

**Church of the
Immaculate Heart of Mary
Mahwah, New Jersey
Religious Education Center
2017-2018
Parent Handbook**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church is committed to establishing and fostering a dynamic partnership with parents in the faith formation and religious education of their children. This handbook was designed to provide your family with valuable information regarding our program. **We request your full cooperation in familiarizing yourselves with the program's guidelines as outlined in this handbook and in complying with our policies and procedures** to help make your child's religious education experience as safe and as fruitful as possible.

By word and example, parents teach their children from birth throughout life. Parents are the *primary educators* of the faith. At your child's Baptism, you undertook the responsibility and commitment of raising your child in the Christian faith. At IHMC, we (catechists and the whole parish community) strive to *assist* parents in building and continuing their Catholic faith formation. The partnership between parents and Immaculate Heart of Mary Church requires ongoing communication and collaboration.

If that sounds serious — it is! It is also a joy and an adventure. I hope that if you are devout and engaged in parish life that you share that joy with NEW families here at IHMC. If you have been away from the sacraments — please COME HOME! *Ask your children what they're learning in Religious Education class, and let them remind you of the simple, beautiful truth of God's love for us, JESUS!*

I feel blessed and humbled to be trusted with this ministry. Please join me in thanking and supporting the catechists who volunteer to share the Good News with the youth of our parish.

May God bless their efforts — and yours!

Anne Laura
Parish Catechetical Leader
Immaculate Heart of Mary

Parish Pastoral Team

Rev. Jacek Marchewka, Pastor
Ms. Anne Laura, Parish Catechetical Leader
Ms. Elaine Kownacki, Office Manager
Mrs. Mary McCarrick, Confirmation Coordinator

Rectory Phone 201-529-3517
Religious Education Office Phone - 201-529-2294

Religious Education email: religiouseducation@ihcmahwah.org

Mailing Address: Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Religious Education Center
47 Island Road
Mahwah, NJ 07430-1215

2017-2018 CATECHISTS

First Grade	Mrs. Marilyn Conklin Mrs. Betty La Barbera Mrs. Sheila Sequeira
Second Grade	Ms. MaryAnn Genito Mrs. Anne Suleski
Third Grade	Mrs. Ellen Quinn
Fourth Grade	Mrs. Maryann Mauro Mrs. Meredith Marchesi
Fifth Grade	Mrs. Felicia Fox Mrs. Christine Brett
Sixth Grade	Mr. Don Bruce Mr. Joseph Sinacore
Seventh Grade	Ms. Ashley O'Leary Mrs. Sandra Weber Mrs. Dot Crisiffuli
Eighth Grade	Mrs. Eileen Matarazzo Ms. Carol Miele
Youth Choir	Mrs. Angela Palumbo
Christmas Play	Mrs. Irene Contey

Substitute Teachers and Assistants

Mrs. Rita Halpin

Mrs. Florina Merturi

(as of 9/10/17)

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Schedule of Classes

Grades 1, 2, & 3	Mondays	4:30-5:45 pm
Grades 6, 7 & 8	Mondays	7:00-8:00 pm
Grades 4 & 5	Tuesdays	4:30 - 5:45 pm
Grade 9	2 Thursdays Per Month	7:00 - 8:30 pm
*Grades 6, 7, 8, & 9	Check Calendar for Special Events	

Drop-Off/Pick Up Procedures

Note: This policy was adopted solely for the protection of the children using our facility.

Parents must park and walk their children to the Parish Hall or Parish Center doors no earlier than 10 minutes before class time. Parents must also park and **come into the Parish Hall** to pick up their children no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled end of class time.

We must be informed in writing if a child is to be picked up by someone other than his/her parent. This includes car pools. We must be given copies of any court orders that prohibit a parent from picking up his/her child.

If a child must leave class early for a serious reason, the catechist must be informed in writing. When the parent arrives, he or she must go to the supervising adult, who will escort the parent to his/her child's class.

Cell Phone

Cell phones create a **major** disruption during class time. If a child must carry a cell phone, it must be **turned off** and placed out of sight in a pocket or bag. If this rule is not followed, the teacher will confiscate the cell phone and return it to the student once class has ended. **Under no circumstances are students to come to class with electronic devices such as iPads or hand-held video games.**

Attendance Policy

As Catholics it is our responsibility to teach our children about God. For this reason you send your child to religious education classes. Consistent attendance ensures that children get the most from their religious education. It is important that you give God and your child's religious education their rightful place amongst all the priorities in your child's life. If your child is ill and not able to attend class, please call the religious education office at 201-529-2294 or e-mail us at religioueducation@ihcmahwah.org at least one hour before the class begins. The student, with the parents' help, will be required to make up the missed lessons. Excessive absences (more than four) will be dealt with on an individual basis and will require completion of additional assignments in order to progress to the next grade level.

In the event that your child is not able to attend class, he/she is expected to follow the syllabus and complete the assigned pre-class work for the missed lesson. The Catechist may ask for an in class assignment to be completed in addition to the online work as it pertains to the missed lesson.

Inclement Weather

If Mahwah Township Public Schools have an early dismissal or are closed due to inclement weather, catechetical classes are canceled as well.

Emails and text messages will be sent to the parents and a recorded message announcing the closing can be heard by calling the Religious Education Office at 201-529-2294.

Student Responsibilities/ Code of Conduct

Students are expected to:

1. Treat adults, peers and Church property with respect and Christian charity.
2. Always walk slowly and quietly; no running or yelling.
3. Address others respectfully without the use of profanity or foul language.
4. Refrain from using their electronic devices (all cell phones must be turned off during class).
5. Attend classes each week on time, prepared, and ready to learn.
6. Read and complete any work that was missed due to an absence.
7. Behave appropriately in the classroom, follow the class rules and not cause disruptions.
8. Attend Mass regularly.

Illness/Accidents

In the event of a physical injury or illness, the child will be taken to the office of the supervising adult. The parent will be contacted.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures have been developed and will be followed by all staff and volunteers.

A fire drill will be conducted within the first few weeks of the beginning of classes.

In case of an emergency evacuation of the school (fire, smoke, etc.) the children will be taken into the church and will sit with their catechist and class.

If an emergency situation occurs (such as occurred on 9/11/01) during Religious Education classes, the children will NOT be informed of any disaster. If parents wish to come to pick up their children before the end of class, they must first go to the supervising adult to notify him/her of their intentions.

Abuse Policy

No child will be allowed to be in an unsupervised, one-on-one situation with any staff or volunteer in a remote or unobserved area. If you bring your child to the classroom and the catechist or aide are not yet present, please remain with your child until others arrive.

Any parent who suspects any type of abuse should notify the proper authorities immediately.

From the Archdiocese of Newark

The Archdiocese takes very seriously any and all allegations of sexual misconduct by members of the clergy, religious and lay staff of the Archdiocese. We encourage anyone with knowledge of an act of sexual misconduct to inform us immediately so that we may take appropriate action to protect others and provide support to victims of sexual abuse. Individuals who wish to report an allegation of sexual misconduct may do so by calling the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at (201) 407-3256.

Our Mission Statement

We attempt, through our Religious Education Program, to meet the needs and understanding of all our children and families, recognizing their varying degrees of catechetical background and experience in our diverse community. Through the Grace of the Holy Spirit, we strive to inform our children in the basics of the Catholic faith, ensure that they are properly prepared to receive the Sacraments, and to be an instrument in transforming our students into Catholic Christians with a strong faith on which to base their future spiritual growth.

Texts Used

Grade 1 through Grade 7
Faith and Life Series, Third Edition
Copyright: 2013
Publisher: Ignatius Press

Grade 8
Youth Catechism (YOUCAT)
Copyright: 2011
Publisher: Ignatius Press

Theology of the Body for Middle Schoolers
Copyright: 2011
Publisher: Ignatius Press

Accessed through: <http://www.mycatholicfaithdelivered.com>

***Note* All students/parents will be issued a license to view the online interactive textbook.**

Sacramental Preparation

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are received in 2nd Grade. Grade 1 Religious Education or Catholic school religious education is required before entering the sacramental preparation in Grade 2.

Three parent/candidate mini-retreats are held during the year.

Confirmation is held in Grade 9. After a child has completed grades 1 through 8 of Religious Education or Catholic School religious education, he or she will receive an invitation to apply for the Confirmation program in Grade 9.

Among other obligations, the candidates will be required to perform 20 hours of community service.

Grade Level Overviews

All grade levels of religious education are important, each assisting the child to grow in a deeper knowledge of God and of their faith, and an increased awareness of their responsibilities as a disciple of Jesus Christ and as a member of the Catholic Christian community. The focus of each grade is as follows:

Grade 1 **Our Heavenly Father**

Students are introduced to the Holy Trinity through studying the development of salvation

history and presentations on God the Father, the life of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Students are also introduced to God's plan and their participation in God's family, which includes Mary, the angels, and the saints. The emphasis of the first grade curriculum is for students to grow to know, love, and trust God.

Grade 2 Jesus Our Life: Sacramental Preparation for 1st Reconciliation & 1st Eucharist

The students are prepared for the sacraments of Penance and First Holy Communion through studying the development of salvation history. As students learn about God's plan of love and mercy, they begin to understand that these sacraments are God's gift to us and that they too are part of God's loving plan. Special emphasis is given to preparation for and reception of these sacraments, as well as learning about the Mass.

Grade 3 Our Life with Jesus

Through studying the development of salvation history, students become immersed in the life of Jesus and develop a deeper understanding of God's loving plan and of how they are a part of His plan.

Grade 4 Jesus Our Guide

Through studying the development of salvation history, students come to a better understanding of God, His plan for man, and our relationship with God. Students develop a better understanding of their purpose and goal in life and a deeper appreciation for the Church as the very means that God has given us on our pilgrimage to heaven.

Grade 5 Credo: I Believe

Through studying the Creed and the development of salvation history, students are immersed in the Profession of Faith. They develop a deeper understanding of each component of the Creed as it is part of salvation history.

Grade 6 Following Christ

In the sixth grade, students learn about their Christian life of love, the law of God, their human frailty in following that law, and the means that God gives them to follow His law especially through graces received in the Holy Mass. By focusing the study of salvation history on typology in the Passover feast and the Last Supper, the students are brought to a deeper understanding of the Eucharist. The sixth grade concludes with a study of the last things in light of God's mercy and our hope for heaven.

Grade 7 The Life of Grace

Students learn about God's loving gift of revelation through creation, the prophets, the Incarnation, and the Church. Grace is understood as being central to our relationship with God because it unites us with Him and allows us to share in His eternal life. Seventh grade places special emphasis on the role of grace in the seven sacraments and in developing the virtues.

Grade 8 Claiming Our Catholic Identity for Ourselves

Grade 9 Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Sunday, 9/17/17	Catechetical Sunday 10:30 AM Mass
Monday, 9/18/17	Religious Education Classes Begin 4:30-5:45 PM Grades 1, 2, & 3
Monday, 9/18/17	Religious Education Classes Begin 7:00 - 8:00 PM Grades 6,7, 8
Tuesday, 9/19/17	Religious Education Classes Begin 4:30-5:45 PM Grades 4 & 5
Monday, 10/09/17	No Religious Education Grades 1-3 & 6-8 (Columbus Day)
Sunday, 10/22/17	“Prayer” Mini-Retreat for 2 nd Graders 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM Meet in Church for Mass
Sunday, 10/22/17	Youth Choir Sings ~ 10:30AM Mass
Tuesday, 10/31/17	No Religious Education Grades 4 & 5 (Halloween)
Sunday, 11/12/17	Youth Choir Sings ~ 10:30AM Mass
Thursday 12/7/17	7:00pm Vigil Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception Required for Grades 6, 7, 8, & 9
Sunday, 12/10/17	Christmas Celebration 1:00 PM in Gym Youth Choir Sings ~ 12:00 Noon Mass
Sunday, 12/17/17	Snow Date for Christmas Celebration
Thursday 12/21/17	7:00pm Advent Pardon and Peace Service Required for Grades 6, 7, 8, & 9
Sunday, 12/24/17	Christmas Eve ~Youth Choir Sings ~ 5:00 pm Mass
Monday, 12/25/17	No Religious Education (Christmas Break)
Tuesday, 12/26/17	No Religious Education (Christmas Break)
Monday 1/1/18	No Religious Education (New Years Break)
Tuesday 1/2/18	No Religious Education (New Years Break)
Sunday, 1/7/18	“Reconciliation” Mini-Retreat for 2 nd Graders 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM Meet in Church for Mass
Sunday, 1/7/18	Youth Choir Sings ~ 10:30AM Mass
Monday, 1/15/18	No Religious Education for Grades 1-3 and 6-8 (MLK Day)
Saturday, 2/10/18	First Reconciliation (10:00 am)
Sunday, 2/11/18	Youth Choir Sings ~ 10:30AM Mass
Wednesday, 2/14/18	5:00pm Ash Wednesday Family Mass All Students will meet for Mass with their families in lieu of class

this week. Attendance will be taken.

Monday, 2/19/18	No Religious Education Classes Presidents Day Recess
Tuesday, 2/20/18	No Religious Education Classes Presidents Day Recess
Sunday, 3/4/18	“The Eucharist” Mini-Retreat for 2 nd Graders 10:30 AM to 1:30 PM Meet in Church for Mass
Sunday, 3/4/18	Youth Choir Sings ~ 12:00 Noon Mass
Thursday, 3/22/18	7:00pm Lent Pardon and Peace Service Required for Grades 6, 7, 8, & 9
Sunday, 4/1/18	Easter Sunday
Monday, 4/2/18	No Religious Education Classes - Easter Monday
Tuesday, 4/3/18	No Religious Education Classes - Easter Tuesday
Monday, 4/9/18	No Religious Education Classes – Spring Recess
Tuesday, 4/10/18	No Religious Education Classes – Spring Recess
Monday, 4/30/18	Last Religious Education Class for 2 nd Graders Only
May 5th and 6th, 2018	First Eucharist Weekend
Monday, 5/7/18	Last Religious Education Class Grades 1-3 and 6-8
Tuesday, 5/8/18	Last Religious Education Class Grades 4 & 5
Sunday, 5/13/18	Crowning of Our Blessed Mother/Youth Choir Sings ~ 10:30AM Mass

PARISH PROFILE

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Mahwah, New Jersey was established in the Fall of 1915 as a place of worship for Polish immigrants living in Mahwah and the surrounding areas. The founding Pastor, Father Thomas A. Patalong, S.D.B., was a member of the newly established Don Bosco High School, also founded in 1915 for Polish speaking youths. The Mahwah Parish became a haven for newly arrived immigrant families from Poland. The extraordinary care and concern of these families by the many Salesians who staffed the parish accounts for the present-day demonstration of devout faith to Our Lord Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The Polish traditions, and adherence to Catholic Church doctrines and devotions is still a landmark of the parish community.

The parish has made many transitions since the founding fathers began this great missionary work. The Salesians of St. John Bosco continued to staff the parish up to the fall of 2002, when it came under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Newark. From the humble beginnings of a tiny church — a school, convent and rectory were added to the facilities. The last addition was the replacement of the original wooden church with a truly magnificent church that reflects the devotion, traditions and tremendous faith of this parish community.

Throughout the years, the influx of young Catholic families to this area has changed the composition of the parish, which has become increasingly multi-ethnic. Although the worship services are now almost exclusively in English, the Sunday 9 a.m. Mass is in Polish. In our recently renovated chapel, images of Our Lady of Czestochowa, St. Faustina, St. Maximilian Kolbe, and St. John Paul II comfort us and remind us to ask for their intercession.

The magnificent spiritual and cultural traditions of the past are melded now in the present. The spiritual richness of the community continues to attract a flow of new parishioners. The motto “To Jesus through Mary” is as vibrant today as it was to those who first heard it in that tiny little Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1915.