

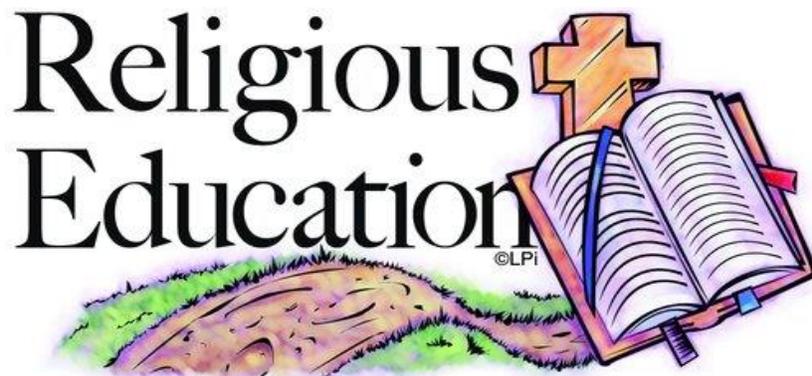
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

**Religious Education Program
Parent/Student Handbook**



**146 S. Pitney Road
Galloway, NJ 08205
www.OLPHparish-nj.org
609-652-0008**

*With wild abandon
With joy in flight
Youth flies off
In its strength and might,
No thought today of tomorrow's plight.*



*O Lord, once a child-God born,
Guide our children as they
Leave hearth and home
Assuring us they'll not be alone.*

Table of Contents

Philosophy	1
Admission Policies	2
Parent/Guardian Consent	
Non-discriminating policy	
Remedial Programs	
Special Needs Program	
Rights of Non-Custodial Parents	
Attendance Procedures	3
Assignments	3
Books	4
Building Usage Rules.....	4
Child Abuse Policy	4
Class Cancellation	5
Change of Address/Phone Number and Email Address	5
Class Placement	5
Church Bulletin.....	6
Communications	6
Discipline.....	6
Field Trips	7
Fire Drills	7
Youth Group.....	7
Health Information.....	7
Liturgy	8

Table of Contents

Other Parish Organizations	
Altar Servers.....	8
Parent Signature Card	8
Parish Membership	9
Parking	9
Penance Service, Sacrament of Reconciliation	9
Personnel.....	10
Progress Reports.....	10
Registration Policy	10
Religious Education News	11
Request, Early Dismissal	11
Requirements for Children in Sacramental Programs.....	11
Sacraments of Reconciliation & Eucharist Sacrament of Confirmation	
Schedule	12
Substance Abuse Policy	13
Suspension/Immediate Removal	13
Basic Doctrine & Prayers for each Grade.....	14

Philosophy

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Religious Education Programs are committed to a dynamic partnership with parents in the religious education of their children. Parents, by word and example, teach their children from birth throughout life. At their child's Baptism, parents undertake responsibility of providing for his or her Christian formation. The Religious Education staff endeavors to assist parents to build on and continue Christian formation with formal classes. This partnership between parents and Religious Education staff requires ongoing communication and collaboration.

In our classes, we seek to provide the catechesis and building skills needed for each child to grow and mature, as far as each is able, in understanding, positive attitudes, and faithful practice of the Catholic faith (see 1 Cor. 13:11). We strive, therefore to assist each child in committing him or herself to a relationship with God characterized by a lifelong pattern of vigorous sacramental life, prayer, Christian service, and growth in understanding of the Catholic faith.

Committed to an active partnership between program and families, we place our efforts with confidence in God's loving hands.

GENERAL POLICIES: **ADMISSION POLICIES**

New Registration of Students - Registration of new students is initiated in early Spring and throughout the Summer. Hours and dates of registration are announced in the parish bulletin. We admit all public school students, who are registered in our parish.

New students, transferring from another parish, Catholic School or Religious Education Program or beginning Religious Education program or classes for the first time are accepted into grades Prek to 8 after receipts of pertinent official parish records; Baptismal certificate, a recent letter from previous parish religious education program, report card, First Communion Certificate, etc.

Parent/Guardian Consent: Due to parish policy, a child's custodial parents(s) or guardian must give written consent to register a child in the Parish Religious Education program. The custodial parent/guardian's signature will also signify that the signee has read, understands, and supports the policies contained in the Parent/Student Handbook. Parents are asked to review the Handbook contents with their child before they begin their religious education.

Notice of Non-discrimination Policy: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Religious Education Program admits students of any sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to program participants. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin in the administration of its programs or the recruitment of its catechists.

Remedial Programs: Elementary Students, who enter our programs after extended periods of time without formal education and those who transfer from other programs, will be assessed by the DRE/CRE for their grade level readiness around the time of registration. Remedial assistance will be provided if needed. Some special sessions, or the completion of the children's catechumenate process, may be required before students are admitted to regular class sessions.

Students who enter our parish religious education programs without having been prepared for one or more of the initiation sacraments normally provided to their peers are provided through special transition classes. Parents are asked to bring such special sacrament preparation needs to the attention of the DRE/CRE at registration time before classes begin.

Special Needs: Children who may have difficulty succeeding in a regular classroom setting to ensure the success of every child. We also offer an intensive two-week program for those families that do not wish to attend the Sunday classes. For more information about these programs, please contact the office.

Rights on Non-Custodial Parents: Both parents have the right of access to a child's religious education progress reports and achievement information unless one parent produces a legal (court certified) document to the contrary. The Elementary Religious Education Program will supply a mid-term progress report to the non-custodial parent upon request, which must be in writing. Changes in the normal routine must be approved by the custodial parent/guardian. No child will be dismissed from our programs to the non-custodial parent/guardian.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

When a child is absent from class, parents are asked to send a note of explanation to the child's teacher when the child returns to class the following week. Excessive absences or lateness may require repeating a year. In case of monthly or two week intensive, exceeding one absence per year will require subsequent registration to weekly Sunday classes.

ASSIGNMENTS

Parental involvement is a necessary part of religious education. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their children complete the work assigned by the catechist. Parents must assist the students in the parent section of the book at the end of each lesson.

Parents are asked to help their children learn their prayers and accompany them when they attend the Reconciliation Services. Children's Liturgies and other Religious Education functions.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Child Abuse includes, but is not limited to, the following

1. Engaging in sexual activity with a child.
2. Denial of proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care, or other care necessary for the child's health;
3. Use of restraint procedures on a child that cause injury or pain.
4. Administration of prescription drugs or medication without ongoing supervision of a licensed physician.
5. Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances.
6. Commission of any act, other than by accidental means, that threatens or results in any injury or death to the child.

The DRE/CRE of Parish Religious Education Programs are required by the State of New Jersey Code and Diocesan Policy on Child Abuse to report suspected or actual child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Catechists have had a background check by the NJ State Police and are fingerprinted.

BOOKS

It is expected that parents assist the children in remembering to complete homework assignments and to bring their books to class each week. Students will not be permitted to participate in class without their books; therefore lost books must be replaced at the student's expense as soon as possible.

At the end of the year, students should keep basic texts. These should be saved for reference, future projects and the like for High School and beyond.

BUILDING USAGE RULES

1. Gum, food and drink are **not permitted** in the building halls or classrooms.
2. Respect for parish property, all teachers and fellow students must be shown at all times.
3. If necessarily tardy, enter classroom quietly so as not to be a distraction.
4. **Classrooms must not be entered until arrival of teacher. Please wait in the hall outside of the classroom.**
5. Normally students should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before class and picked up no later than 10 minutes after dismissal.

CLASS CANCELLATION

In case of inclement weather, cancellation of classes will be announced on the following radio stations:

Lite Rock 96.9 (LiteRock969.com)

Cat Country 107.3 (CatCountry1073.com)

SoJo 104.9 (SoJo1049.com)

WFPG Talk Radio 1450 (WPG1450.com)

97.3 ESPN (973ESPN.com)

New Jersey 101.5 (NJ1015.com)

CALL THE OFFICE 652-0008, Extensions 208 or 207 FOR
RECORDED MESSAGE.

Check the parish website at: www.OLPHparish-nj-org

CHANGES OF ADDRESS , TELEPHONE OR EMAIL ADDRESS

It is important that records be kept up to date. Therefore, the Religious Education Office must be notified immediately of any change of address , telephone number or email address.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Any request to change a student from one class to another must be made to the Religious Education Office. Such changes will be made only for serious reasons. Teachers are not permitted to admit a

student to join their class without the permission of the Religious Education Office.

CHURCH BULLETIN

The church bulletin is the most important vehicle of communication. It is distributed at all the weekend Masses. Special announcements will be included in the Religious Education section. Please read it every Sunday and record important events on a calendar for future use.

COMMUNICATIONS

Parents and catechists are encouraged to call one another regarding the progress of the children. Catechists are always to be contacted first, if a problem arises pertaining to the class/homework or behavioral problems. If the parent and the teacher are not able to resolve the problem, the DRE/CRE will try to come to a mutual solution to the problem.

DISCIPLINE

Every person is worthy of being treated with care and respect fitting one made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, classroom behavior should be characterized by genuine Christian care, mutual respect, and honesty.

Under no circumstances will a student or an adult be permitted to strike another or use abusive language for any reason. Lack of self-discipline during religious class will be addressed promptly.

The normal steps for disciplinary action will be:

1. Verbal correction by the teacher
2. Remove child from class and send to DRE/CRE

3. Referral conference and completion of form by student and DRE/CRE.
4. Conference with student, DRE/CRE and parent.
5. Removal from program.

The DRE/CRE retains the right to omit one or more steps whenever it is deemed necessary.

Major Violations:

- Drugs/Alcohol/Substance Abuse (see substance abuse policy)
- Harassment-Verbal or physical (includes sexual)
- Stealing or damaging parish/school property
- Jeopardizing a person's safety
- Fighting
- Crude or offensive language
- Bullying
- Disrespectful of adults in the program.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are religious in nature and off school premises. Parents are required to provide transportation for all events not on the school grounds. A permission slip will be required before any student may participate in such an activity.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted throughout. Students are expected to leave the building quietly and quickly. Any adult, who is working or visiting the school at the time, is expected to leave by the nearest exit.

YOUTH GROUP

All Junior High and High school teens are invited to attend our Youth Group which meets on Sunday evenings.

HEALTH INFORMATION

All parents are requested to write on the registration form any health issues of the child. If a new health concern occurs during the school year, parents should write a note to the DRE, and to the child's teacher.

LITURGY

The families of our parish have the opportunity to participate in the Children's Liturgy of the Word once a month at the 11:00 am Mass on Sunday from September to May. This is an excellent place for children to grow in Scripture. All children are expected to attend Mass on Saturday or Sunday. **It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure that the child attends Mass regularly.**

OTHER PARISH ORGANIZATIONS

Altar Servers: Although not associated with the Religious Education Program, Altar Servers are youth that serve the church community. Youth in grades 4-8 may become altar servers with the permission of their parents. Meeting and training sessions will be held periodically throughout the year. If any youth is interested in being an altar server, please call the parish office or give your name to a Religious Education Catechist.

PARENT SIGNATURE CARD

The parent signature paper (found in the back of this book) is a contract between the parents and the Religious Education Administrator. By signing the contract, the parent agrees to adhere to all of the rules and regulations contained in the Religious Education Handbook. The paper is signed by the parent and returned to the child's teacher. The paper will be kept on file by the Religious Education Office.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

Individuals and families are considered members of the parish if they are formally **registered**, are **active and contributing** to the mission and needs of our church community. "Registered" means that we have an updated record of the individual's or family's membership in the parish. To register, simply fill out a registration form available from the parish office. By "active" is meant that the individual or family attends Mass weekly and on holy days, and participates in other parish activities according to need, desire, interest and availability. By "contributing" is meant that the individual or family supports the parish financially through the use of contribution envelopes, and/or offers their time and talents to the parish in service to its needs.

Individuals and families who are not registered, active and contributing will find it difficult to obtain some parish services, such as a letter of eligibility if asked to be a Godparent at baptism or sponsor for Confirmation. Additional fees are levied for other services such as baptisms, weddings, enrollment in the regional school and enrollment in the religious education program.

PARKING

We ask that when you drop off and pick up your children from class that you **DO NOT** park in front of the school or attempt to pull up in front of the school. It is extremely dangerous for the students to walk out of the building into traffic. Instead, please park in the lots and walk to the building.

PENANCE SERVICE OR SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Children should frequent the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

In grades 3 through 8, a lesson pertaining to the Sacrament of Reconciliation is included in the text. Each year the student is

expected to review the meaning of this Sacrament. At Assumption worship site, confessions are heard every Saturday from 3:00 – 3:30 pm or by appointment with a priest.

PERSONNEL

All volunteers, who serve as catechists are interviewed and are witness to Christ, his teachings and life. They have the ability to share their faith with children. Initially, the volunteers receive training before they begin teaching. Each volunteer promises to pursue the Diocesan Catechetical Certification. Catechists have had a background check by the NJ State Police and are fingerprinted. Ongoing professional assistance is available through DRE/CRE staff, the parish and the Diocese.

PROGRESS REPORTS

To encourage student accomplishment and accountability for learning, a student's achievement of basic learning objectives required for his/her grade level will be monitored throughout the year. Areas assessed will include (1) attendance, (2) behavior and positive attitude, (3) class participation, (4) memorization, (5) class and home assignments, and (6) grasp of content. A successful year will result in advancement to the next level. A student who fails to achieve basic learning objectives will be required to work with a parent or guardian during the summer to complete those areas. Once completed, the student must demonstrate competency and may be advanced to the next level.

REGISTRATION POLICY

Registration in our Religious Education Program is contingent upon registration in our parish. Any exceptions must receive prior approval through our parish office.

Re-registration procedures normally begin in the month of February. Forms will be sent home with your child/children initially in February

and subsequent months through the close of our program. Check our parish website under "Religious Education forms" to download.

If you cannot contribute to parish financially, an appointment must be made with our Pastor/DRE as soon as possible. In lieu of tuition, you may be able to contribute your time and talents in one or more of our parish ministries.

All registration fees must be paid in full prior to child/children being admitted into a class. If you have a financial hardship and cannot pay in full, please contact the Religious Education Office immediately. A letter explaining the financial hardship will be required and reviewed by our Pastor/DRE.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Religious education news will be printed throughout the year in the form of monthly calendar, memos or bulletins to parents, guardians, or students.

REQUEST FOR EARLY DISMISSAL

All emergency early dismissal requests are granted, if a note is sent to the DRE/CRE, during the actual session the child attends. The child who is dismissed early, is released only to a parent/guardian or to an adult that the parent has specified will be picking up the child.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN THE SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

SACRAMENTS OF RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST:

The children will:

- Be responsible to fulfill the guidelines for regular attendance of a grade

- Participate in a year and a half program of preparation before the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Take part in a two year program before the reception of the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist
- Join in the Solemn Celebration of Holy Eucharist in the parish place of worship, the center of the Christian Community.

The parents will:

- Attend required sacramental preparation meetings.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

The youth will:

- Be accountable to fulfill the requirements for regular attendance of grades one to eight.
- Participate in all events of the two year Confirmation program
- Complete all written assignments with the parent or sponsor assigned to a particular task
- Attend a retreat in the 8th grade.
- Complete a Saint Report
- Contribute service to the community

The parents will:

- Attend required Sacramental preparation meetings.

SCHEDULE

Our Religious Education Program schedule will be distributed at the beginning of the year. Each class will last for 1 hour and 15 minutes. A schedule of the meeting dates will be provided for the parents of the children in all grades. Parents will be notified as to the time of the class.

Since the catechists are giving of their time for the benefit of the students, parents are asked to cooperate with the class schedule.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Substance abuse is defined as either the possession of, use of, or trafficking in any unauthorized, illegal drug, chemical, alcohol, or tobacco-like substance which can be introduced into the body through ingestion, inhalation, injection or percutaneous means. Any student found in possession of any illegal or unauthorized substance on parish property will be immediately suspended from the program. A conference with the parent(s)/guardian, student and the DRE/CRE is mandatory for re-admittance to the program. Any student found in possession of or using any illegal, unauthorized substance a second time will be removed from the program. Any student trafficking in illegal substances, even the first time, will be formally withdrawn from the program and the matter will be turned over to the proper authorities.

SUSPENSION/IMMEDIATE REMOVAL

Gross violations of program policies, or any action which continually disrupts the learning environment, or endangers another student, adult, volunteer or the parish facilities can lead to suspension or immediate removal. The DRE/CRE can apply any of these actions when deemed necessary. Written notification will be sent to parents and student indicating the reason(s) for suspension. A mandatory conference will be held between program personnel and the parents before a student is re-admitted. The Pastor will be notified when such action is taken. When a student's presence constitutes a disruption or a threat, he/she will be immediately removed from the classroom. A conference will be held between the program personnel and parents before a student can be re-admitted to the classroom or program.

Basic Doctrine and Prayers for Each Grade

PreK and Kindergarten – God made each child to experience belonging to warm, welcoming and caring communities of family and church. The child continues to discover the wonders of his/her world as gifts from a loving God. Each child learns how to talk to God, the Father. The child listens to stories of Jesus and the saints.

Mary is Jesus' Mother and our Mother.

Learn the Our Father and the sign of the Cross.

Grade 1 – God creates each person to live in a caring and loving environment. Jesus is God's Son, who died and rose for us. Jesus teaches us how to pray and shows us how to love our neighbor. Jesus gives Himself to us in the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit is sent to begin the Church. The Sacrament of Baptism, a few mass responses and Bible stories are introduced.

Mary, is the Mother of Jesus and Our Mother.

Learn the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father and Sign of the Cross.

Grade 2 – Through the study of Jesus' life, the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist there is an introduction of Church worship.

Mary is Jesus' Mother and our Mother.

Review basic prayers and learn the Act of Contrition, and parts of the Mass.

Grade 3 – Jesus, our friend, invites us to teach others about our Church. The Pope, bishops, priest and deacons are our Church leaders. Each person has an important role in the parish. Through our behavior at Mass we show respect for God and others. The Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation, parts of the liturgical year; Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter are discussed.

Know two Holy Days of Obligation. Become familiar with the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Mary is the Mother of God and our Mother.

Review prayers, start to learn the Apostles Creed, Stations of the Cross and the Rosary.

Grade 4 – The law of Love, which is given to us by Jesus, summarizes the student's comprehension of the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Personal and communal sin.

Mary is Mother of God, and Our Mother and Queen of Heaven.

Review prayers. Understand the Joyful and Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary. Including the Apostles Creed and the Stations of the Cross.

Grade 5 – Jesus is human and divine, the terms; transubstantiation and Consecration, the Mass, the Church is Jesus' community, the Seven Sacraments. Sacramentals, are studied. There is a continued examination of the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, Marks of the Church in relationship to other beliefs and Liturgical Year of the Catholic Church.

Mary is the Mother of God, Mother of the Church and is a sign of hope.

Review all prayers including the Rosary and the Stations of the Cross. Learn the Nicene Creed.

Grade 6 – Intense examination of the Old Testament, Jesus' roots in the Jewish Community and the experience of the Passover Supper. Review fifth grade subject matter.

Acknowledge who Mary is in the relationship to us and the Church. Review all prayers. Experience Scriptural prayer.

Grade 7 – Begin preparation for Confirmation. Introduce books of the New Testament and study the life of Jesus through the Gospels.

There is an in-depth study of the Sacraments and the Mass. A complete review of all the material taught in Grades 1-7.

Review title of Mary.

Review all prayers. Do service projects.

Grade 8 – Continue to prepare for Confirmation by investigating the Sacrament of Confirmation, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit given to the Church Community and the candidate's response of serving the church and the Community. Discussions on Morality in relationship to the Catholic Church, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Mary, Mother of the Church.

Review all prayers. Know all Mass responses. Experience a "Teen Retreat" and do service projects.