

Parish Catechetical Handbook For Families

“Assisting families in leading children to Christ”



St. Peter Catholic Church
219 Adams Avenue
Montgomery, AL
334-262-7304

<https://www.stpetermontgomery.com>

Dear Family,

Welcome to our parish catechetical program. The purpose of our program is to follow Christ's call "to proclaim the Good News everywhere in the world and to hand his message on to successive generations by professing, living and celebrating the faith..." (*National Directory for Catechesis* #15)

The parents are the **primary educators and evangelizers** of their children. Our pastor, along with those working in catechetical ministry, seek to assist parents in their God-given duty to raise their children to a full life in Jesus Christ. This handbook has been designed to provide general information, dates, and requirements for participation in the parish program.

In the *National Directory for Catechesis*, the U.S. Bishops remind us that it is in the parish that the faithful are "energized to carry out Christ's mission." It is here that the "spiritual, moral and material support for the regular and continuing catechetical development of the parishioners" is provided. (*NDC*, #60)

The parish reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary. Parents will be notified, in writing, if changes are made to any procedure or information contained in this handbook. We hope this serves to enhance communication, and provide a clear presentation of expectations and responsibilities of students and their families. In the long run, we hope it makes family life easier!

We thank you for letting us assist you in this most sacred of duties and for entrusting us with your most precious of assets. We look forward to working together with you this year. It is in working together that we are the Body and Christ and carry out His mission.

May the Lord bless our efforts,

Rev. Saleth Mariadoss
Pastor

Marinella Davis
Parish Catechetical Leader

Parish Mission Statement

The mission of the catechetical program of St. Peter Parish of Montgomery, Alabama, is to help all participants and their families develop a relationship with the person of Jesus Christ and to live out their Catholic faith in ways that draw others to Christ and the Church. We seek to carry out this mission through catechesis, spiritual growth and service.

Objectives for Parish Catechetical Program

- To present a comprehensive and systematic formation in the faith, that integrates knowledge of the faith with living the faith
- To center on initiation into the life of the Triune God
- To be appropriate to the age level, maturity, circumstances, language and ethnic background of each participant
- To involve all members of the parish community, particularly the parents
- To focus on the symbols, rituals, and prayers of the Church
- To enable the believers to live out their faith in their everyday life

from the National Directory for Catechesis (NDC, 2005)

The parish catechetical program admits students of any sex, race, color, or national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in this catechetical program. Where possible, our parish program strives to make accommodation for children and youth with disabilities. Please contact Marinella Davis, Parish Catechetical Leader, for consultation about particular situations.

Catechetical Personnel

Pastor Rev. Saleth Mariadoss
Phone: 334-262-7304
Email: secretary@stpetermontgomery.net

Parish Catechetical Leader

Marinella Davis
Phone: 334-649-7964
Email: pclstpeter@gmail.com

Catechists

Grade	Teacher	Room	Email
K-1		St. Kateri Tekakwitha	
2		St. Clare of Assisi	
3-5		St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	
7-8		St. Martin of Porres	
9-10		Knights Room	
11-12		St. Thomas Aquinas	

Textbooks

Grades K-1: *Tell Me About the Catholic Faith/Walking with Jesus*

Grades 2-8: *Spirit of Truth*

Grades 9-12: *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth; YouCat*

Calendar for the Year 2023-2024

Classes begin on September 10th, 2023

Last class is on May 5th, 2024

Holidays - (No Classes held on these Sundays)

November 26 – Thanksgiving Weekend

December 24 – Christmas Break

January 1 – New Year’s Break

January 14 – Dr. Martin Luther King Break

March 31 - Easter

Holy Days of Obligation

November 1 – All Saints

December 8 – Immaculate Conception

December 25 – Nativity of Our Lord

January 1 – Mary, Mother of God

Sacramental Celebrations & Special Events

Sunday, January 28, 2024 – First Reconciliation

**Saturday, April 20, 2024* – First Holy Communion Retreat*

second graders only

Sunday, May 5, 2024 – First Holy Communion

Parent Meetings

Sunday, October 8, 9:10-9:30-am – First Reconciliation Parent Meeting

Sunday, March 3, 9:10-9:30am – First Holy Communion Parent Meeting

Sacramental Preparation Guidelines

Baptism

Baptism preparation consists of one-on-one meetings of the parents with the pastor or deacon in order to help parents understand their commitment of faith in bringing their child into the Christian community. To schedule your appointment, please call the church office at 262-7304.

First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion

Children in second grade attending the parish catechetical program will receive special preparation to celebrate the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Children need to have received at least one year of religious instruction prior to starting their sacramental preparation. The sacrament of First Reconciliation will be celebrated in January, while First Holy Communion will be on the first Sunday in May. Special preparation sessions for both parents and children will be held prior to the celebration of each sacrament.



Confirmation

The sacrament of Confirmation will be celebrated in the spring of the 11th grade or in the fall of the 11th and 12th grade if the two grades are combined. Confirmation formation starts in the 11th grade and is a continuation of adolescent catechesis. The teen must have completed two years of adolescent catechesis either in a Catholic high school or in the parish catechetical program.



Parish Catechetical Policies

Attendance Policy

Students and parents should make every effort to attend every catechetical session and/or parent meetings offered at the parish. **Family Sundays** are catechetical sessions designed for **the entire family**. Both children **AND** parents (at least one) need to be present. Children cannot be dropped off by themselves.

Arrival and Dismissal

Sessions will begin promptly at 9:00 am and will be dismissed at 10:10 am. Children should be dropped off in the main classroom at the end of the hall *before* class begins, but **not earlier than 10 minutes prior** (8:50 am) and picked up promptly at 10:10 outside of their classroom. **To respect the catechists and those attending 10:30 am Mass, it is important to pick up your child on time at 10:10 am!**

Pick Up Authorization

If your child is in the 4th grade or below, it is **mandatory** that someone come to the classroom to pick them up. If a sibling will pick them up, they must be at least 10 years old (5th grade). Only those listed on the “pick up authorization” section of the registration form will be allowed to pick up your child. If you need to add someone to the list during the year, please submit their information to the PCL.

Communication

Since the catechist has the most direct contact with your child, parents should discuss any classroom problems with the catechist first. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, parents should speak with the PCL. If still unresolved, the problem may be brought to the pastor.

Comments, suggestions and ideas are always welcome. Please share them with the Parish Catechetical Leader by email (pclstpeter@gmail.com) or in a written form.

Emergency Class Cancellation

In the event that class is cancelled or in case of emergency, an email and a text message will be sent out as soon as possible alerting families of the cancellation. We will also post on our St. Peter Facebook page as well as post physical notes on the door, when able.

Health Concerns

Health information is collected on the Catechetical Registration Form. Catechists and other personnel are not allowed to dispense or administer medication to students. If your child is on medications, please follow their doctor’s orders in administering their medication.

Student Behavior and Expectations

- Students will be expected to show respect to their teachers and classmates. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Classroom rules are posted in each classroom. At the first disruption, the child will be referred to classroom rules. After the second incident, the child will be sent to talk with the PCL. If inappropriate behavior continues, the parent/guardian will be contacted.
- All students are expected to share in the faith learning experience of the parish program.
- Students attending parish catechetical sessions are expected to regularly attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of obligation, and celebrate sacraments. Parents or guardians are also strongly encouraged to do so. We strive to help our students recognize this parish as their “family of faith”. In order to help them recognize their faith family, it is important that they celebrate Mass here as often as possible.
- The Archdiocese of Mobile has a detailed *Field Trip Policy*. This policy, its regulations, and permission forms will be used for all field trips, service projects, retreats, etc.

Dangerous behavior

Harassment, racial slurs, fighting, smoking, drugs, or other inappropriate (or gang-related) conduct among students will not be tolerated. Violations of this rule will warrant immediate notification of parents/guardians of the child involved, and may warrant suspension or even dismissal of the involved from the program. The proper civil authorities may also be notified.

Weapons

In the unlikely event a student is suspected of possessing a weapon or drugs while on parish premises or as a participant in catechetical program or a youth ministry event, the Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL) will immediately notify the parents of the child. The proper civil authorities may also be notified.

General Expectations

It is expected that each family become actively involved in the parish and in the catechetical program so that by their participation they model a living, conscious and active Christian faith, and reinforce the values and attitudes for living that faith. The family and their children are expected to embrace and live these values and attitudes.

Before a student will be permitted to participate in the catechetical program their parent or guardian must sign the Parent Consent Form at the end of this handbook stating that they have read these rules and policies, and that they agree to be governed by them. These forms are due no later than two weeks after a child begins attending class.

Child & Adolescent Protection Policy

“All children have the right to be safe and protected from harm in any and all environments – home, school, religious institutions, neighborhoods and communities. The Archdiocese of Mobile embraces this right to safety and is dedicated to promoting and ensuring the protection of children” (Archbishop Lipscomb, 2003). With these words, Archbishop issued a policy that Archbishop Rodi continues today.

The policy requires, in part, that all children and youth in grades Pre-K–12 be catechized on the principles listed in the Archdiocesan Child and Adolescents Protection Program. This catechesis takes place during *Respect Life* month which is in October. A letter will be sent to each family, notifying parents of the dates of these CAPP classes for the children and youth.

In addition, the policy requires that all priests, deacons, school administrators, teachers, youth ministers, parish catechists, support personnel, coaches, and other volunteers having “substantial contact” with children attend training in the prevention and recognition of all forms of abuse against children. This program is provided by the Archdiocese. All persons who work with children in the Archdiocese of Mobile will be required to have background checks as part of the CAPP training.

Pursuant to state law, we are required to report suspected child abuse, and we will also follow all Archdiocesan policies on such matters. If you have questions, feel free to contact the Archdiocesan Office of Child Protection.

Phone: (251)434-1559

Email: childprotection@mobarch.org

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

If the Parish Catechetical Program plans an off-site activity or program, you will be required to complete a parental/guardian release form according to the *Archdiocesan Field Trip Policy*.

Acceptance of Responsibilities

I have read this handbook and understand the policies concerning the parish catechetical program for Kindergarten – High School. I agree to abide by these policies, and make sure my child understands her/his responsibilities.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

For the Student:

I understand that I am taking classes to further my growth in the Catholic faith. I will do my best in class and participate fully.

Student's signature

Date

This page is to be completed, signed and returned to The Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL) before the beginning of the parish catechetical program. It must be received no later than two weeks after a child begins attending class.