

**ST. JAMES RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**  
**429 ROUTE 25A**  
**SETAUKET, NY 11733**

**DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**  
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Louise DiCarlo

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

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**PASTORAL STAFF**

Rev. Robert Kuznik, Pastor

Rev. Robert Scheckenback Associate Pastor

Rev. Deacon Lou Anetrella

Todd Bradshaw Business Manager

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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE HOURS**

Office:

Monday through Thursday 9:00 – 4:00 pm

Friday Office Closed

Other times by appointment

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**EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

For emergency closings and changes in the schedule

WALK 97.5 WBLI 106.1 WBAB 102.3

WBAB 102.3 NEWS 12 (Cable)

<http://www.cancellations.com/>

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**IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Rectory 941-4141

Parish Outreach 941-4141 ext. 333

Parish Center 751-9567

Church Basement 751-9818

Our Daily Bread 941-2731

Child Abuse (800) 342-3720

Youth Runaway (Horizons) 360-7581

AL-ANON 669-2827

Incest Survivors 354-0746

VIBES (Victims Information Bureau Domestic Violence)

360-3606

AA 24 hour hotline for alcohol and substance abuse

669-1124

RESPONSE 751-7500

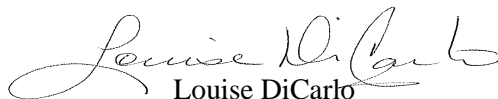
VIRTUS [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org)

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Dear Families,

Religious Education and Faith Formation involves both educators and parents. Our hope is to provide a climate for learning in which the students can acquire knowledge and grow in friendship with the Lord. This calendar is sent to all parents/guardians. The purpose of the calendar is to present our goals and to familiarize you with the practical aspects of the Religious Education Program as well as the offerings of the year. The policies, norms, and requirements of the program are clear and available to all. Please keep this calendar and use it for future reference throughout the year.

Sincerely,

  
Louise DiCarlo

Director of Religious Education

## **INTRODUCTION**

The abbreviation RE stands for "Religious Education," FF stands for "Faith Formation" and these abbreviations will be used throughout this calendar. The RE Program presents the basic tenets of the Catholic faith to students enrolled in levels 1-9. It follows the guidelines set forth by the Diocese of Rockville Centre. The Program is led by grade level coordinators and is under the direction of the Director of Religious Education.

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YOU are the primary educators of your children! We are here to support you in your family's faith development. Children take their example from you. If you pray, they will pray. If your faith is important to you, it will be important to them. If you are kind to others and treat them with respect, your children are sure to follow. Come to church as a family and your children will learn that they are a part of God's larger family.

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**TOGETHER we will make this a wonderful experience for all!**

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## **OBJECTIVES of RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

1. To provide religious education and faith formation opportunities for students in levels 1 through 9 and older if needed.
  2. To assist parents as they promote Catholic attitudes, values and practices in their children.
  3. To provide an environment of acceptance where Catholic doctrine is taught and discussed.
  4. To provide opportunities for the reception and celebration of the Sacraments.
  5. To allow and provide parents the opportunity to be active participants in the faith lives of their children.
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## **ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM**

Admission to the RE Program at St. James is open to families who live within the parish boundaries who are current, registered members of St. James Parish. Exceptions to this policy may be made for those who for a good reason, that is beyond their control, cannot attend the RE Program within their own parish. The decision on exceptions will be made by the DRE in consultation with the Pastor of St. James.

Transfers from another parish faith formation program will require verification. The parent is responsible to provide a letter of transfer from the child's previous faith formation program. Children must successfully complete **each** level according to the individual parish guidelines. All children who have not received prior instruction will be evaluated on an individual basis to determine the appropriate level at which they should begin the faith formation program.

You must choose to worship in St. James Parish. Admission to the program expects that St. James will become your primary place of worship.

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## **POLICY FOR INITIATION OF SACRAMENTS**

The primary goal of sacramental preparation is to provide understanding and acceptance of the concepts related to each of the individual sacraments. The following Diocesan guidelines are to be adhered to:

### **FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST COMMUNION**

- ❖ Attendance at a religious education program in a church or school **for two consecutive years directly prior** to the reception of a sacrament with regular class attendance is required or its equivalent.
- ❖ A basic understanding of course content
- ❖ Parent participation at all parent meetings
- ❖ Attendance at grade level offerings
- ❖ Completion of supplemental book
- ❖ Active participation in the Church community, including regular attendance at Sunday liturgy.

### **CONFIRMATION**

- ❖ Continuous attendance in a religious education program at school or church leading up to 2-year Confirmation course
- ❖ Parent participation in specified meetings
- ❖ Attendance at the scheduled meetings, parish offerings
- ❖ Attendance at Confirmation retreat
- ❖ Interview with Pastor
- ❖ Attendance at Confirmation rehearsal
- ❖ Completing and submitting all required forms and supplemental material.
- ❖ Active participation in the Church community, including regular attendance at Sunday liturgy.

Older children seeking the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion will meet with a priest or the DRE and their parent(s) to determine a plan for preparation. It may include family participation in the RCIA process.

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## **FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The religious education and faith formation of your child are tasks that cannot be accomplished alone. As parents, you are the primary educators of your children. You provide the example for your child by living your faith and attending Mass and receiving the sacraments regularly. In partnership with you, we hope to teach your children what it means to be a Catholic Christian. We are here to assist and encourage you in your God-given responsibilities.

- ❖ Families are expected to be active in the parish and support it in the spirit of stewardship, sharing their time, talents, and treasures.
  - ❖ Parents are required to attend meetings applicable to them.
  - ❖ As a parent, please inform us of any special needs your child may have.
  - ❖ Regular attendance at Religious Education Classes is essential.
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## CHANGE OF ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER OR E-MAIL ADDRESS

It is important that our records be kept up-to-date. Therefore, please notify the Religious Education Office of any change of address, phone/cell number, emergency number or e-mail address.

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## HEALTH CONCERNS AND MEDICATIONS

Health concerns should be brought to the attention of the Director of Religious Education during registration. If a child is diagnosed with a medical concern after registration, please inform the Director of Religious Education as soon as possible.

In addition, if there is someone who has had a serious illness or death in the family or is experiencing a time of difficulty, please bring the situation to our attention.

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## WEEKLY MASS

In order to properly connect religious education, sacramental preparation, and prayer to Liturgy, all students need to attend Mass each weekend. **It is impossible to expect a religious education program to succeed if the central act of worship is ignored.** *RE class attendance does not take the place of Mass.*

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## ATTENDANCE

We want every student in the RE program to have a successful and positive experience and to receive a complete, well-rounded religious education. Please assist us with this by placing a high priority on this part of your child's life. Of course, the text material may be made up, but class time includes many activities such as prayer, films and discussions which cannot be made up. Diocesan policy requires all programs to run a *minimum* of 24 weeks. Children meet once a week for 1 hour (1 hour and 15 minutes for JH). **Attendance at all classes and workshops is mandatory unless otherwise excused.** Since our catechists are volunteers and give freely of their time to our children, please be mindful in giving the catechist advance notice if your child is to be absent.

The following guidelines have been established so that students will be assured they are ready to be successful in the next year of religion class.

**Any student who accumulates 3 or more "unexcused" absences in one program year may not be enrolled to the next level.** A student must complete one level before being enrolled in the next level. **Students who are preparing to receive Sacraments who have 3 or more unexcused absences may be asked to prepare for the Sacrament the following year.**

- ❖ When a class is missed, it is the responsibility of the parent and child to make up the missed chapter and any supplemental assignment.
  - ❖ If special circumstances warrant long absences, contact the DRE to arrange for special home study.
  - ❖ 3 unexcused absences will require a meeting with the DRE. More than 3 absences without a meeting will result in a repeat of the level.
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## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

The safety of our children is of utmost importance to us. For that reason, all children are to be signed in and out of class. They should not be left at the curb to be sent into the building or catechist's home. The children will be dropped off and picked up by their parents or legal guardians. If someone other than the parent or legal guardian is to pick up the child, the Catechetical Leader must be informed of this change in writing prior to the beginning of class.

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## **CUSTODY ISSUES AND ORDERS OF PROTECTION:**

Where there is an order of protection in effect, the parent or guardian must provide a list of names of those persons allowed to pick up the child. This list must bear a notarized signature of the parent or guardian. Where there is an order of protection in effect, anyone picking up the child must present photo I.D. to the Catechist.

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## **CANCELLATION OF CLASSES**

If scheduled classes are canceled for any reason, parents will be notified by telephone. If you have not been called, you may assume that it is business as usual. The rule of thumb for classes is that if the school district is closed (Three Village CSD), so is our program. If school has closed early because of inclement weather, our program will be canceled as well. If school is closed on a Friday because of weather, then any evening activity will be postponed. Please check the website and your email for weekend activity schedules.

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## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

St. James Religious Education Program is a Catholic Christian Community. As a member of this community, every student has certain privileges and obligations. In order to protect these rights and maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, it is necessary to develop guidelines which all students are expected to follow. Violations of program regulations and guidelines, which infringe on the rights and privileges of others, cannot be tolerated. Specific guidelines must be followed so that each child may develop into a responsible Christian.

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## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The following policy is provided so that all individuals involved in RE may be respected and valued:

1. The catechist will let the student know immediately that a behavior is unacceptable. This constitutes a warning.
2. If the discipline problem continues, the catechist will remove the student from the situation.

3. If there is a third occurrence, the student's parent will be called and the student will be removed from the class and sent home.

If a student is removed from a class a second time, parents will be asked to attend class with the student for the next couple of weeks until the behavior is corrected.

If it becomes necessary to remove a student from a class for a third time, the child will be suspended from the class and placed in home teaching until the parents, student, catechist and DRE can meet and mutually design a plan for behavior improvement. All lessons missed while the student is on suspension must be made up at home before the student can be readmitted to the class.

#### **Some examples of expected behavior:**

- ❖ **Respect for the environment of the facility (on site or catechist's home) and the people in it**
  - ❖ Attentiveness to the lesson, participation in the lesson
  - ❖ Self-control in words and actions
  - ❖ Respect for the belongings of others
  - ❖ Appropriate behavior exhibited in Church as well as active participation
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#### **DRESS CODE**

Keeping in mind that we always want to set a good example, that what looks fine on one person does not necessarily work for another, and that what offends one person may not offend another, we have developed the following guidelines. **Following this should help eliminate complaints, embarrassing situations, harassment and giving offense to others:**

#### UNACCEPTABLE DRESS

- ❖ Clothing must be worn appropriately (nothing inside-out or backwards, no rolled up pant legs, no shirts worn half on and half off, unfastened bib overalls or suspenders).
- ❖ Bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, halter tops, tank tops with large sleeve openings, tank tops with less than 2" wide straps, basketball jerseys (unless a T-shirt is worn underneath), see through, mesh, or sheer tops through which undergarments can be seen, or shirts/tops that expose the entire shoulder.
- ❖ No sagging pants that expose undergarments.
- ❖ No clothing or jewelry may be worn with suggestive or questionable language or drawings. (some examples may include, but not limited to the following: graffiti, gang related symbols, racial, ethnic, and/or sexual slogans or innuendos, tobacco products, pictures or language about alcohol, violence, weapons, drugs, language that is blatant disrespect of others' beliefs, or images deemed offensive or not in good taste).
- ❖ Low-cut blouses/shirts/tops or extremely tight tops, tube tops, or any top that exposes cleavage.
- ❖ Coats must fit and be appropriate for the season. Hoods are only permitted when it is deemed necessary due to weather conditions (classes where students transition outside the building for classes). Hood may NOT be worn inside the building

- ❖ Coats are not to be worn in the classroom.
- ❖ Hats are not permitted in Church (boys)
- ❖ No pajamas, bedroom slippers, and shower shoes.
- ❖ Chains or any attire that could be used as a weapon.

**REMEMBER – If in doubt, wear something else!**

Students will be reminded of the rule once. If following these guidelines continues to be a problem, the student will be referred to the DRE, who will set up a conference with the parents.

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**SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICIES**

Substance abuse is defined as the possession of, use of, selling or distributing any unauthorized, illegal drug, chemical, alcohol, or tobacco-like substance, which can be introduced into the body through ingestion, inhalation, or injection. Any student found in possession of an illegal or unauthorized substance on parish property or at parish-sponsored events will be immediately suspended from the program. A conference with the parent, student, DRE and pastor is mandatory for re-admittance. Any student selling or distributing will be turned over to local authorities.

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**ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Items such as iPods and MP3 players should not be brought to class. Cell phones may be brought to class but **MUST be turned off** while the program is in session. At no time should there be calls or texting in class unless authorized by the catechist or supervising adult.

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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS/COMMUNICATIONS**

We envision the faith formation of children as a cooperative effort of parents, Catechists, Catechetical Leaders, and the entire parish community. We encourage parents to be in communication with the child's Catechist. The Parish Office of Faith Formation will communicate with parents on a regular basis, either by mail or by sending letters home with students. We will also keep parents informed about activities of the program by the church bulletin, website, emails, and newsletters. However, the church bulletin is the most important vehicle of communication.

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**CURRICULUM**

All series are approved by the Diocesan Office of Religious Education. We ask that you become familiar with these texts as you review them with your children. Additional materials such as videos and magazine handouts will be used to enhance the textbook. Also, students in level 6 will receive Bibles. These Bibles should be brought to class and kept in good condition as they will be used from year to year. We ask, likewise, that you discuss with your child/children the importance of the Word of God and the significance of it in relation to their religion textbooks. **These textbooks are not a place for graffiti.** If textbooks are lost, new ones will be distributed at a cost of \$15.00 each.

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## **RELIGION RESOURCES**

Additional religion materials are available in the Religious Education Office located downstairs from the rectory.

Please feel free to browse materials there while your children are attending religion classes (while the office is open) or stop in during office hours.

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## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

The RE Program helps students grow, not only in knowledge of what their faith involves, but also in the practice and celebration of their faith and in their relationship with a loving God.

Mass, prayer services and workshops are an integral part of the Program. These are listed on the RE calendar for your convenience. Students are expected to actively participate in these prayer opportunities. Parents are also most welcome to actively participate and assist in their planning.

Second level students prepare for the reception of First Reconciliation and First Communion. Seventh through Ninth level students prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation with reception in the fall of their Ninth level. Programs are designed for parents of these students to enhance this important step in their children's lives. Active participation in these parent programs is mandatory for those who wish their children to receive these Sacraments at St. James Parish.

Students who have completed the fourth level have the opportunity to be trained as altar servers. Training sessions are held in the spring and fall.

Students in the RE Program also have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the year at monthly grade level communal services.

RE students are given the opportunity to be active in the community by participating in various service projects that help the elderly and the less fortunate. There will also be a variety of opportunities to help out at the parish.

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## **CHILD ABUSE/SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM**

Child abuse is of serious concern. Consistent with diocesan policy and local legal codes, parish catechetical staff has a moral and legal duty to comply with the law to ensure the welfare of a child. Pursuant to state law, we are required to report suspected child abuse, and we will also follow diocesan policy on such matters. Per the U.S. Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, the Archdiocese of Rockville Centre has selected *Fuzzie* and *Talk to You* as its safety training program for all children. It is training for the prevention of sexual exploitation, abduction, internet crime, drugs, and school violence. Various sessions will be offered in 2012-2013. We continue to implement the Archdiocese's Safe Environment program, which includes procuring background checks on employees, volunteers, staff, etc. who have contact with children and young people on a regular basis. Additionally those individuals are required to attend training in the *VIRTUS* program.

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### **Diocesan Reporting Procedures:**

**When a complaint of sexual abuse of a child or minor is reported to any person working for the Church, the following should occur:**

- ❖ **They should inform their pastor, principal, or agency director;**
  - ❖ **urge the complainant to notify the legal authorities immediately and assist them if the need help;**
  - ❖ **and notify the diocesan Office for the Protection of Children and Young People at 516-678-5800, ext 573.**
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### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

All parents must be involved in the RE Program in order for the Program to be a successful one. Some *suggested* ways to be active include (but not limited to):

1. To participate in the masses and paraliturgies that are integral parts of the Program.
  2. To participate in Family Religious Education workshops and meetings.
  3. To join committees (social, baking, All Souls/All Saints and Mardi Gras).
  4. To serve as a catechist or as an aide in the classroom.
  5. To organize and serve receptions for the RE Program.
  6. To chaperone for retreats and field trips.
  7. To provide the staff with helpful suggestions and input on the Program.
  8. To pray for the success of the RE Program.
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## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Role of the Catechist**

The task of the catechist is to echo the Word of God in such a way that the faith of students may mature and the Christian story be faithfully handed on. This is done through an instructional process which provides opportunities for a student's faith to be discovered, named, matured, challenged and affirmed by the echoed message found in the Scriptures, the church's traditions, and the student's own experience. Parish catechists are engaged in catechizing adults, young people, children, and those with special needs. Theirs is a particular way of carrying out the promise which the church makes at every Baptism: support, pray for, and instruct the baptized and foster their growth in faith. The fundamental task of catechists is to proclaim Christ's message, to participate in efforts to develop community, in order that the Christian message be sought, accepted and more profoundly investigated. They recognize that faith is a gift and that it is not their efforts, but the interaction of God's grace and human freedom which lead people to accept their faith. Our catechists are very important to all of us. By their willingness to share their gifts, time, and talents, these people make our program a reality. We are privileged to work with them and offer them Catechist Training Programs and special days of reflection and prayer.

### **Catechist**

If you would like to be part of a small-faith community that minister to students and their families, this is the opportunity for you! We have the need for the following people:

#### **Level 1 - Team Leaders**

Leaders would be in charge of approximately 10 – 15 families and act as liaisons between families and the religious education office. These "groups" will gather throughout the year. Training is provided!!!

#### **Elementary (2-6)**

Using crafts, music, weekly lessons and other media you will work with elementary – age children. This program meets either in the catechist's home or in the Parish Center (space is extremely limited and is given on a first come, first serve basis.) This program meets from October through mid-May. Classes are a minimum of 1 hour. An additional hour of preparation time is needed each week. Training is provided!!!

#### **Confirmation program (7 - 9)**

Meeting once a week in a class of approximately 10 children, this is a 2 year program. You will begin in the 7<sup>th</sup> year to get the children ready for the Sacrament of Confirmation through weekly catechesis and service projects. Classes are 1 hour and 15 minutes. Training is provided!!!

#### **Junior High (7 - 9)**

Monthly service projects and socials round out the program. Training is provided!!!

#### **Sacramental Preparation**

This is a program for older students (JH or older) who have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation. This class meets once a week and focuses on the Sacrament. Training is provided!!!

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## **ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Aides**

If you would like to work closely with students and also be part of a small-faith community of catechists, this is the opportunity for you. Our goal is to provide class aides (or co-teachers) to provide support for both the catechist and the students. All home based classes are required to have an aide. As with the catechist opportunities, training is provided!!!

### **Music**

Can you play the piano? Guitar? Recorder? Can you sing? We could use your help! We need musicians for the Sunday Liturgy of the Word and various prayer services throughout the year.

### **Class Parent**

Help coordinate special events for your child's class by volunteering to be a Class Parent. We would love an individual for each class.

### **Office Help**

We are looking for people who enjoy interacting with students and families and who can lend a hand around our Religious Education office answering phones and doing "light" office work.

### **Hall Monitors**

We are in need of people to man the halls during class hours. This is a great opportunity to help us if you need something to "fill" that hour while you wait for your child's class to end.

### **Hospitality**

We are looking for people to help out with various Religious Education events during the year. We need people for set-up, clean up, refreshments. Events include: General Catechist meeting, fall general parent meetings, All Saints/All Souls party, Level 1 Breakfast with St. Nick, Mardi Gras, Level 1 parent/child meetings, JH Socials.



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PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

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By signing below I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Religious Education Handbook of St. James and agree to abide by the policies set forth in the handbook.

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Parent/Guardian signature

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Date

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Child's (Children's) name