

Saint Patrick Parish

Religious Education Program

100 South 'L' Street Sparta, Wisconsin

608-269-4748

stpatrickspartarep@gmail.com

Grades K – 11

Parent / Student Handbook

2019 – 2020

Registration and sign off form - last page of this handbook.

(Please complete both sides) Return form with payment to: St. Patrick's School at the address listed above or send with your child to class. If you have questions please call the School office 608-269-4748 or email REP office at stpatrickspartarep@gmail.com

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The REP/Parish reserves the Right to Modify this Handbook.

Saint Patrick Parish Staff

Pastors of St. Patrick's

Fr. Eric Berns, Pastor

Rectory 269-2655

Fr. Fernando E. Lara Hernandez, Associate Pastor

Rectory 269-2655

Parish Secretary

Rocio Rosales

Rectory 269-2655

e-mail: stprectory@stpats.net

Business Manager

Sue Bushmaker

Rectory 269-2655

e-mail: sbushmaker@stpats.net

Director of Religious Education

Charlie Burnett

School office 608-269-4748

REP Administrative duties

Linda Svoboda

School office 608-269-4748

e-mail: stpatrickspartarep@gmail.com

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of Saint Patrick's Parish Religious Education Program (REP) is to share with the family in the religious education of the child by providing an educational program that teaches Church doctrine and develops an experience of Christian community. While the parents/guardians are the primary educators and role models for their children, the REP, in union with parents/guardians, prepares the child for a life in Christ and a desire to serve others in accordance with the Gospel message.

OBJECTIVES

To carry out this philosophy we will strive:

- To demonstrate respect for ourselves, one another, and our REP.
- To teach doctrine and scripture, placing emphasis on building community and serving others in need
- To assist students in learning to make reflective application of Christian values to present-day issues
- To develop a deepening sense of peace and justice towards self, neighbor, and the world
- To promote an educational program which fosters the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and emotional growth of the religious education community

ADMISSION POLICY

Students are placed in the same religious education grade (K-11) as coincides with their grade level at school.

It is expected that all families be active parishioners at St. Patrick's Parish. An Active Parishioner is someone who:

- Has registered in St. Patrick's Parish, providing the parish office with the information needed to maintain accurate parish records. (form available in school office or the rectory)
- Regularly participates in Sunday Liturgy. **Religious Education class does not substitute for Sunday Mass under any circumstance.** Students and parent/guardian need to regularly attend weekend Mass. We are commanded by God to keep Holy the Sabbath day. It helps keep us human beings on the correct path. Please help your child grow in Christ by attending weekly Mass.
- Demonstrates an interest in the life and activities of St. Patrick's Parish community by:
 - Participating in annual programs, including the contribution of time and talent when able
 - Providing financial support to your parish

- Practicing daily prayer

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Patrick's REP admits students of any sex, race, color, nationality and ethnic origin to all rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the program. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, nationality or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies or employment practices.

REGISTRATION

Parents/guardians need to register students annually for the Religious Education Program using the REP Registration Form. Registration will start on the date stated on the REP Calendar typically in August each year for classes starting in September. Late registrations are accepted. Forms are attached or can be found online at stpatricksparish.weconnect.com, click on the Religious Education tab.

Students who are receiving Sacraments need to have their baptismal record on file with us.

REGISTRATION FEES

The Religious Education Registration Fee is \$60.00 each student for Kindergarten through the 11th grade, **If paid by September 1st a \$5 discount per student applies.**

Please contact the REP office if you need help covering Registration Fees. If parents/guardians choose to contribute their time and talent by volunteering as a catechist/Teacher for the REP school year, their children's registration fee is waived for that REP school year. If you have an interest in teaching or co-teaching, please contact the Religious Education office.

Aquinas High School Students only need to register for grade 11 with no fee required. This is needed to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. (also see Sacraments heading)

BUSING for K-6

St. Patrick's parish has arranged for the busing company to drop off K-6 grade REP students from Sparta's public schools at St. Patrick's school each Wednesday afternoon when REP classes are in session. We will have a snack available and free time in the Gym before classes start at 3:45pm. Parent/guardian must pickup students at 4:45pm.

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DAY

If the Sparta Public Schools dismiss early or cancel school due to weather on a scheduled REP day, REP will automatically be canceled. No other notice will be given.

All classes are at St. Patrick's School 100 South L St. Sparta.

K-6 have a snack available in the gym and free play time before class.

Classes K-6 are held on Wednesday afternoon 3:45 pm until 4:45pm.

Classes 7-11 are held on Wednesday evenings 7:00 pm until 8:00pm.

Please enter and leave the building at the main (center glass) doors on 'L' street.

Occasionally a teacher may send home an assignment to be completed or a prayer to be learned. Please assist your child, if younger, and make sure older child(ren) complete the assigned activity so the class can move ahead smoothly. Thank you for your help.

Additionally, there are times when students will be participating in events outside of the classroom (Mass, Adoration, Confession, Stations of the Cross etc.). Every effort will be made to keep these events on time, but it is important to realize these events may, occasionally, run long. Parents/guardians are asked to allow students to participate fully without interruption.

ATTENDANCE / EARLY DISMISSAL / TARDY

Regular attendance in class is vital for successful growth in the knowledge of our Catholic Faith. PARENTS/GUARDIANS should see that their child's attendance at religious education has priority over all other activities. PARENTAL/GUARDIAN insistence on attendance underscores the value of religious education.

The attendance requirements for K-10 require students miss no more than three (3) classes and the 11th grade no more than one (1) class in the REP school year. If a child is unable to attend class due to illness or another legitimate reason, the parent/guardian should notify the REP Office before class. Call or email REP office 608-269-7500 or School office 608-269-4748 e-mail: stpatrickspartarep@gmail.com

If a student is marked absent and the REP office has not received prior notification of that student's absence, we will make every effort to follow up with a phone call home to be sure the student is safe and accounted for.

If the Sparta Public Schools dismiss early or cancel school due to weather on a scheduled REP day, REP will automatically be canceled. No other notice will be given.

MINISTRY and SERVICE

All parents/guardians and students (at all grade levels) are encouraged to share their time and talents in some form of ministry. Each of us is blessed with diverse talents that can support true community and bring us closer to Christ. Early stewardship that is cultivated and practiced consistently builds the framework for a socially responsible young adult whose future is assured infinite rewards from serving others. To encourage this stewardship and framework, the REP is requiring service hours for Confirmation to be completed in grades 7-10.

- Students in 7-10th grade will be required to complete 12 service hours total prior to the Sacrament of Confirmation in grade 11. At least 3 of these service hours must be at St Patrick's parish/school. The remaining 9 may include other community service.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION AND RECEPTION POLICY

According to Canon Law, all children must receive the Sacrament of Baptism prior to any other sacrament. If a child has not been baptized by the second grade year of school, arrangements must be made by the parents/guardians of the child with the Pastor before candidacy for any other sacrament can be established.

Children of Saint Patrick's Parish receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist during the second grade year of school. The Sacrament of Confirmation is received during their junior year of high school.

Children receive preparation for these three sacraments in one of three (3) ways:

- Attendance at Saint Patrick's Catholic School
- Attendance at Saint Patrick's Religious Education Program (REP)
- Attendance at another Catholic school, which offers specific, immediate preparation for the sacrament to be received. The pastor must approve this program of preparation.

PLEASE NOTE: For a child to receive a Sacrament at Saint Patrick's Parish, he or she must have been enrolled in one of the three (3) programs above for all years prior to the sacramental year. For example, for a child to receive Confirmation it is not enough to enroll him/her in the junior year Religious Education Program. He/she must have been **continuously enrolled in all the years prior to the eleventh year.**

If you need help with an alternate preparation process please contact the REP office to get an option worked out.

SACRAMENTS OF FIRST RECONCILIATION & FIRST EUCHARIST

Any child wishing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist must:

- Attend REP classes or Catholic school prior to (second grade) the year of the receipt of the sacrament.
- Attend REP or Catholic school in 2nd grade for immediate preparation.
- REP Office must have a copy of the Baptismal record prior to Reconciliation and First Eucharist.
- Attend the MANDATORY meetings, with their parents/guardians, prior to First Reconciliation and prior to First Eucharist.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS

Students make their immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation in grades nine and ten. However, all of the grades (1-11) are important and necessary for the preparation for the sacraments and a fuller understanding of the Catholic Faith.

As the students (9th and 10th grade) begin their final preparation for the sacrament of confirmation in their junior year, they will need to complete the following requirements:

- Must have Baptismal record on file with REP office.
- Must have received First Eucharist & reconciliation.
- Attend the MANDATORY 10th grade Confirmation Retreat
- Attend all grades of religious education training prior to the year of the receipt of Confirmation.
- Regular attendance at R.E.P. classes. No more than 3 absences, except for illness or other legitimate reasons
- Complete 12 service hours – With at least 3 service hours completed at St Patrick’s Parish/School. (should be completed between grades 7 through 10th)
- Select a Confirmation name. Name must be of a Saint. The student will write a report about the Saint they have chosen and why they selected that name. Though not explicitly required, it is highly preferred and suggested the name be of a Saint of the same gender.
- Select a Confirmation sponsor. The sponsor must be a Confirmed Catholic in good standing with the Catholic Church. A good sponsor is one who the student admires as a faithful witness to Jesus Christ and who attends Mass and receives the Sacraments frequently. The sponsor cannot be a parent/guardian of the student. The student can have two sponsors if desired. If the student chooses two sponsors, one must be a man and the other a woman.
- Write a letter to the Bishop requesting to be confirmed which explains why the student wishes to be Confirmed.(This will be done as part of class in grade 11)

DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR POLICY

We expect students to show proper respect toward their teachers and classmates. Disciplinary concerns will be managed respectfully, while students are expected to be accountable for their actions and behaviors.

Disruptive/disrespectful behavior harms the student, valuable class time, and growth of the entire group. When disciplinary concerns occur, each concern will be evaluated individually and generally directed in the following manner:

- The teacher will work to resolve the disruption through discussion with the student(s) at the time it occurs.
- If resolution is not obtained, the teacher will refer the student(s) to the REP Office.
- If the student continues to demonstrate disruptive/disrespectful behavior, the Director of Religious Education will notify the student's parent/guardian. We ask that parents/guardians actively work with us in handling any discipline issues.
- As a last resort, a student will be removed from the REP if disruptive behavior continues after all interventions are exhausted and with the approval of the Director of Religious Education and Pastor.

Violence of any kind is NOT tolerated! Any student physically harming another will be subject to immediate disciplinary action. The severity of the incident and history of the students will be considered when discipline is administered. These actions may include, but will not be limited to: written assignments, detention during and after REP class time, suspension, and/or expulsion from the program.

INJURIES or ILLNESS DURING CLASS

If a student becomes injured or ill during REP classes, the teacher or designee will immediately notify the REP Office to manage the circumstances. The REP Office will notify the student's parent/guardian. Only in a life threatening or critical situation will the REP Office or designee contact 911.

INFECTION / ILLNESS PREVENTION

Disposable gloves and (secured) cleaning materials are managed by the REP Office in the event of an injury or illness involving body fluids. As indicated above, emergency services will be contacted in critical/life-threatening situations. A basic first aid/medical kit is accessible in case of need and phone access is available in the REP Office (located in the school).

SEARCH and SEIZURE POLICY

Anything brought onto St. Patrick's property is subject to search and seizure policy.

Although the REP anticipates that dangerous events are unlikely or minimal, it is necessary to maintain a safe environment.

If a serious problem arises or is suspected, student's personal property will be searched by the Director of Religious Education. The Director of Religious Education will immediately contact parents/guardians and/or the appropriate persons as necessary.

SUBSTANCE USE – MEDICATIONS – FOOD – DRINK – ATTIRE – ELECTRONIC DEVICES and MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

Students should come to class in clothing that does not promote alcohol, drugs or illicit behavior. Clothing must reflect a decorum of modesty.

If your child is taking medication of any kind, it cannot be administered by REP personnel and/or volunteers. Please make arrangements for your child to take their medication prior to or following REP classes.

Students are not to bring and consume food, drink and/or snacks during class with the exception of prearranged events and permission from the Catechist and Director. Prearranged approval to have food and drink during class will be done with notification between teacher and REP Director.

Students are not to use cell phones and/or other electronic devices during class. Please turn them off when entering the classroom. Use of cell phones or any articles that cause class disruption will not be tolerated and will be removed during class. The Director will secure any removed articles until given to parents/guardians at the conclusion of class. Refer to the Discipline & Behavior Policy subsection. We expect parents/guardians will work with REP staff to avoid such situations and support a safe and respectful environment out of consideration for all individuals present.

FIRE / DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

A fire / disaster drill will be conducted by the REP Office and held annually to enhance emergency preparedness of Staff and Students during REP classes. The REP Office will follow procedures developed by Saint Patrick School Policy and use as appropriate for emergencies that could occur during REP classes.

PARENT’S/GUARDIAN’S ROLE

Parents/Guardians are the primary teachers and role models of the faith.

Teachers are only aids in this process. Parents/guardians can help their children by reviewing lessons, asking questions, being interested in and aware of what is happening in the classroom, making sure material sent home by the teacher is completed, volunteering in the classroom and for special events and actively participating in any parent/student meetings. Parent/guardians attendance with the child at Mass or other parish activities are key examples for your child's future growth in the faith.

No program of religious instruction can be fully effective without the continuous interest, support and example of the family.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The Diocese of La Crosse requires a Safe Environment orientation for all volunteers and staff of each parish. **As parents you should know more about this program.** Follow the directions below to view the program online at your convenience. If you do not have internet access, you can view the video by making arrangements with the R.E.P. Office.

Directions to view the Safe Environment Program of The Diocese of La Crosse

1. On the internet, go to “www.dioc.org”
2. Click on the “Offices & Ministries” tab top left of the screen
3. Click on the “Safe Environment” tab in the right column
4. Click on the “Program Training” tab on the left of the screen
5. Click on the “Parent” tab
6. Please follow all of the steps to complete the training (click on blue wording to get started)

All students will receive age appropriate safe environment training as part of their class instructions. Any parent may choose to opt out of this training by signing the opt out box on the registration form.