

Religious Education Program Family Handbook 2017-2018



Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish

***16043 South Bell Road
Homer Glen, IL 60491***

Faith Formation Office: (708)301-0214

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Class Location

Homer Junior High School--15711 Bell Road

**Disclaimer: Our Mother of Good Counsel RE Program is in no way affiliated
with Homer Community Consolidated School District 33-C.**

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Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish--Religious Education Schedule—2017-2018
Wednesdays PER SCHEDULE BELOW (Not ALWAYS Every Other Wednesday) 6 -7:30PM
Classes held at Homer Junior High (HJH) School (Entrance A)
15711 South Bell Road, Homer Glen, IL 60491

SESSION A

September 6, 2017
 September 20, 2017

October 4, 2017
 October 18, 2017

November 1, 2017-**7PM dismissal**
 November 15, 2017

December 6, 2017
December 20, 2017 (NO CLASS)

****January 3, 2018** (IN CHURCH)**
 January 17, 2018
 January 31, 2018

February 14, 2018-**7PM Dismissal**
 February 28, 2018

March 14, 2018
 March 28, 2018

April 18, 2018

SESSION B

September 13, 2017
 September 27, 2017

October 11, 2017
 October 25, 2017

November 8, 2017
November 22, 2017 (NO CLASS)
 November 29, 2017

December 13, 2017
December 27, 2017 (NO CLASS)

****January 10, 2018** (IN CHURCH)**
 January 24, 2018

February 7, 2018
 February 21, 2018

March 7, 2018
 March 21, 2018

April 4, 2018 (NO CLASS)
 April 11, 2018
 April 25, 2018

****Classes on January 3 and January 10, 2018 will be held in Church from 6-7:30 PM.**

November 1, 2017 is All Saint's Day, dismissal from HJH at 7PM. Mass in Church at 7:30 PM
 February 14, 2018 is Ash Wednesday, dismissal from HJH at 7 PM. Mass in Church at 7:30 PM

GRADE 3 REQUIRED PARENT MEETINGS AND SACRAMENT SCHEDULE

First Reconciliation Required Parent Meeting – Thursday, September 28, 2017- 7 PM in church

First Reconciliation--Saturday December 16, 2017
A Session – 9 AM B Session -- 11 AM

First Communion Required Parent Meeting – Monday, January 8, 2018 – 7 PM in Church

First Communion Practice in Church – Wednesday, May 2, 2018
A Session – 6 PM B Session – 7 PM

First Communion Sunday, May 6, 2018
A Session -- 1 PM B Session -- 3 PM

GRADE 7 CONFIRMATION PREPARATION REQUIRED PARENT MEETING

(Note: The Sacrament of Confirmation is received in 8th Grade)
Monday, October 23, 2017- 7 PM in Church

GRADE 8 REQUIRED PARENT MEETING AND SACRAMENT SCHEDULE

Confirmation Required Parent Meeting – Thursday, November 9, 2017 - 7 PM in Church
Confirmation Date TBA

8th GRADE CONFIRMATION RETREAT FOR STUDENTS

Sunday, January 28, 2018; 1-6 PM Location: Providence Catholic High School

Evangelization and Faith Formation Commission

Our working motto is,
***“What you do I cannot do. What I do you cannot do. But
together you and I can do something beautiful for God.”***

We invite you to become a member of the Evangelization and Faith Formation Commission-EFFC- and to help our Parish’s faith grow stronger, and in doing so, we can do something beautiful for God.

All parents are invited to attend Evangelization and Faith Formation Commission meetings.
Please check the Parish bulletin for dates and times.

Commission Chairperson

Mrs. Darcy Trudelle

Secretary

Mr. John Rdzak

Members At Large

Mrs. Margaret Avery-Robinson

Mrs. Judy Keating

Mr. Mick Simenc

Ms. Ava O’Connor



Philosophy of Religious Education

Religious Education is a process of living and sharing the teachings of our Catholic Faith. We do this by incorporating the teachings of Jesus into practice in our lives, through our relationships with our families, our parish and our community.

Spiritual understanding and growth must begin in the home. Parents, as you teach your children so many things as they grow, let us remember that you, parents, are the first religious educators of your children. Our catechists and aides build on what is learned in your home. By the time your child reaches first grade, they have a solid foundation, because of you sharing our faith with them. We commend you for that, and then we can begin to build upon the foundation you have set at our religious education classes.

Along with the weekly lesson, we will guide and teach our young people to obtain a more enriched understanding of our faith and show them how to incorporate their faith into their everyday lives.

Our Mother of Good Counsel Religious Education Program is designed to provide our children with basic Catholic teaching. We strive to help our young people develop a deeper understanding of their faith through prayer, study, art, song, and religious oriented activities.

Our program exists to support our families as they guide their children in the understanding and practice of their faith. It is essential that parents join in covenant with our RE Program by incorporating our Catholic faith into daily life, and most importantly—

Attend weekend Mass together as a family.

Parent Formation

Our Parish has become a partner in an exciting 24/7 web-based digital formation series called **FORMED**. This series is designed to help adults and children, grow in our faith at all levels. Access is FREE by using our parish code. We strongly urge you to take advantage of this excellent resource to learn more about our faith, so you not only live it out more deeply, but share it with others.

How to register:

- Go to Formed.org
- Enter our Parish Code **NDQPGV** on the home-page.
- Create a personal account with your username/email and password
- Start enjoying THE best Catholic content all in one place!

Program Expectations

We strive to provide a quality religious educational experience for our students, including a study of our Catholic beliefs and scripture, prayer and worship, along with community service.

Enrollment

The Religious Education Program at Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish is available to children of registered families in grades 1 through 8.

Attendance

For the safety of the children, we do keep accurate attendance records. Please call the Faith Formation Office at (708) 301-0214 before 4:30 PM on class days to report an absence. If you call after 4:30, please leave a message on the voice mail. If you have not called your child's absence into the Faith Formation Office, we will call home after attendance is collected. This is done for the safety of the children, and to remind you of the next class date.

If there is an order of protection on any child, please notify the Faith Formation Office.

Missed Lessons

We can understand absences for illness, or a family emergency. Sports participation or extra activities are not legitimate reasons for missing class. If your child misses two consecutive classes, the Faith Formation Coordinator will contact you to ensure lessons are covered at home. Students must make up all class work when absent. In Grades 1-6, missed lessons will be given to the students upon returning to class. In Grades 7-8, lessons covered in class are expected to be completed by the student prior to his or her return.

Tardy Students

Children must arrive on time and stay for the entire session. If your child is tardy he/ she must have a note explaining the circumstances. The Program Coordinator, on an individual basis, will handle excessive tardiness.

Early Dismissal Policy

For safety reasons, we will not allow any child to leave class early without proper authorization. If your child must leave early, parents must come into the school and sign out their child. Under no circumstances will children be allowed to leave the school and walk to meet parents elsewhere. Children are not allowed to leave class early to attend other activities.

Emergency School Closings

In the event of the closing of School District 33-C, Religious Education Classes are automatically cancelled. Your child's Catechist or Aide will call your home as soon as they are notified in the event it becomes necessary to cancel classes. You may also check www.emergencyclosings.com should it become necessary to cancel class. In addition, you should receive a blast email from the Faith Formation Office.

Parent Sacramental Meetings

The yearly Sacramental Parent Meetings are mandatory and meant for the parents of children who are preparing to receive Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation, along with the beginning of Confirmation Prep which begins in 7th grade. **Students need not attend this meeting.** These meetings will answer all of your questions regarding preparation and reception of these Sacraments, and will be held in our Church. Please check the yearly calendar included in this handbook for the date and time. Information distributed at these meetings will not be given to students.

Behavior Policy

Each student is expected to follow a code of conduct that is exemplary of Catholic values. This dictates that students show proper respect for themselves, all adults, fellow students, school property, and program rules. Name-calling, teasing, harassing, or bullying will not be tolerated. Each Catechist will make known his or her expectations for the classroom. If a child's behavior is inappropriate, the Catechist will call home. If the inappropriate behavior continues, the child will be sent to the Faith Formation Coordinator and another phone call home will be made. If serious disciplinary matters continue, the Coordinator has the authority to have parents seek alternate means of religious education. **Please discuss these policies with your children.**

General Rules

1. **Everyone** will be treated with respect and courtesy.
2. **The use of electronic devices of any kind is banned during class time.**
3. School and personal property will be treated with respect. Parents will be notified about any damage to property and will be required to pay for the damage.
4. Under no circumstances should anything be removed from any desks or counters. Nothing in any of the Junior High classrooms may be disturbed. Taking items that belong to someone else will result in disciplinary action up to and including finding alternate means of religious education.
5. Violence or fighting may result in dismissal from classes.
6. Students will not interfere with another student's right to learn or a Catechist's right to teach.
7. Students are expected to complete assignments given by Catechists. Parents will be contacted when assignments are not complete.
8. Eating and drinking are **not** allowed in any classroom.
9. **All participants are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire class.**

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

It has become necessary to establish a policy on using electronic devices once your children enter the building, including using devices during class time. This does not restrict the children making calls once they are out of the building. The policy is to assure uninterrupted class time for both the students and the catechists.

The use of ANY portable electronic device is BANNED during class time.

If your child brings any electronic device (cell phone, I-POD, Kindle/Nook, hand-held games, etc.), they will be required to deposit them in a container when they enter the class room, and pick them up at the conclusion of class.

If your child does not surrender the device and is found to be using it during class, **the device will be confiscated by the catechist, and a parent will be responsible for retrieving it during Faith Formation Office hours.** A confiscation notice will be given to your child, and must be presented when retrieving the device. A call must be made to the Faith Formation office to assure staff are available when retrieving the electronics. **The device will not be given back to the student.**

Student Dress Code

In keeping with the partnership between our parish and Homer Jr. High, we agree to comply with the student dress code of District 33C. In compliance with Homer 33C Board Policy, the responsibility for the appearance of students rests with the parents and students themselves. Clothes worn should be neat and clean. Any form of dress determined to disrupt the education process, or to be distracting to the purpose and conduct of the RE Program will not be permitted. Dress and grooming will be neat and in keeping with health, sanitary and safety requirements. Clothing, jewelry, or markings (on clothes or person) which promote or depict violence, drugs, sexual content, or gang affiliation or thereof, will not be tolerated.

The following dress items and styles are prohibited:

- Headgear worn in the building (hats, scarves, bandanas, visors, etc.) by students and/or adults.
- Pants and overalls worn below the waist or inappropriately worn.
- Shoes with pop out wheels or detachable wheels.

Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons

Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish prohibits using, passing or selling tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or other narcotics in any form. Matches, lighters, sharp objects, or weapons are strictly prohibited. A violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including finding alternate means of Religious Education.

Dispensing Medication

We cannot be responsible for administering medication. If your child has a medical condition where medication is needed, please notify the Faith Formation Office.

Arrival and Departure

Please plan to arrive at Homer Junior High about 5-10 minutes before class begins. Students should go straight to their classroom, but may not enter the classroom until the Catechist or Aide arrives. Children are not allowed in a classroom unless an adult is present. If a parent opts to walk their child into the building, all adults must **ENTER** and **EXIT** through the **main entrance—Door A**. Entering and exiting through Door B is strictly prohibited. **RE Staff are stationed at this exit to ensure no one enters/exits using Door B.**

With departure, we ask you to exercise caution. Please heed the directions given by the Traffic Controllers. They work in conjunction with the police, who are present each week to ensure the safety of all. They deserve courtesy and respect when directing you where to enter the lot, and where to park to wait for your children. **DO NOT PARK IN THE DESIGNATED HANDICAPPED SPACES WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION AS THESE SPACES ARE NOT ALLOCATED FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, THEY ARE A NECESSITY FOR THOSE WHO NEED THEM. TICKETS WILL BE ISSUED TO THOSE PARKING ILLEGALLY. USING CELL PHONES ON SCHOOL PROPERTY MAY RESULT IN TICKETING.**

We must control access to the building for security measures—another level of security to keep our children safe, therefore **we ask parents to wait outside the school when picking up their children.** We appreciate your cooperation with our dismissal policy.

Dismissal Procedure

Grades 1 through 4—dismissed through the main entrance-Exit A at 7:25.

Grades 5 through 8—dismissed through Exit A at 7:30.

SAFETY is Our Primary Concern

Therefore the following points may help

Be **PATIENT** and practice **PATIENCE**

Exercise Extreme Caution

Volunteer to be a Traffic Monitor.

Religious Education Curriculum

The curriculum of our program is based on the belief that learning one's faith is a process that includes not only a structured program, but also an opportunity for each child to live and practice our faith within our parish community. What we teach must be reinforced by the family's practice of their faith. This goal can only be achieved through a strong partnership between parish and home.

Our program may include written homework for the upper grades. After each session, all children will bring home their books containing their work for the evening, and possibly a handout for you to read which explains their lesson. Please read and discuss these with your children, and make every effort to help your children grow in their faith. There will be periodic assessments of the students' understanding of classroom material. This serves a two-fold purpose: to assess the Catechist's presentation of material as well as to ensure that each child is giving their attention to the material that is being presented. These expectations will be reflected in the Student Evaluations that will be completed and shared with parents at mid-year, and at the conclusion of the school year. At certain specified intervals, students will be asked to individually recite a prayer the class has been practicing. The children will have ample time to prepare for this. This will be done in a friendly, positive manner.

Prayers and Beliefs to Know

Grades 1-8

Sign of the Cross

Glory Be

Hail Mary

Our Father

Prayer Before & After Meals

Guarding Angel Prayer

Grades 3-8

Act Of Contrition

Nicene Creed

Apostle's Creed

Seven Sacraments

Ten Commandments

Grades 4-8

The Confiteor

The Beatitudes

Parts of the Mass

4 Marks of the Church

Grades 5-8

Stations of the Cross

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Corporal Works of Mercy

The Rosary

Texts and Materials

ALL FAMILIES ARE ASKED TO HAVE A BIBLE AT HOME FOR THE USE OF BOTH CHILDREN AND FAMILY.

Grades 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6

Students will use “Blest Are We” Faith and Word Edition, published by Silver Burdett Ginn/RCL Benziger. This is a program designed specifically for religious education of students who do not attend parochial schools.

Please ensure that your child brings their book to class each week.

Lost books must be replaced for a charge of \$25 replacement fee. Children in grades 1-6 will need to bring a pencil, a folder and their textbook to each class. Students in grade 6 will need to purchase “The Compass Bible for Catholic Teens” through the FF Office upon enrollment for the 2017-18 school year. This Bible is the property of each student and will be used in Grades 6, 7 and 8. If this Bible is lost, another copy must be purchased for student’s use.

Grade 3 Sacramental Preparation

Students in Grade 3 will be prepared for Reconciliation using the text “Pardon and Peace” by RCL Benziger. First Communion prep will use the text “We Give Thanks and Praise” by the same publisher. First Reconciliation will be celebrated in mid December with First Communion to be celebrated in May. Please refer to the yearly schedule included in this handbook for specific dates and times.

Grades 7-8

Students will use the “Christ Our Life” series published by Loyola Press. **Students in 7th and 8th grades need to bring their text, a pen, and one notebook to each class.** The notebook will be used for journaling during class. A Confirmation Preparation Booklet will be given to each student and will be used to log their service hours. This Confirmation Booklet will be given to each student in 7th grade and will be used over a two-year period. **Service hours for eighth graders must be completed by March 1, and the list must be turned in to their RE teachers by their first RE class in March. Seventh graders can turn in their lists by their last RE class of the year.**

Students in Grades 7 and 8 will prepare for Confirmation. Confirmation is celebrated in the spring of 8th grade. The Bishop’s Office sets the date for Confirmation. Therefore, the dates change from year to year. Information will be sent home with your 8th grader when our office receives the date from the Bishop’s Office

Parent Conferences

Catechists will schedule conferences with parents at their discretion. Parents may request a conference with their child's Catechist or the Program Coordinator at any time. Parents are welcome to speak with their child's Catechist before or immediately after any scheduled class. We simply ask that you stop and let the Coordinator know so she may inform the Catechist.

The Role of Parents

Parents are asked to participate actively in the program for volunteer needs such as traffic, front desk, hall monitors, catechists and aides. It is expected that parents will involve themselves in their child's progress in the following ways: attending Mass regularly, helping with home activity assignments, praying traditional and personal prayers regularly, attending special sacrament meetings & events, taking an interest in their child's curriculum, involving your child as the family extends concern and service to neighbors and community. We need all parents to volunteer in some capacity. Your time and talents are important to the success of our parish.

Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion, and Confirmation is an important part of your child's faith formation. Parent and family participation is indispensable in the spiritual growth of your child. Participation at weekend Masses is the best preparation for these Sacraments. It is imperative that families practice their faith.

One parent or adult family member must participate in the Sacramental Preparation Meetings which will be held in our Church. Please check the yearly schedule, our weekly Parish Bulletin, and our Parish website for specific date and time.

Children must attend Religious Education Classes for two consecutive years prior to the reception of Reconciliation and Communion. Children must attend Religious Education classes for two consecutive years prior to the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Faith formation is an ongoing experience and learning process for the entire family. Each year builds upon the past. Therefore, children should attend Religious Education classes throughout grade school.

Registration for Religious Education

In order to adequately plan for each school year, we ask you to register your children each year. Toward the end of March, there is a "RE Re-Enrollment Weekend" where you may enroll your children for Fall Classes. We will not assume that your child will be attending classes in the fall unless he/she has re-enrolled. New parishioners may enroll their children into our program at any time.

We do ask that parents provide us with a copy of their child's Baptismal Certificate upon enrollment, or at the latest, prior to the first class in September.

Tuition Payment Policy

We will have a packet/class assignment and textbook pick up weekend at the end of August. This will be held before and after all weekend Masses. As stated, classroom assignments and student texts will be distributed during this time. The balance of your tuition may be paid at any time prior to the first class date. You may simply mail your payment to the FF Office, or place it in the weekend collection in an envelope marked "Religious Education."

Children will not be accepted into next year's classes unless all back tuition has been paid or special arrangements have been made. Please contact the Faith Formation Office if there are financial difficulties and we will be happy to work with you.

ONE- HALF THE TOTAL TUITION AND FEES MUST BE PAID UPON RE-ENROLLMENT

| | <u>June 1-Aug 31-Base Rate</u> | <u>Prior to June 1</u> | <u>SEPT 1-and later</u> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 child | \$290.00 | \$240.00 | \$320.00 |
| 2 children | \$365.00 | \$315.00 | \$395.00 |
| 3 or more children | \$415.00 | \$365.00 | \$445.00 |
| <u>ADDITIONAL FEES:</u> | | | |
| (Per child) | Grade 6---Bible Fee | | \$10.00 |
| | Grade 3---First Eucharist fee | | \$50.00 |
| | Grade 8---Confirmation/Retreat fee | | \$50.00 |



Catechists

Catechists are adults from our parish who have responded to God's call to share our faith with our children. Please prayerfully consider whether God is calling **YOU** to use your gifts and talents to share our faith through this enriching and rewarding ministry.

Initial training and ongoing formation for this rewarding ministry are provided through the Joliet Diocese. Please contact the Faith Formation Office if you plan to attend. It is highly recommended that catechists attend a Catechist Initial Formation session.

To maintain compliance with the requirements handed down by the Joliet Diocese, all volunteers in our program must provide proof of having attended the "Protecting God's Children" workshop. Also, per Diocesan policy, all volunteers must undergo a background check. This is done through our FF Office to keep our children safe.

For the ease of all volunteers, we do provide child-care services during each class session. All we ask is that you provide us with any information regarding special needs or considerations for your children so we can let the sitter know.

The Parish Church and Family Church Partners in Faith

As Catholic families, your daily life is a true expression of your faith. Your faith is not complete by itself. It should be united with and supported by your fellow parishioners. Christ has called you to Himself in and through the sacraments. Therefore, you share in one and the same mission that He gives to the whole Church.

Church teaching summarizes the mission of the family in four distinct, interdependent tasks:

- * Families form living communities
- * Families serve life by bearing and educating children
- * Families participate in building a caring and just society
- * Families share in the life and mission of the Church

You Make this Mission Of Christ Happen By.....

- ◆ Sharing the Catholic Faith Story
 - ◆ Celebrating Rituals
- ◆ Enriching Family Relationships
- ◆ Responding to Those in Need
 - ◆ Working for Social Justice
 - ◆ Praying Together

In the U.S. Bishop's Pastoral letter, "Follow the Way of Love," they further express how families live out their Christian Mission of Baptism.

You believe in God and that God cares about you.

You love and never give up believing in the value of another person.

You are united to one another through relationships of intimacy.

You evangelize by professing faith in God and living by the Gospel values and set an example of Christian living for your children and others.

You educate, since as primary teachers of your children, you impart knowledge of faith and help them learn the values for Christian living.

You pray together, thanking God for blessings, and asking for strength and guidance in times of doubt and crisis.

You serve one another, often sacrificing your own wants for the other's good.

You forgive and seek reconciliation.

You celebrate life as you gather for meals; you break bread and share stories, becoming more fully the community of Christ.

You come together for special family celebrations, when tragedy strikes and in joyful celebration of the sacraments.

You welcome the stranger, the lonely, and the grieving person into your home.

You give drink to the thirsty and food to the hungry. The Gospel assures us that when we do this; they are strangers no more, but Christ.

You act justly in your community when you treat others with respect, stand up against discrimination and racism, and work to overcome hunger, poverty, homelessness and illiteracy

You affirm life as a precious gift from God when you oppose whatever destroys life such as abortion, war, capital punishment, neighborhood and domestic violence, poverty and racism.

**The following
documents are
DIOCESAN
POLICIES**

PLEASE

READ

DIOCESE OF JOLIET

POLICY REGARDING SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS

Revised February 2013

I. INTRODUCTION

On June 14, 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. On December 8, 2002, the *Essential Norms for Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors* were approved by Pope John Paul II. In June of 2005, the *Charter* and the *Norms* were revised, and in 2011, the *Charter* was revised in order to re-affirm the deep commitment of the Church to create a safe environment for children and youth.

The Diocese of Joliet first promulgated a policy regarding sexual abuse of minors on June 14, 1990. Revisions were made in September 1993, in June 1997, in June 2003 and July 2008. As with the previous edition, this policy is intended to be in conformity with provisions from the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and from the *Essential Norms for Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors*.

This policy is designed to ensure appropriate responses to allegations of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults by clergy, seminarians, religious, employees and volunteers. It addresses preventing sexual abuse through education and screening, reporting abuse, providing pastoral assistance to persons affected by abuse and the processing of allegations.

A copy of this policy is to be given to all clergy and seminarians as well as to all employees and volunteers who will sign an acknowledgement of its receipt. The policy is also to be published on the diocesan website.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual conduct with a minor or a vulnerable adult which is either unlawful and/or contrary to the moral teaching of the Church, which is engaged in by an adult employee/volunteer of the Diocese or a parish. It also includes the acquisition, possession, or distribution of pornographic images of minors for the purposes of sexual gratification, by whatever means or the use of whatever technology.

B. Ministerial Relationship

A ministerial relationship is established between persons when care or services are given. Persons in a ministerial relationship with others include clergy, seminarians, diaconal candidates and religious, as well as employees and volunteers.

C. Employee

An employee is a person who is compensated for services to a diocesan agency, parish or school.

D. Volunteer

A volunteer is a person who functions without compensation in any role within a diocesan agency, parish or school.

E. Minor

A person who has not reached his or her 18th birthday is defined as a minor.

F. Vulnerable Adult

during parish, school or religious education sponsored events. The program is also available to parents and guardians.

All persons who continue involvement with minors are required to participate in an updating educational program at least annually.

Children and youth are to receive instruction appropriate to their age level (*USCCB Charter 12*).

Prior to beginning service, all clergy, seminarians, diaconal candidates, religious, employees and volunteers are to receive a copy of the *Standards of Behavior for Those Working with Minors*, and are to sign an acknowledgement of its receipt. The *Standards of Behavior* includes information about appropriate boundaries for those who have regular contact with children and young people (*USCCB Charter 6*). This requirement also applies to all persons who are involved with minors on a regular, recurring basis, and those who may have an opportunity to be alone with children during parish, school or religious education sponsored events.

Procedures for reporting abuse are to be readily available in printed form and are to be the subject of periodic public announcements (*USCCB Charter 2*).

The Office of Formation of Priests and Deacons is responsible for providing programs of human formation for chastity and celibacy that will assist clergy in living their vocation in faithful and integral ways. (*USCCB Charter 17*)

2. Screening

Prior to beginning service, all clergy, seminarians, diaconal candidates, religious, employees and volunteers are required to undergo a criminal background check. This requirement also applies to all persons involved with minors on a regular recurring basis and those who may have an opportunity to be alone with children during parish, school or religious education sponsored events. Backgrounds are evaluated using the resources of law enforcement or other agencies (*USCCB Charter 13*). Background checks are to be performed every five years for all persons who continue involvement with minors.

All seminarians, extern priests, diaconal candidates, and diocesan and parish employees must be fingerprinted for the purpose of obtaining a criminal background check. Fingerprints are submitted to the Illinois State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for clearance as a condition of employment.

Fingerprinting is administered by a vendor approved by the Diocese of Joliet. Prior to the individual being permitted to begin service, results are evaluated by the Diocese with its legal counsel when appropriate.

Name-based background checks are used only for volunteers or for renewals of employees who were screened through that type of background check.

Anyone with a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse may not minister, be hired or volunteer in a diocesan agency, parish or school.

a. Employees

Any prospective diocesan, parish or school employee must complete an application that includes:

1. Employment history, indicating positions held, dates of employment, name(s) of the immediate supervisor, phone number(s), and reason(s) for cessation of employment;
2. Any allegations of physical or sexual abuse made against him/her, which may/may not have involved civil or criminal complaints;
3. A signed authorization to release the applicant's employment history to the prospective employer, as well as at least two references who are not relatives.

Hiring agents must review the employment history and the references provided. All documents must be retained in the employees' file during the time of employment.

b. Volunteers

All volunteers are to complete an informational questionnaire provided by the entity for which they are intending to volunteer.

c. Businesses Furnishing Personnel

Any business supplying personnel for janitorial services, etc., is required to provide the diocese/parish/school with a copy of the criminal background checks of those persons who will be working at the facility. The business is also to provide a written guarantee that such personnel have never been arrested or convicted of any crime, that they are not aware of any complaint or allegation relating to sexual abuse or substance abuse, and that they are suitable to work in an environment where there may be contact with minors. Such information must be kept in a secure file along with the background checks of other employees and volunteers.

d. Members of Religious Orders

When any religious is presented for assignment or residence in an institution or parish, the appropriate religious superior is to provide the Bishop with a written statement about the person's suitability for ministry including information regarding allegations of sexual abuse.

e. Priests/Deacons

When a priest/deacon seeks an assignment in the Diocese of Joliet, his diocesan bishop or religious superior is to provide the Bishop with a written statement of suitability for ministry including information regarding allegations of sexual abuse.

No priest/deacon of the Diocese of Joliet who has a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse or who has committed sexual abuse may be transferred for an assignment to another diocese.

f. Candidates for Priesthood and the Diaconate

The Diocese of Joliet uses adequate screening and evaluations in determining the fitness of candidates for admission to the seminary or to the diaconate. Additional evaluations are conducted during the years of formation. A comprehensive psychological profile of each seminarian/diaconal candidate must be obtained before anyone is admitted to the priesthood or diaconate.

C. Response to Allegations

1. Reporting

All persons, whether parishioners, employees, or volunteers who have reasonable cause to suspect an incident of sexual abuse by anyone including clergy, seminarians, religious or employees have a serious moral obligation to report the incident or allegation to civil officials (*USCCB Charter 4*).

Under Illinois law, certain personnel (including school, child care and recreational program personnel) are considered mandated reporters and must report to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) any situation in which they have reasonable cause to suspect physical or sexual abuse of a minor. Clergy are mandated reporters as to child sexual abuse. Reporting abuse of a vulnerable adult is made to the appropriate state agency.

Reports of abuse should also be made to the Victim Assistance Coordinator. Complaints against members of religious orders are to be reported to the Victim Assistance Coordinator as well as to the respective superior.

Procedures for making a complaint are available on the diocesan website, at parishes or diocesan offices, and are the subject of periodic public announcements.

When a person reports an allegation of sexual abuse, the person will be received with the utmost respect and pastoral sensitivity. Victims are advised of and supported in their right to report abuse to civil authorities (*USCCB Charter 4*).

2. Assessment and Determination

a. The Bishop is immediately informed of any allegation. If he determines, after consultation with others, that there is a semblance of truth to the allegation, and that it is not manifestly false or frivolous, the assessment process begins. (*Questions & Answers Regarding the Canonical Process for the Resolution of Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors*) However, in no way will the process conflict with an investigation being pursued on a state or federal level. .

b. The Bishop notifies the Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection (hereafter referred to as the Director) of the allegation, who in turn notifies the Review Board. He then appoints the Director to oversee an investigation. This investigation will be conducted by professional investigators and may include other competent professionals such as diocesan counsel and members of the Review Board.

c. The Review Board advises the Bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and in his determination of a cleric's suitability for ministry. (*USCCB Charter 2*) In certain cases, the Review Board may consider it important to speak directly with the person making the allegation, the accused person, or other persons for the sole purpose of gathering additional information. The Board will also offer to the Bishop other advice it considers pertinent to the case.

d. The Bishop has sole responsibility for deciding if it is more likely than not that sexual abuse has occurred and for determining any action with regard to the accused. In the case of clerics of the Diocese of Joliet, with sending the case to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome, all in accord with Canon Law.

e. After reviewing the case, the Congregation will advise the Bishop as to which canonical processes are to be followed.

APPENDIX

REVIEW BOARD

The Review Board is a consultative body that advises the Bishop regarding allegations concerning the sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults and related issues. (*USCCB Charter 2, Norms 5*)

A. Membership

The Review Board, whose members are appointed by the Bishop, is composed of not less than nine or more than eleven members of outstanding integrity and good judgment. The majority of members are laypersons, none of whom are diocesan employees.

Members are to have expertise in one of the following areas: social work, civil law, education, treatment of sexual abuse of minors, or clinical treatment of sexual disorders. One member should be the parent of a minor and one member should be a pastor. When possible, one member is a victim/survivor of child sexual abuse or a parent of the same.

Annually members select a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among themselves.

Consultants to the Board may include a representative of the Bishop, a canon lawyer, the Promoter of Justice, the Chancellor, the diocesan attorney and the Victim Assistance Coordinator.

B. Terms

Members are appointed for a term of five years, which may be renewed once (*USCCB Norms 5*). The Bishop has the right to terminate the appointment of a member at any time.

C. Meetings

The Review Board convenes whenever there is business to conduct or assembles at least on an annual basis. It will ordinarily meet in person, but members may participate by conference call.

D. Duties

Members of the Review Board are to:

- Advise the bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and in his determination of a cleric's suitability for ministry.
- Review diocesan policies and procedures for dealing with sexual abuse of minors on a regular basis.
- Advise the Bishop, as requested, on all aspects of cases, whether retrospectively or prospectively.
- Provide new members with an orientation to the Board and present them with a copy of the *Pastoral Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors*, a copy of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* as well as other appropriate materials.
- Attend all meetings, especially those involving particular cases.

E. Criteria for Making Recommendations

- A simple majority of the entire Committee membership is needed to make a recommendation to the Bishop.
- Members may be present in person or electronically
- When considering an allegation of sexual abuse, each member decides, after considering all the evidence presented, whether the allegation is more probably true than not.

F. Communication

The Bishop will insure that the alleged victim and the accused are provided with appropriate and timely information about the progress of the case.

G. Confidentiality

Deliberations and conclusions reached by the Review Board are to be held in strictest confidence. The Bishop, or his authorized representative, are the only persons who communicate with the alleged victim and the accused, the media or any other persons.

DIRECTOR OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION

The duties of the Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection include, but are not limited to the following:

- Oversee the implementation of this Policy on a regular basis.
- Report regularly to the Bishop and the Review Board about the implementation of this Policy and the progress of individual cases of abuse.
- Supervise the work of the Victim Assistance Coordinator.
- Serve as the central information point for child abuse issues among pertinent members of the Diocesan Curia and diocesan attorney.
- Maintain all records pertaining to child protection and child abuse.
- Provide staff assistance to the Review Board.
- Prepare for the annual audit.
- Communicate to the public, i.e., within the Church community and beyond, the efforts of the Diocese of Joliet to prevent the abuse of minors and to heal past abuse.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR

The duties of Victim Assistance Coordinator include, but are not limited to the following:

- Receive allegations of sexual misconduct against minors and vulnerable adults.
- Listen with compassion to the experiences and concerns of victims.

- Advise victims of their right to report to civil authorities and inform them they will be supported in the exercise of that right.
- Inform the Bishop of allegations including any anonymous allegations or allegations that do not contain sufficient information.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

The Diocese does not enter into settlements which bind the parties to confidentiality settlements unless the victim requests confidentiality and this request is noted in the text of the agreement (*USCCB Charter 3*).

RECORDS AND REPORTS

The Director maintains written and electronic documentation regarding all information acquired by the Review Board, its determinations and decisions.

All of the above records are confidential. However, law enforcement officials receive whatever information is necessary for them to carry out their duties.

Information and records generated by mental health practitioners, including those of alcohol and substance abuse treatment providers, are retained or released in accordance with the provisions of Illinois and Federal laws.

The Diocese communicates transparently and openly about issues of sexual abuse within the parameters of legally mandated confidentiality and privacy especially to the faith communities directly affected (*USCCB Charter 7*).

The Diocese publishes an annual public report on the progress made in implementing this policy and cooperates with audits conducted by the National Review Board.

POLICY SUBMISSION

A copy of this policy as well as any revisions to the policy is filed with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops within three months of its effective date (*USCCB Norms 2*).

DIOCESE OF JOLIET STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR TO SAFEGUARD AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

Revised 2014

In accordance with the *USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* (Article 6) and Diocese of Joliet's *Policy Regarding the Sexual Abuse of Minors* (revised 2013), these *Standards of Behavior* have been developed to foster and maintain an atmosphere of trust and safety for minors participating in various programs within the diocese. All personnel, be they employees or volunteers who staff these programs, are expected to maintain high standards of professional, ministerial and moral behavior, and are expected to comply with these Standards.

A. Definitions

- A minor is defined as anyone under the age of 18.
- A vulnerable adult is one who habitually lacks the use of reason (Canon 99) or who, because of mental or physical disability is incapable of protecting himself/herself from sexual abuse.
- Physical abuse is non-accidental injury that is intentionally inflicted upon a minor or vulnerable adult.
- Sexual abuse is any conduct with a minor or vulnerable adult which is either unlawful and/or contrary to the moral teaching of the Church, which is engaged in by an adult employee/volunteer of the Diocese of Joliet or a parish/school/agency. It also includes acquisition, possession, or distribution of pornographic images for the purposes of sexual gratification, by whatever means or the use of whatever technology.
- An employee is a person who is compensated for services to a diocesan agency, parish or school.
- A volunteer is a person who functions without compensation in any role within a diocesan agency, parish or school.

B. Standards

The following Standards are intended to assist Church personnel in making decisions about interactions with minors and vulnerable adults in Church sponsored and affiliated programs. They do not supersede state law or State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services requirements, nor are these guidelines intended to be all inclusive.

Responsible Professional Conduct

1. Ministry to minors respects the rights of parents to educate and form their children. Therefore, activities with minors are to be conducted with the explicit knowledge and consent of parents or legal guardians.
2. Church personnel are never to leave minors unattended during a class, session, event, etc.
3. Church personnel are responsible for releasing minors in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities. In the event that Church personnel are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a minor, they are to contact the parent or legal guardian of the minor.
4. Church personnel are prohibited from the use, possession or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance while working with minors. They are also prohibited from furnishing alcohol or illegal substances to minors or permitting minors to use such in their presence.
5. Church personnel may provide transportation in accordance with the Diocese of Joliet Transportation Policy.

6. Church personnel are prohibited from using physical discipline for the behavior management of minors. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior by minors

Physical Proximity and Modesty

1. Church personnel are never to be nude in the presence of minors. Rare exception may be made when necessary for specifically designated medical personnel.
2. Minors are never to be nude in the presence of Church personnel. The appropriate supervision of locker-rooms may be the exception.
3. Changing and showering facilities for adults are to be separate from those for minors.
4. When officially approved overnight stays are necessary, an adult should never share a bed, sleeping bag or cot with a minor. An adult is not to spend the night in the presence of a lone minor, unless it is his/her own child.
5. Houses used as residences for priests and religious are exclusively for their use. Minors should not be allowed in the private quarters of those residences. With the exception of occasional visits from family members, minors are not permitted to be overnight guests in the residences of priests or religious.
6. Counseling areas should have transparent windows or open doors. Care should be made to have another adult in the general vicinity during counseling sessions.
7. Adults should never meet with minors on a one-to-one basis in secluded areas or closed rooms.

Physical Contact

Appropriate affection between Church personnel and minors is important for a child's development. It is a positive part of Church life and ministry and should be given in public but not in isolated or secluded areas.

1. The following forms of affection, whether initiated by a minor or adult, are regarded as examples of appropriate contact:

- Side hugs
- Shoulder to shoulder hugs
- Pats on the upper back
- Handshakes
- "High-fives" and hand slapping
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with small children
- Sitting beside small children
- Kneeling or bending to receive hugs from small children
- Holding hands during prayer
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate
- Reciprocation of appropriate gestures initiated by a minor

2. The following forms of affection, whether initiated by a minor or an adult, are regarded as examples of inappropriate contact:

- Lengthy embraces
- Full frontal hugs
- Kisses
- Holding minors of school age on the lap
- Touching buttocks, chest or genital area
- Touching the knees or legs of minors
- Tickling
- Wrestling and/or roughhousing
- Piggyback rides

- Any type of massage
- Any form of unwanted attention

Communication

1. Verbal communication with minors is to be appropriate.
2. Church personnel are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations or the telling of jokes with sexual content. However, it is permissible in an educational setting to discuss issues of human sexuality. These classes will convey the Church's views on the topics. If minors have other questions not answered or addressed by individual teachers, they should be referred to their parents or guardians. Church personnel are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with minors.
3. Church personnel are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented or morally inappropriate materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) or accessing similar materials through electronic or other technological means in the presence of minors.
4. Church personnel are prohibited from using technology to interact with minors on issues related to sexuality, including but not limited to sexually related conversations, and viewing and/or distributing sexually motivated materials, and inappropriate expressions of affection.
5. Church personnel should remind minors that all communication sent digitally (texting, email, social network sites, posts, notes, etc.) is not confidential and may be reposted to others.
6. Church personnel's electronic interactions are reserved for professional and/or, ministry related purposes.
7. Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation of minors and vulnerable adults equally apply to the virtual worlds as they do to the physical world.

Undue Attention

Certain conduct has been used by adults to develop inappropriate relationships with minors. Activities include singling out minors or showing them unusual attention. Some examples of this behavior prohibited for Church personnel are:

1. Presenting gifts to a minor that would not ordinarily be given to an entire group of children, excluding awards, etc.
2. Allowing a minor to drive automobiles of Church personnel even though another adult may be present
3. Singling out a particular child for special dinners, events, trips or outings

The *Standards of Behavior to Safeguard Against Child Abuse* is to be given to all diocesan and parish employees, as well as to all parents and parishioners whose children attend parochial schools or attend Religious Education programs. The document is posted on the diocesan website: www.dioceseofjoliet.org

Members of the clergy, religious, employees and all volunteers who work with minors will be required to receive in-service education that addresses their role in protecting minors.

Minors who serve as employees or volunteers will be informed that they have a right to a safe working environment and a right to disclose behavior not in accord with these standards.

CAUTION: Anyone who has reason to believe that a minor is being physically or sexually abused should make a report to Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Mandated reporters must report to DCFS at 1-800-252-2873 (1-800-25ABUSE)



Tips on Cell Phone Use

1. Take precautions with your child's cell phone.
2. Be specific about cell phone use and set up specific rules about how and when the phone will be used. Set a limit on how much time children can use each month and how many text messages they can send and receive.
3. Emphasize and enforce the rule that teens must follow all laws when driving and using a cell phone.
4. Review school policies and agreements regarding cell phone usage on school grounds during the school day and after school.
5. Explain potential legal consequences of sexting.
6. Make the child aware texting reveals your phone number to whomever you send a message.
7. Children should:
 - know that predators can also send messages and call to arrange meetings.
 - know that if they receive a bullying or threatening text message, they should report it immediately to a parent or trusted adult
 - not answer a call from a number that they are not familiar with or not expecting.
8. Review your service plan to learn which features can be blocked to protect children.

Resources for Parents

General Internet Safety Guides

www.onguardonline.org

www.NetSafeKids.org

www.pollyklaas.org

www.willcountysao.com

www.cyberangels.org

Internet Filtering Software

<http://kids.getnetwise.org>

Internet and Cell Phone Safety

www.NetSmartz.org

www.microsoft.com/protect

www.safeteens.com

www.safekids.com

www.netparents.org



PARENT GUIDE



Internet Safety for Children & Teens



Diocese of Joliet
16555 Weber Road Crest Hill, IL 60403
www.dioceseofjoliet.org

Internet Safety



www.thearticle.com

The amount of information available on the Internet continues to grow at an astounding rate. Opportunities abound for social networking, building online profiles, sending video and photos, sharing ideas and thoughts through blogs, tweets. These ways of socializ-

ing and communicating can be fulfilling and worthwhile, yet they do come with certain risks of inappropriate content, contact and conduct. This brief guide attempts to provide general information and where to go for additional information.

General Parent Guidelines

1. **Talk to Your Children**—children of all ages (including toddlers) see parents using multiple electronic devices. Children as young as 2 are now using computers for learning. As soon as your child is using an electronic device, it is time to talk to them about online behavior, safety, and security.

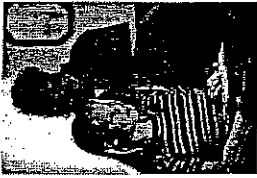
How to begin

- Start Early
- Create an Honest and Open Environment
- Initiate conversations
- Communicate your values
- Be Patient

2. **Learn How to Monitor What Your Children Do Online**

There are many good sites that help parents learn how monitor, control, and block electronic use such as getnetwise.com. The site has many video tutorials, extensive tools that parents can use and a wealth of information.

For Parents of Children (Aged 5-12)



1. Keep the computer in a public place with the screen facing outward.
2. Establish family rules and guidelines to include:
 - a. setting limits on how much time they spend online
 - b. no personal information given
 - c. no school information disclosed
 - d. review of pictures posted.

3. Reinforce the dangers of and penalties for sharing personal or school information. Many schools have policies against students posting information about the school, including the school name, teacher names, etc. Carefully review your school's policies and agreements with your child.
4. Prohibit any meeting in person with someone he/she knows only online, unless you are present.
5. Inform your children that you will monitor Internet use, messaging, and social networking in order to keep them safe.

For Parents of Teenagers (Aged 13-17)

1. Teens have more Internet access through cell phones, mobile devices, or friend's computers, as well as more time to themselves. Consequently, it is not realistic to always be in the same room as your teens when they are online. Reinforce the concept that you and other family members can walk in at anytime, and ask them what they are doing online.

2. Emphasize the concept of credibility and not everything they see on the Internet is true.
3. Let them know that everything on the Internet is public and that it is close to impossible to "take something back once it is posted"
4. Share stories using real examples of teens who have been harmed or hurt because of unsafe online practices .
5. Remind your teen that behind screen names, avatars, profiles are real people with values and feelings. They need to be mindful of what they say and exercise good judgment..
6. Inform your teen that many institutions and companies routinely comb social networking sites to determine if potential job applicants fit their expectations.
7. Remind students that photos can be as damaging to one's reputation as words. Review pictures that are posted.
8. Meeting someone contacted online carries considerable risk and is not advised. If a meeting is arranged adhere to the following:
 - a. do not meet alone.
 - b. go with a trusted adult..
 - c. meet in a public place.
 - d. if not what you expected, walk away and tell a parent or trusted adult.
9. Do not overreact if and when you find out that your teen has done something online of which you do not approve.
10. Reinforce the expectation that parents monitor Internet use and that safety rules must be followed.
11. If teens confide in you about something scary or inappropriate that they encountered online, your first response should not be to take away Internet privileges. Try to be supportive and work with them to help prevent this from happening in the future.