SACRED HEART CHURCH
CCD FAMILY HANDBOOK

Revised August 3, 2026

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Dear Parents,

On behalf of our Pastor, Fr. A.C. Peri, and the catechists who make this program successful, I warmly welcome you and your family to Sacred Heart Church's CCD Program. It is a great blessing and privilege to be a part of your child's faith formation and preparation for reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and the Eucharist!

At your child's baptism, you committed to being their primary guide in faith. Our program aims to support you in this role by providing structured instruction in Catholic beliefs. However, the hour spent in class is just one part of faith formation. Your child's understanding and appreciation of our faith will be most profoundly shaped by experiencing it at home through your example.

To make the most of this opportunity, we kindly request that you:

- **Attend Sunday Mass as a family**
- **Engage with your child's CCD homework**
- **Prioritize your child's participation in the CCD Program**
- **Support and cooperate with your child's volunteer catechist**

We kindly ask that you:

1. Review this handbook with your child to understand key aspects of our CCD Program
2. Parent/Guardian and Child sign the handbook agreement form (last page)

Please keep this handbook and the CCD calendar for future reference throughout the year. For your convenience, a digital version of the handbook is available on our website.

Wishing you and your family God's blessings,

Sandy M. Duarte

Sandy M. Duarte
Director of Religious Education
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Family Commitment Prayer

God our Father, who mediates the sacred sacrament of Marriage, we thank You for blessing us with the gift of families, each one unique and precious. You created the family as an image of love and unity, revealed to us by the Most Holy Trinity. Our family is committed to setting an example of that love and unity throughout our daily lives and in all our personal relationships.

Guide us on our journey as we read Your holy Word and reflect upon it. May Your word transform us so that, through our witness, we can become the yeast that transforms the world. Strengthen our bonds, deepen our faith, and help us to be a beacon of Your love to all we encounter.

O Holy Spirit, who resides within us through our baptism, we ask that You illuminate our hearts and guide our family relationships and interactions with others.

We pray for all families in our parish, that they may hear and heed Your Word. May our parish community reflect the love and unity of the Blessed Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - now and always.

Amen.

Sacred Heart Church
2026-2027 CCD CALENDAR
Classes Held at Sacred Heart Church Hall

September 13, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
September 20, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
September 27, 2026:	**10:00 AM Family Session with Fr. Frank Scanlon**
October 4, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
October 11, 2026:	**COLUMBUS DAY – NO CLASS**
October 18, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
October 25, 2026:	**10:00 AM Family Session with Fr. Frank Scanlon**
November 1, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
November 8, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
November 15, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
November 22, 2026:	**10:00 AM Family Session with Fr. Frank Scanlon**
November 29, 2026:	**HAPPY THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS**
December 6, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
December 13, 2026:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
December 20, 2026:	**10:00 AM Family Session with Fr. Frank Scanlon**
December 27, 2026:	**MERRY CHRISTIMAS – NO CLASS**
January 3, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
January 10, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
January 17, 2027:	**MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY – NO CLASS**
January 24, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
January 31, 2027:	**10:00 AM Family Session with Fr. Frank Scanlon**
February 7, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
February 14, 2027:	**PRESIDENTS DAY – NO CLASS**
February 21, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
February 28, 2027:	**10:00 AM Family Session with Fr. Frank Scanlon**
March 7, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
March 14, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
March 21, 2027:	**10:00 AM Family Session with Fr. Frank Scanlon**
March 28, 2027:	**EASTER SUNDAY – NO CLASS**
April 4, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
April 11, 2027:	10:00 AM All Classes in Session
May 2, 2027:	**11:30 AM First Communion**

Confirmation Date to be Determined

Catechetical Volunteers

Catechists are women and men who are members of our parish family. In this ministry, catechists work as assistants to the parents who are the primary catechist. Our role is to ***help***, ***not to replace***, the vital role parents have as the primary catechists. It is our role to help the parent's journey with their children as they deepen their faith and love for our Lord.

This ministry is indeed challenging, but, as most catechists will state, it is as rewarding a calling and ministry as there is. If anyone wishes to become a catechist or catechist assistant, please contact the Director of CCD who will be able to further discuss the opportunities and areas of need in our parish's program.

Class Schedule and Times

Class times are 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Sundays from September through April. The calendar enclosed, is also on the parish's website (www.sacredheartepri.com), and available upon request.

Parents are expected to bring their child/children into the church hall using the ramp located on the side of the church.

Registration/Enrollment

You must be a registered parishioner to participate in our CCD Program.

Registration, including the remittance of the registration fee, are necessary prior to your child attending his or her first class.

Students are to be re-enrolled every year.

New to the Parish or Transferring

Students transferring from another parish's religious education program or from a Catholic school must supply the following when registering:

- A copy of your child's baptismal certificate.
- Documentation of prior religious education or Catholic school completion (letter of verification, including attendance record) Students who enter the CCD program without having celebrated the sacraments of initiation, and who are beyond the usual age for reception of these sacraments, may need additional formation.

Attendance

Regular attendance at CCD classes is important to the ongoing faith formation of students and should always take precedence over ***all*** extracurricular activities. The sessions are built on each other and carry a central focus throughout the year.

Much like attendance in elementary/middle school, absences can have an adverse effect on your child's growth.

The student must complete all class work and homework. If a student is ill, the parent should notify the CCD office prior to class to report their absence.

- Students **may not miss more than 3 classes** to be considered ready for reception of the sacraments and for the year to be counted.

Please contact us immediately if there is a family situation that will impact your child's attendance.

Tardiness

Please arrive on time. Parents and children who arrive late not only miss out on important information and class time, but they also disrupt the class.

Late arrival and early dismissal is very disruptive. It is suggested that every child come to class each week prepared to fulfill their class time obligation. Late arrival/early dismissal is counted toward attendance and will impact their overall attendance record. **3 late arrivals/early dismissals are the equivalent of 1 absence**.

Communication

There are four primary modes of communication:

- E-mail: It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure the CCD Office has an up-to-date email address on file.
- Facebook: Sacred Heart Church
- Web Site: www.sacredheartepri.com
- In the event of inclement weather, cancellations will be posted and announced on the local TV stations as well as Facebook.

Learning Environment

A welcoming and respectful environment is necessary to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to sharing and learning. Courtesy and cooperation is expected of each and every person and respect for the catechist, assistant, and fellow students is required

Students are required to follow the rules and regulations discussed herein, as well as the rules set forth in their respective class:

- Students will NOT be allowed to use cell phones or any electronic devices during class time or special sessions. If these items are found to be used during a CCD session they will be collected and returned at the end of the session and parents will be notified. Sacred Heart is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones or other electronics.
- Appropriate dress is encouraged.
- No food is allowed.
- No chewing gum.
- No toys or games.
- Students may not write on white boards unless as part of class instruction/activity.
- Students may not enter the church hall without a catechist, assistant, or other CCD staff member or volunteer present.
- Care must be taken of church property: tables, chairs, walls, posters, books, projects, etc.

Discipline

Most of the children in our program are interested in learning about their faith. At times, some children are unable to control their behavior, and disrupt the class. All students are expected to come to class willing and eager to learn.

If a child displays behavior that is inconsistent with the rules and values established in their class and/or the program for the good of all, their behavior will be redirected in a positive manner. Catechist and/or staff members shall have a conversation with the child, modeling positive behavior and encouraging positive alternative choices and virtues. Continued behavior concerns (even over multiple class sessions) may necessitate the catechist to request intervention by the Director of CCD to discuss with the student possible solutions to the problem.

If a catechist refers a student to the Director a second time (even over multiple class sessions), the parents will be notified and the parent and child will meet with the Director in order to address the behavior and resolve the situation. The parent will be required to attend class with their children until the behavior is amended.

If the disciplinary problem cannot be resolved and the student cannot control his/her behavior, an alternative setting for the child's learning experience will be recommended.

Mass Attendance

Attending Mass is the primary way in which children and adults learn about their faith. During Mass, we hear the word of God proclaimed, and participate in the heavenly banquet that is the Eucharist.

Every family will be required to place a tithing envelope in the Sunday collection basket each weekend. A monetary contribution is ***not required***. Envelopes will be recorded as a way to track Mass attendance. A weekly report will be provided to the Pastor.

Academic Expectations for Each Grade Level

The children will be expected to memorize specific prayers and have a good knowledge of other prayers at each grade level. Please pray with and encourage your child to say these prayers frequently in order to foster the memorization process. All the prayers are found toward the back of your child's textbook.

Kindergarten
Sign of the Cross

First Grade
Same as Kindergarten, plus Our Father, Hail Mary,
Glory Be to the Father

Second Grade
Same as Grades K-1, plus Great Commandment,
Grace before Meals, Act of Contrition

Third Grade
Same as Grades K-2, plus Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Fourth Grade
Same as Grades K-3, plus Corporal Works of Mercy

Fifth Grade
Same as Grades K-4, plus Stations of the Cross,
Apostle's Creed, Seven Sacraments, 10 Commandments

Sixth Grade
Same as Grades K-5, plus Beatitudes, Rosary,
Hail Holy Queen

Seventh Grade
Same as Grades K-6, plus Nicene Creed

Eighth Grade & Confirmation Prep
Same as Grades K-7, plus A Vocation Prayer
Precepts of the Church

Sacraments

Each Sacrament requires two years of preparation.

First Communion Preparation

The best preparation that the child can receive is to accompanying their parents and family each week at Mass as they grow to have a sense of community and understand the importance of the Mass in the life of a Catholic. Each Sacrament requires two years of preparation; therefore,

First Communion preparation will begin in the first grade. For example, if a child misses first grade they will receive the Sacrament in third grade.

Children must receive First Reconciliation before First Communion.

All children are required to attend retreats and parents all meetings and classes prior to First Communion.

Confirmation Preparation

Each Sacrament requires two years of preparation; therefore Confirmation preparation usually begins in the 8th grade ("Year I").

A meeting for parents and students to enroll in the Confirmation process is scheduled in the fall. Attendance at this meeting is required for all students in order to be considered as candidates for Confirmation.

Confirmation Sponsors need to be Catholic, have already been confirmed and will be expected to attend a retreat. Sponsors who are not members of the parish will need to provide a letter from their pastor stating they are in good standing.

Young people are confirmed in their faith by being incorporated into a community of believers. This is an on-going process in which the adult community plays a vital role. These young people must witness a community that learns, shares, worships, and serves together. It is the responsibility of parents and other adult members of the community to help those who are newly confirmed to understand that Confirmation marks the beginning of their renewed commitment to the Church.

CONFIRMATION IS NOT A GRADUATION.
CONFIRMATION MARKS
THE BEGINNING OF A COMMITMENT TO LIVE
AS A DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

Adult Faith Formation

Parents and all adult Catholics are encouraged to strengthen their own faith. We cannot pass on a vibrant faith to our children if ours is not strong. Check our website frequently for adult faith opportunities (www.sacredheartepri.com).

Parents of students who will be receiving a sacrament are required to attend Parent Formation Classes on Sunday mornings. Attendance will be taken and a report will be provided to the Pastor.

Social Media Disclaimer

Our CCD program may take photographs of students; these photographs document learning and activities of the students. Please be advised that your child's photo may be included on communications, which may include but is not limited to programs, newsletters, flyers, parish bulletin, parish website, newspapers, etc. If you have a concern about this, contact the Director of CCD.

Handbook Agreement Form

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND AGREEMENT

We (Parents sharing with Children) have read the entire content of the 2026-2076 Parent Handbook and accept the policies, regulations, directives, and procedures contained in the Manual and agree to abide by them.

I understand that the policies and procedures contain herein may be subject to change after the printing of this document.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date/Grade _____

Student Signature _____ Date/Grade _____

Student Signature _____ Date/Grade _____