they must be turned off before entering the classroom. If a phone or beeper goes off during class time the catechist will bring the item to the office where it can be picked up after class. If you need to reach your student during class time call the Religious Education Office at 594-3234 and we will send someone to deliver the message or bring your student to the phone. Students are always permitted to use the office phone to call parents. No electronic items such as ipods, mp 3 players or other such items are allowed on campus. The students are here for our Lord and I know they can give Him just over one hour of their time.

Parents will be kept informed of upcoming events during the school year thru emails. Memos and notes may also be sent home periodically. Catechists also send home updates, please check weekly with your student for any notes that are sent through them to you.

Medical Release Forms

Each student is required to have a medical release/permission form on file in our offices. It includes, basically the same information that is required at the Shiner ISD. Please notify the office of any change in your address, phone numbers or insurance information. If you failed to review or fill out a form, please come by the office to help us finalize this form.

Sacramental Preparation

It is very important that those preparing to receive a Sacrament attend all classes. Second grade students prepare all year to receive the Sacraments of Penance and First Holy Communion. The 10th grade is a preparatory year for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Eleventh grade students receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and during the year are required to do service projects and attend a spiritual retreat. Students preparing for the sacraments are allowed **no more than 3 absences** during the Religious Ed school year. Students missing classes in these grades are most especially required to make up their work. Failure to do so may result in them not receiving the Sacrament and even not advancing to the next grade.

May Our Lord Continue to Bless You,

Kim Ulcak

Kim Ulcak,
Director of Religious Education