

## **Mission Statement**

At Saint Katharine Drexel Parish, we recognize and value the domestic church as the strength and foundation of the whole Church. The Christian home, through the context of a loving family environment, is a child's first encounter with the love of Christ. By bringing their child to the sacrament of Baptism, parents begin a child's journey towards discipleship and lead them to the universal call to holiness, which is the primary calling of all those baptized in Christ. In an effort to support parents in this unique and vital vocation, the parish of St. Katharine's invites all families to participate in a formal religious education program, emphasizing prayer, virtues, and the Truth of the Church. It is our belief that faithful practice and catechesis in these areas will foster a sense of belonging to the Church, a deep understanding of our responsibility in accepting Salvation, and most importantly, a profound relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ and all the joys that lie within it.

The Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) depends largely on the spiritual support of the parish of St. Katharine Drexel and requests continued prayers for our students, catechists and families.

# **The Parish of St. Katharine Drexel Religious Education Program *Summer Academy***

## **Policies and Procedures**

## **Policies and Procedures**

The Religious Education Program at the Parish of St. Katharine Drexel is designed to help form our youth in prayer, virtue, and the life of the Church. In order to do so effectively, we have set several policies and procedures in place. It is our hope that these ideals will enhance each child's experience in the program, maximize their learning, and above all else, allow for true encounters with Christ's love.

## **Attendance**

There is a great deal of pressure set on these two weeks your child will be in our Academy. The things they learn, discuss, and pray are expected to last them the entire year. In order for our students to both learn and retain the faith, it is imperative that you child attend each class. We recognize and appreciate that the children of our parish have many interests and talents, all which give glory to God. Still, given the complex nature of the faith as well as its necessary priority for all those who seek salvation, we ask that children enrolled in our Summer Academy commit to the program and attend every class. An added benefit to this intense program is that it lightens up your child's schedule a bit during the year. We ask for commitment to these two weeks as well as the 4 Faith in Action sessions set quarterly.

If for some extreme reason, your child is unable to attend a class, we ask that the student complete the packet of work missed sent home by the catechist. It is our hope that this

new system will ensure that no student will miss a lesson, while also giving the catechist an opportunity to check in with a student after missing a class.

If a child does not complete a packet for a missed class, the catechist will consult with the director of the program to evaluate the child's ability to continue with the class grade.

Furthermore, because each session effectively condenses 4-6 weeks' worth of work in the traditional setting into one 3-hour class, being tardy and/or leaving early can add up to missing a significant portion of a given lesson, and thus the education you sign your child up to receive.

If your child must be picked up before normal dismissal times, a written note must be sent to the teacher, who will share it with the director. This note will ensure that your child is safely waiting for you in the lobby of the school, where you can meet the director to sign him or her out of the program for the day.

## **Preparedness**

Due to the rigor of our summer program, it is imperative that children come not only on time, but ready to learn.

This begins with a positive attitude, but also includes some very practical elements of learning. It is imperative that your child come prepared with the following materials:

- Text and Activity book
- Bible
- Writing utensil (please have pencils sharpened)
- A pad to take notes on

Finally, it is important to remember that the faith is complex and difficult. While in the traditional program, homework is assigned to reinforce the Faith, the intensity of the Summer Academy does not warrant homework during our 2-week intensive.

Between Faith in Action meetings, however, some projects may be assigned. It is important for each child to complete homework assignments to be fully prepared for each meeting. It is expected that these projects, which now unified across each grade level, will be completed to the child's greatest ability.

Of course, it is easy for forget these items occasionally, therefore, the first time a child is unprepared is excused. The second time a child comes to class unprepared, there will be a reminder phone call made home. However, if this becomes more of a habit and a child comes to class a third

time unprepared, this may be considered an absence.

Continual disregard to the work expected can ultimately lead to a meeting with the Director of Religious Education and the Pastor to discuss progress and commitment to the program.

### **Behavior**

It is important to note here that all of our catechists are volunteers. Additionally, parents put their children in this

program with the intention of learning the faith. We ask that all students behave with respect to this fact. Students are expected to be respectful of their teacher as well as of the students around them. This includes some of the following ideals:

- Students must and without exception have respect for the subject matter which brings us together. Disparaging language toward the Church and/or to Our Lord will not be tolerated.
- Cell phones will not be permitted to be used at all once class begins. This includes text messaging. Each child is permitted to have a phone on his or her person, but it must be silenced and put away as soon as class begins. If there is a violation of this, the catechist will take the phone and hold it in the front of the room until the end of class. If this is a repeated problem, the parents will be notified and the child will no longer be permitted to have a cell phone on his or her person during Religious Education.
- We ask that all iPods/mp3 players, and any other handheld gaming devices be left at home.

- We ask that students do not engage in side conversations during classes. We invite children to participate actively in class discussions, keeping in mind that all comments should be appropriate and pertaining to class topics.
- It is important for all students to respect each other's personal space and not distract one another from the lesson. Children should keep their hands to themselves during class.
- It is imperative that students address their teachers and fellow classmates with the utmost respect.

It is also very important to keep in mind that the space we use is shared with the students of St. Paul School. The items in the classroom and in the desk are not to be used or played with by the students of the Religious Education Program. All the supplies necessary for class will be available to our students in the front of the room.

### **Pick-up/Drop-off**

We ask that parents be sure to get their child to St. Paul School in enough time to begin their class on time. **Please**

**be sure your child is in the building at least five minutes prior to the set class time.** This will allow the catechist enough time to take attendance and begin the class on time. We will open the doors to the building 15 minutes prior to a Religious Education session and we ask that parents be present at the time of dismissal to ensure the safety of all our students.

All students will meet in the cafeteria and will remain there for their classes so that all of our students are in the air conditioned room. We ask that ALL parents come in to pick up their child. This will afford each catechist the opportunity to connect with the parents and address any questions you may have. Please park your car to pick up your child. If you have several children, they will all be dismissed to the youngest child's class and you can pick them up from the appropriate location.

If you are dropping a child off late, please bring your child to the main office to be checked in. If you are picking your child up early, please give a written note to your child's catechist. Your child will be sent down to the school foyer at the prescribed time, where you can come in to pick up and sign out your child.

### **Disclaimer**

These policies and procedures are set in place to create an environment that inspires faith. This is the goal of all we do in the Religious Education Program. It is the responsibility of the catechists and the director of the program to ensure that our program allows each child to explore all the joys that lay within the life of the Church. If there are other distractions from this goal, the coordinators of the program will deal with these distractions as they deem fit.