



St. JOSEPH & St. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH
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2024-2025 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

St. Joseph & St. Patrick Catholic Church follows the guidelines of a **two-year preparation process** for Sacramental Catechesis established by the Diocese of Laredo.¹ The Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church states that children 7 years of age and older have reached the age of reason, therefore, they must participate in a formal Religious Education Program. However, this does not replace the role of parents as their child's primary catechist in the faith, but rather complements faith formation at home, Sunday Mass, and holy days of obligation.

TUITION

Tuition helps defray the cost of operating our Religious Education Program. Fees are less than the total cost to sustain the program; however, our overall goal is to make the program affordable for our families. The rates are as follows:

1. \$50.00 Families Enrolling a Child
2. \$80.00 Families enrolling two children.
3. \$100.00 Families enrolling three or more.
 1. Tuition Financial Assistance Program
 1. To ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in the Religious Education program, a scholarship and financial assistance fund will be established. Families in need of financial support can apply for assistance using a simple form, available at the parish office.

ABSENCES AND TARDINESS

Classes are held Sunday from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM. Please be punctual. Children are allowed up to three (3) unexcused absences. Unexcused absences are those absences that are not due to illness, death in the immediate family (mother, father, brother, grandfather, aunt or uncle) and other events approved by Father Alan Sanchez.

¹ <https://www.dioceseoflaredo.org/guidelines-and-policies>

DEFINITION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Absences due to illness, death in the immediate family and other significant events such as important sports or academic competitions are considered justified, but do not include training, which contribute to the integral development of the child. Prior notice or written justification is required to recognize the absence as excused.

FLEXIBILITY IN DAILY MASS ATTENDANCE

Participation in daily Mass is encouraged. For families with scheduling conflicts, participation in another weekly Mass will be permitted, subject to the approval of the program coordinator, to comply with this requirement.

EVALUATIONS

Catechists are volunteers who will help supplement the religious formation you have begun at home; therefore, we ask that you continue to be your child's first catechist. Please help them learn their prayers and reinforce the lessons we will be providing. We have limited time with your children, so in order to focus on other aspects of faith formation, we ask that you help us teach them your prayers. Throughout the program year, catechists will assess your child's progress to make sure they are understanding the lessons covered. Assessments will be flexible and will consider at-home learning in addition to class participation. Parents should work with catechists to ensure that progress outside of the formal classroom setting is properly documented and recognized.

DRESS CODE

We recommend that children dress appropriately for class and Mass. We ask that you monitor your child's clothing, so that you refrain from wearing pajamas, shorts, tank tops, thin suspenders, bare shoulders, half blouses, short skirts/dresses, and/or clothing with obscene or inappropriate messages.

Modification of the dress code is permitted in cases of medical needs or special conditions. Parents must communicate these needs to the program coordinator in order to receive an approval of exceptions.

ILLNESS

We will do everything we can to keep your children safe and decrease disease transmission as best we can. We disinfect classrooms before and after each class. Wearing a mask is optional and left to the discretion of the parents. We ask that if your child shows

signs of illness, keep him or her home, if he or she has a fever (over 99.4°F), diarrhea, has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, or is unable to participate in classroom activities. Once your child is able to return, please send us a note stating why they were not there.

ENVIRONMENT

As mentioned above, our time with your children is very limited. Help us by removing any distractions such as electronics, games, toys, and other items that may be distracting during class. At St. Joseph and St. Patrick Catholic Church, we foster an environment filled with respect, honesty, charity, kindness, and love of neighbor.

BEHAVIOUR

As mentioned above, St. Joseph & St. Patrick Catholic Church fosters an environment filled with respect, honesty, charity, kindness, and love for our neighbors. Our goal is to promote personal development, self-respect, and respect for others. Please review these guidelines with your children so they know what is expected of them, your children, you as parents, and our volunteers.

DISCIPLINE

If our behavioral guidance is not followed, the following actions will be taken.

1. **First Occurrence:** The catechist redirects the children and will remind them of our behavior guide and classroom rules.
2. **Second Occurrence:** The Religious Education Coordinator will speak with the student; Parents will be notified of the occurrence after class/Mass.
3. **Third Advocacy:** The Religious Education Coordinator will contact the parents to advise them of the situation.
4. **A serious violation of discipline can result in suspension from religious education classes. Father Alan Sanchez will handle each case on a case-by-case basis.**

Examples:

1. **Damage, deface, and/or destroy school or church property.**
2. **Struggle**
3. **Bringing Weapons**
4. **Leaving without permission**
5. **Stealing**
6. **Being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs**

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Our program likes to keep parents involved in their children's formal faith formation; we meet once a month to share parents' faith.

We understand that we are ultimately responsible for our children's faith formation and these classes will complement what we have done and will continue to do at home.

I agree to do the following:

- Bring my child, on time, all school days and special events as indicated by the calendar.
- Attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation (even when religious education classes are not in attendance) at St. Joseph Catholic Church in La Pryor or St. Patrick Catholic Church in Batesville.
- Attend parent meetings, retreats, confessions during Advent and Lent.
- Be active members of the Parish Community.
 - Youth in confirmation class are required to attend the parish youth group.
- Parents participate in one of the parish ministries.
- Assist with the program's annual fundraiser.
- By bringing your child(ren) to this religious education, you agree to abide by the program guidelines, but you are not limited to just the standards.