

## All Saints Catholic Church Religious Education Policies

The Religious Education program of All Saints Catholic Church exists to promote and coordinate faith formation for all members of the parish, to provide a safe environment within the parish, and to encourage ongoing faith formation for all parishioners. The following policies are enacted to fulfill these goals.

### ***Safe Environment***

All those who work with minors on a regular basis will complete a volunteer services application. The Director of Religious Education (DRE) or pastor will contact references and conduct one or more consumer reports on the applicant's background. These consumer reports may include a criminal history, employment references, driving record, credit report, or others.

All adult employees and volunteers will acknowledge, accept, and support both the *State of Michigan's Child Protection Law* and the Diocese of Grand Rapids' *Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors*.

All employees and volunteers "engaged in programs, services or ministries involving regular contact with children or young people are to attend an awareness session" of *Protecting God's Children*. (From the Diocese of Grand Rapids *Ministry Management Portfolio – Safe Environment Training Compliance*)

### ***Program Management***

Each year all families will complete a program registration form for each child enrolled in the All Saints Church Religious Education program or a sacramental preparation program.

All minor children attending Religious Education classes or programs, or sacramental programs at All Saints Church will be signed in at the beginning of the program and signed out at the end of the program by a designated responsible family member or family friend.

Parents are encouraged to attend the closing prayer sessions with their children on Wednesday evenings. These sessions begin at approximately 7:30 PM and last 10 to 15 minutes. Important announcements are presented just prior to closing prayer.

Parents of children attending Religious Education classes or events are encouraged to drop off their children no earlier than 15 minutes before the scheduled beginning of classes or events, and pick up their children promptly at the end of classes/events. If parents arrive earlier, they must remain to supervise their children. Because catechists and the DRE remain until all children are picked up, parents must pick up their children at the scheduled end of the classes or event. Catechists have obligations to their families and shouldn't be required to remain later. If a family is consistently late in picking up their children, verbal and written notices will be issued. If these don't solve the problem a session will be scheduled with the pastor.

If children are ill, parents are encouraged to keep them home. If there are concerns about missing important information, catechists can be contacted for any make-up work needed.

Families who have children with learning disabilities are encouraged to contact the DRE. We hope all children are able to attend regular religious education classes and will work closely with parents to determine the best learning situation for their children. If parents feel that their children would benefit from home study, arrangements can be made with the DRE to obtain home study materials.

If parents or guardians have any concerns about or suggestions for the All Saints Church Religious Education program, they are encouraged to speak with catechists, the DRE, or the pastor. Those involved in the Religious Education program are always open to suggestions for improvements or changes, and encourage parents and families to become involved in the program.

### ***Sacramental Policies***

Parents or guardians whose children attend public school should enroll their children in All Saints Church Religious Education program beginning in the first grade. Children registering for a sacramental preparation program must have already completed at least one year of religious education prior to the year in which they are registering, or have special permission from the DRE or pastor. Those families who are new to the parish must be able to demonstrate they have fulfilled this policy.

### ***Emergency Management***

Every effort will be made to ensure that children attending Religious Education programs at All Saints Church have a safe physical environment in which to learn about their faith.

Two fire drills and one tornado safety drill will be conducted in the fall of each year for the Religious Education Kindergarten through eighth grade program.

### ***Severe Weather Policy***

In the case of severe weather, the DRE will monitor the weather situation and decide what action will be taken.

- *Tornadoes* – should the area be under a tornado warning at the time Kindergarten through eighth grade classes or special events are to be held, the classes/event will be cancelled. If possible, a message on the Religious Education office voicemail will indicate this. Families may also tune to TV channels 8 (WOOD-TV) and 13 (WZZM-TV) for information. Emails may also be sent out using the email address listed on the child's registration form.
- *Winter storms/extreme wind-chill* – should the area be under a severe winter storm warning or extreme wind-chill warning, families should tune to TV channels 8 (WOOD-TV) and 13 (WZZM-TV) for possible program cancellations. If classes at Fremont Public Schools are cancelled for the day, religious education classes will also be cancelled that evening. The Religious Education office voicemail will indicate a cancellation as soon as that decision has been made.

### ***Contacting the Religious Education office & DRE:***

- Office phone: 924-7571; email: [dre@allsaintsfremont.org](mailto:dre@allsaintsfremont.org) Jill Mead's home phone: 924-9613