

Welcome to the Saint Jude ^{THE} Apostle PARISH

2023-2024 Religious Education Program



"Let the little children come to me." In Christ's own words we are beckoned to draw closer to Him. It is in this spirit that the St. Jude the Apostle Religious Education Program strives to find each "little one" where he/she is and encourage them to take steps closer to God.

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Mission of the St. Jude Religious Education Program

1. To teach the Message contained in Scripture, Revelation and Catholic Tradition in order to help children build the foundation of knowledge on which a mature religious decision may one day be made. The content for this program follows the norms established in the National Directory for Catechesis (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2020).
2. To try and make children aware of the responsibilities which arise from their relationship with God and others by teaching them the Mission of the Church and providing opportunities for them to be of service to others.
3. To provide opportunities to pray and worship through a variety of prayer forms and liturgies.
4. To provide programs for parents to assist them in their responsibilities for the Christian development of their children.

This handbook contains information concerning details of the St. Jude the Apostle Faith Religious Education Program for children, teens and adults, as well as, our Sacramental Preparation Programs.

Role of the Parents

Parents are the primary educators in the faith. Together with them... all members of the family play an active part in the education of the younger members... The family is defined as the "domestic Church"...

General Directory for Catechesis, #255

We believe that formation in Catholic Christianity employs a partnership between parents and the parish. While the parish can provide formal formation in faith, we encourage, and provide support for, parents to take an active role in their children's ongoing faith development. Our Catholic tradition sees weekly participation in the Mass to be an essential practice for this to take place.

Role of the Catechist

Catechists in our Religious Education Program are Catholic persons of faith who volunteer their time and talent to share that gift of faith with the youth of the parish. Catechists strive to build up a community spirit among the youth which will strengthen and nourish them, and which will call them to discover, internalize, proclaim, and live the Gospel message, and to grow in faith.

GENERAL REGISTRATION INFORMATION

All children of registered parish members are entitled to receive a religious education. Information regarding the Religious Education Programs is emailed and/or mailed in the Spring to all eligible parish members for the following catechetical year. Additionally, program announcements will appear in the Sunday bulletin. Registration for the 2023/24 catechetical year will commence on or about June 1st. To facilitate program planning and material ordering registration forms for the 2022/23 Catechetical year are due no later than June 15th.

No new registrations will be accepted after November 1st unless a family has moved into the area or a child is transferring from another catechetical or school program.

REGISTRATION

Registration for Religious Education Programs will be accepted by completing the 2022/23 Registration Form, signing the policy agreement and returning it by mail, in the Sunday offertory collection basket, or in person. Registration is also available on-line registration by visiting the St. Jude the Apostle Parish website at <https://www.stjudeparishwauwatosa.org/>.

Students will be assigned to a classroom on a first come, first serve basis. The order of classroom assignments will be based on the postmark of returned via mail registration forms or the time/date stamp on online form submissions. If more students enroll than available catechists, a waiting list will be created. As new catechists come forward, students will be removed from the waiting list and assigned a classroom. Students on a waiting list will be notified in June. Classroom assignments will be communicated by the end of August.

The student to catechist ratio will be no more than 15:1.

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration tuition & fees cover only a fraction of the total cost of the Religious Education Program. The remainder of the program fees are covered by the parish through our stewardship of treasure provided via parish envelopes. Tuition & Fees are due at time of registration. A \$10 late fee will be assessed to all registrations received after June 15th. *****No family is turned away because of an inability to pay.*****

Faith Formation Tuition:

1 student - \$170 2 students - \$240 3 or more students - \$325

** Non-parishioners will be charged a fee of \$150 per student with no cap.

Sacrament Process Fees:

1st Reconciliation &

1st Eucharist (2nd) \$35

(in addition to class fee)

Youth Confirmation

(preparation and retreat)

\$75

All fees will need to be paid in full by June 30, 2023 unless a payment plan has been arranged.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Financial hardships should never prevent a family from registering their children in the Religious Education Program. Financial assistance is available for those who demonstrate a need. All information shared will be kept in strict confidence. To discuss financial assistance, please contact Heather Warner in the Parish office. A Financial Assistance Request form will be made available to you, or you can download one at <https://www.stjudeparishwauwatosa.org/>. Because fees are a direct cost to the parish, families are asked to cover as much of them as possible. Payment options are available.



GENERAL GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

DROP OFF AND PICK UP SAFETY INFORMATION:

To ensure the safety of our children, we ask all parents to follow our established drop off and pick up procedure as follows:

- For their safety, and ordered by the Wauwatosa Fire Department, students should be dropped off in the south parking lots and not in front of the school.
- Students should enter the building immediately upon arrival for their safety.
- Students should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before class begins.
- You are encouraged to park your car and come into the building to pick up your child.
- Children will be instructed to wait in the entranceway or in the building under supervision.

ABSENCE FROM CLASS/EARLY DISMISSAL

We are responsible for students during the time they are registered for our program. Therefore, we must keep accurate attendance and tardiness records on file in the Christian Formation Office. When a child is absent, please call and leave a message in the Christian Formation Office 414-258-88121 x. 231 or email Heather Warner at hwarner@stjudetheapostle.net that your child(ren) will not be attending.

If a parent wishes to have their child(ren) dismissed early for any reason, they must contact the Pastoral Associate ahead of time. No catechist is to dismiss his or her class before the end of the class time. No catechist can keep a child after dismissal time.

“Snow Day” CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event that school is called off for the Wauwatosa School District or St. Jude the Apostle Catholic School **due to weather conditions**, there will be no Religious Education classes for that evening. If the weather is in question as a Monday progresses or at anytime on a Sunday and it is determined that conditions are unsafe, cancellation information will be broadcast on WTMJ and WISN, which can be accessed at www.tmj4.com and www.wisn.com/weather/closings. Additionally, families will be contacted via email and REMIND. Cancellation information will be communicated by 4:00pm for Mondays and 7:00am for Sundays.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parent contact information and alternate contact information must be provided on the registration form. In the event a child becomes ill or is injured during class, every effort will be made to contact the parents or guardians first. If parents cannot be reached in a timely manner, the alternate emergency contact(s) will be notified. If any of this information changes throughout the year, please inform the Religious Education Office.

MEDICAL NEEDS/ ALLERGIES AND HEALTH CONCERNS

Parents must indicate on the registration form student's allergies and any other health problems which may help us better meet his/her safety needs during class time. Allergy information will be shared with catechists/volunteers. If a student is required to keep on his/her person, personal inhalers or other medicines or medical equipment, the parent must indicate this information on the registration form and complete a medication release form.

CELL PHONE & RIGHT TO INSPECT POLICY

Students who use their cell phones during class will be given a verbal reminder to turn off their cell phone and put it away. At the next offense, the cell phone will be taken away and returned to the student after class. Any further infraction will involve parents needing to retrieve the phone from the Pastoral Associate and a scheduled conference.

If a student is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession, the Pastoral Associate is required to investigate. St. Jude the Apostle Religious Education Program reserves the right to search and seize drugs, weapons and other contraband when there is reasonable belief that such contraband is in the possession of a student or volunteer. Parents and Law enforcement will be notified.

INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL NEEDS FAITH FORMATION

By right of baptism, all Catholics should receive the benefit of the appropriate sacraments. In the St. Jude the Apostle Religious Education program, no child will be denied sacramental preparation and the opportunity for spiritual enrichment. We are committed to serve children with special needs and their families with programming and formational opportunities deemed appropriate for the individual. We believe that each child should have the opportunity to build a relationship with God at his/her level. The opportunity is provided on the registration form to specify any special needs a student might have. These include special learning needs or disabilities. These needs will be shared with catechists and other volunteers when deemed necessary and appropriate. Every effort will be made to accommodate all children and youth in our programs.

FAITH FORMATION HOMESCHOOLING

Generally, the catechesis of children takes place in parish religious education/faith formation programs. The Faith is to be shared in a community context. However, there may be unique circumstances that prevent that full participation, and families may choose to provide formal systematic catechesis for their children in the home.

The Church, catechetical leaders, catechists, and parents all realize that much (if not most,) education in faith takes place outside a classroom setting - in the family, in the neighborhood, in the parish community. It is in these settings that children see and experience the lived faith.

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee does not allow homeschooling for sacramental preparation. Children preparing for sacraments of initiation must be prepared for the sacraments in the parish.

The St. Jude the Apostle Faith Formation program will work to support and assist any family in their decision. If you home school your child(ren) and would like more information or when/how one would go about coordinating the reception of sacraments for your child(ren) in our parish, please contact Heather Warner in the Faith Parish Office at 414-258-8821 x231.

SAFEGUARDING ALL GOD'S FAMILY POLICY

For Students:

As mandated, the diocese requires that all students be given the opportunity to attend a presentation on ways to keep themselves safe. This will be offered during class time during the catechetical year. Parents will be given the opportunity to preview the information presented. These presentations will reinforce our belief in the respect and dignity of each human person and help children be more aware of what constitutes a safe boundary among family, friends, and strangers.

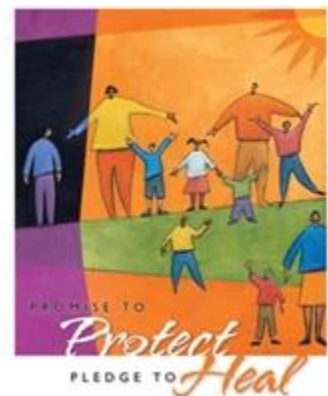
Pursuant to state law and the diocesan Safe Environment Policy, we are required to report suspected child abuse and we will follow the state laws and diocesan policy on such matters.

For Parents:

At the Opening Parent Meeting and throughout the year, parents will be provided with Safeguarding All God's Family information and newsletters. The information presented is useful in keeping family members safe from child predators, as well as pertinent information regarding bullying, internet safety and other topics.

For Catechists and all Volunteers:

All volunteers must have an interview with the Pastoral Associate. Criminal and personal background checks are done and safe environment training is completed before a volunteer is allowed to minister in the Religious Education Program.



LOCKDOWN PLAN

In the unlikely event of an intruder, the catechists will lock their doors and all students and catechists will remain in the classroom until they are informed by the Pastoral Associate and/or other official authority that it is safe to unlock the classroom doors. When the authorities deem it safe to do so, the classroom catechists will ensure the safe dismissal of each student to their parents on the sign out sheet.

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

In the unlikely event of a fire, catechists will pick up the communication folder and walk the children out to the assigned area for their classroom as indicated on the map by the classroom door. The catechists will take roll upon arriving at their designated location and will indicate the safe dismissal of each student to their parents on the sign out sheet. The Religious Education program conducts two fire drills per year.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Following Jesus' command, "Love one another as I have loved you", our Religious Education staff, volunteers and students treat each other with mutual respect. To create an environment that promotes Christian values and behaviors, and which creates a positive learning space, all students, catechists and guests must abide by the Religious Education behavior guidelines.

General rules for all program participants:

- Respect all people and the property of others.
- Behave in a courteous manner.
- Take good care of church and school property.
- Settle disagreements in a peaceful manner

Specific Behavior Guidelines:

1. Respect and courtesy toward directors, catechists, and other students is expected at all times.
2. Students are not to enter their classrooms until an adult is present.
3. Students are not to remove any items from the desks they are using, or tamper with property of St. Jude the Apostle Parish & School.
4. Classes will start promptly at the designated time.
5. Students are expected to bring their religion textbook and/or materials/folders to class each week.
6. Gum is not allowed in school/church.
7. "Wheeled shoes" are not allowed in school/church.



DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In order to maintain an atmosphere of learning and growth in faith, the following process for disciplinary action will be observed:

- **FIRST OCCASION** The catechist will speak to the student privately concerning his/her behavior. Students may be sent to see the Pastoral Associate for disruptive behavior. If the child is sent out of the classroom, parents will be notified by the Pastoral Associate.
- **SECOND OCCASION** The Pastoral Associate will notify the parents.
- **THIRD OCCASION** The catechist and program director may determine that the student shall not be allowed to return to class until the catechist, program director and parents have met with the student. Any student who has been sent to meet with the director three times for disruptive behavior may not return to the class until such a meeting has taken place.

A student who continues negative behavior following steps 1-3 will be dismissed from the program for the current year at the discretion of the program director. Options for home study will be offered to parents/guardians. Students dismissed the previous year may not re-enter the program without first having a meeting with the director. If home study is not completed, from the previous year, the student must repeat the grade level from which they were removed.

GENERAL SACRAMENT PREPARATION GUIDELINES



Sacraments are expressions of faith and essential to what it means to live as a Catholic Christian. Our sacrament preparation processes are created to be opportunities for children and parents to grow in faith and learn or deepen their understanding of the sacrament and the graces received in the sacramental ritual and how they can help one to live as disciples of Jesus.

Families must be registered members of St. Jude the Apostle Parish. Participation in Sacrament Preparations by members of other parishes must be accompanied by a letter of permission from the Pastor of their home parish.

Sacramental preparation is separate from the regular faith formation process for children and youth provided in a Catholic School or Religious Education setting.

PARENTAL ROLE

At their child's Baptism, parents agreed to be the primary educators of their child in the faith by word and example. Therefore, parents are expected to work in partnership with the Church to help their children prepare to celebrate the sacraments.

- ✓ To participate in a sacrament preparation process complete involvement of the child and his/her parent(s) is mandated as required in each preparation process.
- ✓ **All parent meetings incorporated into a sacrament preparation processes are mandatory.** If a parent cannot attend, a delegate such as a grandparent, uncle, aunt, etc. may be sent to receive the necessary information.
- ✓ The Religious Education Program will advertise the sacrament schedule in their calendars and updated process information in the bulletin, newsletters and web site. It is the parent's responsibility to read these communications and keep informed as to when a process begins and all the requirements within the process.

MASS ATTENDANCE

The Eucharistic celebration is the 'source and summit' of our faith. At Mass "we participate in the Paschal Mystery of Christ, that is, in his dying and rising which is made present for us in the Eucharistic sacrifice." (USCCA Ch 17) Through our participation in this paschal process, we are transformed with the bread and wine into the Body of Christ to bring Christ's message of peace and love into the world. **To be adequately prepared to celebrate the sacraments, children and youth should attend Mass weekly.**



PROOF OF BAPTISM

Proof of Baptism is required and must be turned in at registration for a sacramental preparation process. Proof of Baptism of the candidate is required and consists of original Baptismal Certificate or photo copy. All original documents will be returned. Copies from other parishes may be sent directly to the Religious Education Office at 734 N Glenview Ave Wauwatosa, WI 53213.

Individuals baptized in an accepted non-Catholic Christian ecclesial community, will make a profession of faith prior to preparing for the sacraments.

Sacramental Preparation First Reconciliation

The sacrament of Reconciliation is first celebrated with children in 2nd grade. It is required that one full year of Catholic faith formation has been completed prior to enrolling. Preparation is held in the fall. Parents must attend a mandatory preparation session to help their child become more aware of the forgiveness which is ours through Jesus Christ.

Sacramental Preparation First Communion

Through the preparation process, children in 2nd grade or higher and their families deepen their understanding of this sacred mystery. It is required that one full year of Catholic faith formation has been completed prior to enrolling. Preparation is provided in the spring. Parents attend two preparation sessions, one without their child and the second with their child.

Sacramental Preparation Confirmation

Along with Baptism and Eucharist, Confirmation is a sacrament of Christian Initiation. It represents a sealing of Baptism and the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Confirmation program is designed to help our young people to explore, deepen and strengthen the seeds of faith they were given at baptism. The candidates, themselves, are choosing the Catholic faith as a way of life.

The preparation process is designed for eleventh grade students. The purpose of the program is as follows:

- To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ
- To encourage them to participate in the life, mission, and work of the Church
- To promote their spiritual growth

The candidate must:

- Participate in two years of formal religious education in either parochial school or a parish Religious Education Program in 9th and 10th grade.
- Be knowledgeable about the basic teachings of our Faith.
- Participate FULLY in the Parish Confirmation Program
- Attend and participate in class and attend Mass on Sundays
- Participate in the service requirements
- Participate in the confirmation retreat

Candidates and families will receive a Confirmation Handbook detailing program expectations.

****Regular attendance is required in order to be eligible to receive the respective sacraments. Whether a student is eligible to receive the sacrament due to excessive tardiness and/or absenteeism will be determined by the Pastoral Associate.**

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC) is for children between the Ages of 8 and 16, and who have reached 2nd grade age, whether baptized or unbaptized. Children preparing to receive the Sacraments they have missed since Baptism, or to join the Catholic Church through Baptism, will attend sacramental preparation sessions in addition to Christian Formation classes on a regular basis beginning in September and continuing through the Easter Season. The process enables children to enter into a relationship with God and share in the life of their identity as Children of God. The importance of weekly Mass will be stressed as will understanding the parts of the Mass.

Each family comes to the process with different needs. The children will be of various ages and have had different levels of previous instruction. Families will meet with the Pastoral Associate to determine the preparatory needs of the family. Every child will need a Sponsor/Godparent. The Sponsor/Godparent will be someone other than a parent, who will support the child in his or her Catholic Journey. The sponsor must be a Baptized and Confirmed Catholic, who is over the age of 16, and is in good standing with the Catholic Church. The sponsor will fill out a sponsor registration form.

Elementary Religious Education Grades K-6

Elementary Faith Formation at St. Jude the Apostle Parish is designed for all children attending a public school in grades K5 – 6. Classes are held in the Education Center and taught by volunteer catechists who receive training to enable them to share our Catholic faith in an effective way.

In K through 6th grade, will utilize the Sadlier *We Believe* catechetical curriculum. *We Believe* empowers students to uphold their faith and go out into the world as Catholics—proud of who they are. The Catholic Identity Edition assists children and families in:

- Building Catholic Identity around core Catholic beliefs, practices, and principles so all students, including, needs of diverse learners, can truly embody their faith
- Includes flexible models of implementation that serve the changing needs of busy families.
- Involves families with tools to enrich their identity as a Catholic family in today's world.

Grades K-6 meet every Monday night from 6 – 7:15pm beginning the first Monday after Labor Day until the end of April.

Middle School Religious Education Grades 7-8th

Youth in grades 7-8th will explore *Chosen: This is Your Catholic Faith* which is a program endorsed by the USCCB that takes young people on a journey through the entire Catholic faith in all its richness and vitality. Young people will be captivated by the story, from Creation all the way through salvation history, and they will come to see how the sacraments, prayer, and discipleship are the keys to a happy life. The goal of this program is nothing short of winning over the hearts of teens and making them disciples of Christ. *Chosen's* carefully designed methodology features highly effective and engaging material conveyed through videos, student workbooks, and classroom experience.

Grades 7-8 meet every Monday night from 6 – 7:15pm beginning the first Monday after Labor Day until the end of April.

High School Faith Formation Grades 9-10th

The St. Jude the Apostle Religious Education program provides an opportunity for High School students in grades 9th and 10th to grow in faith by developing a meaningful relationship with Jesus, a better understanding of our Catholic tradition and help to plant roots for the adult years. This program includes instruction, fellowship, prayer, service, and fun. The Youth Ministry program also provides opportunities for youth to engage in service, social and retreat events throughout the year.

Grades 9-10 will meet on the first and third Sunday of the month from 10-11am and then attend 1:00am Liturgy.

Two years of High School Christian Formation classes are required of any young person, not enrolled in a Catholic High School before they begin to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Progress and Assessment of Faith Formation Participants

Assessment can be a useful tool to ensure that details of the Gospel message are being clearly communicated to our young people.

- Testing cannot be used to determine whether or not a child will have passed on to the next grade.
- All written assessments and evaluation tools must be cleared by the Pastoral Associate.

Progress reports for grades 1-8 will be sent home in November. The report will communicate to the parents/guardians the following:

- Students understanding of the content presented in class
- Student participation
- Student's cooperation

St. Jude's Athletic Policy for Parish School and Religious Education Programs

All students are invited and encouraged to participate in the various sports sponsored by St. Jude's. To be eligible for being on a team or trying out for a team, the following criteria must be met:

1. The family must be a registered member of St. Jude the Apostle parish. 6145.2(b) Archdiocesan Policy. Reminder: Any children who are currently in grades 6, 7, and 8 who participated in interscholastic athletics for the previous parish/school last year are ineligible to play sports for the new parish/school for one year. 6145.2, #28
2. The family must be a registered member of St. Jude the Apostle parish by August 1st.
3. Students in the Religious education program must attend regularly. This is defined by the parish as **missing no more than one class per month during the school year and not just during the season of a particular sport. Regular attendance also includes being on time for class. Excessive tardiness will affect a student's eligibility to participate in a sport(s). Eligibility based on tardiness will be determined by the Religious Education Director. If a student misses more than one class per month or is excessively tardy, he/she will be ineligible for the rest of that season or the upcoming season (which may take place the next school year. For example, if the season has ended and then the student misses class which violate the policy, then that student will be ineligible next year.)**
4. **NEW:** Dual participation in the same sport is permitted. For example, a student-athlete on a parish-based team who attends a public school may now play on the parish team and the school team concurrently. A student-athlete may now play on a school/parish team and another team such as a select all-star, club, tournament, AAU or recreation league team at the same time during the season.
5. A team's entire competitive season must be completed before any member of that team may begin participation in another sport. This restriction applies to practices as well as games or matches. **EXAMPLE:** A player participating with the football or soccer team must complete the **entire** football or soccer season before participating in any practices, games, matches, scrimmages, etc. for another sport ... such as basketball or volleyball. 6145.2(b) Archdiocesan policy