

## **WELCOME**

Welcome! The priests, the Director of Religious Education and the Staff of St. Isidore welcome you to the Parish Religious Education Program (PREP). We look forward to cooperating with you, the parents/guardians, in helping your children appreciate the great gift of Catholic faith, which they began to live at Baptism.

***Faith cannot be taught; it must be lived!*** St. Isidore Religious Education Program aims at supporting our parents by offering consistent and formal education in the basic life and worship of the Catholic tradition. Our goal is to build upon the foundation of faith that you have created at home. Our volunteers further explain what you have taught your children while following the Religion Guidelines from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. We strive to bring children to a deeper and more loving relationship with the Lord Jesus. We cannot do this without your help. Our church teaches, "Parents have the primary right and responsibility for the religious education of their children." What we expect from you as parents is support and concern. Please take time with your children to develop upon and discuss the lessons we teach in class. Please attend Mass regularly! PREP classes are not a substitute for weekly Mass. Ultimately, the cooperation and communication between the PREP Staff and parents is crucial to the faith formation of our children. May the Lord be with us and may the Holy Spirit guide us as we begin another year of PREP!

### **Saint Isidore Religious Education Program Ministerial Statement**

The Saint Isidore Religious Education Program strives to provide a faith-filled learning environment modeled on the compassion, joy, and challenge of Jesus. Unless a child attends a Catholic school, parents must enroll their children in the Saint Isidore Religious Education Program as a pre-requisite to receiving the Sacraments as prescribed by the Church. Participation in the Religious Education Program ensures a consistent course of learning in accordance with the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Archdiocesan guidelines. We invite all to share in this vision willingly and to embrace the following goals of the program:

1. To teach as Jesus did and share the basic elements of the Catholic Christian faith.
2. To promote a knowledge of our faith and moral formation in Jesus Christ.
3. To teach the children how to pray with Christ.
4. To develop a sense of prayer, liturgy and service within this faith community and in the larger parish community.
5. To provide parents with the necessary help to fulfill their roles as the primary providers of the faith of their children.
6. To encourage families to participate in the educational, spiritual, liturgical and social life of the Saint Isidore Parish Community.
7. To provide a faith community experience for each child as they journey in their faith. This community experience is most necessary and mandated for the years of immediate preparation for the sacraments.

Saint Isidore Parish Religious Education Program, staffed by volunteer faculty, exists as a service to our parish community.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Nicole Hallowell

Director of Religious Education

St. Isidore Parish, 603 W. Broad St., Quakertown, Pa. 18951

**Phone:** 215-536-6498

**Email:** izprepoff@comcast.net

**Website:** www.stisidoreprep.com

**Office Hours:** Monday: 8:30-11:30am, 6:00-9:00pm

Tuesday 8:30-11:30am, 12:30-3:30pm

Wednesday: 2:00-9:00pm

Thursday: 8:30-11:30am, 6:00-9:00pm

Friday: 8:30-11:30am

Sunday: 9:00am-1:00pm

**\*\*Office hours are approximate and subject to change without notice. Please call ahead.**

## **REGISTRATION**

**New Students:** New registrations are accepted at any time. A new student is defined as one who was not previously enrolled in St. Isidore PREP. PREP families must be registered as parishioners of Saint Isidore Church. If the student was not baptized at St. Isidore Church, a Baptismal certificate must be presented for verification at the time of registration. Parents of children who were baptized at St. Isidore Church need to present an appropriate date. Proof of any prior religious education may be required.

**Returning Students:** Registration begins in March every year. Families will be given the opportunity to register during a registration event at school in March. ***We strongly encourage families to register in the spring!*** A form for each family can be turned in to your child's teacher or to the DRE. Put your form with the session noted, your children's names & your tuition fees in an envelope and give it to your child's teacher.

**Please note that timely registration is the only way we can guarantee your child a text, a teacher, a classroom, and the desired session in September.**

**Please register before the close of the school year!!**

## **TUITION AND FEES**

**(2008-2009)**

Tuition (2008-2009): \$105.00 per student

Late fee (applied to registrations for returning students received after March 31<sup>st</sup>): \$30.00

First Holy Communion Retreat and Materials fee: \$20.00

Confirmation Retreat and Materials fee: \$45.00 (\$25.00 without robe)

- This fee covers the cost of each student's textbook, folder, classroom and art supplies, activity days, audiovisual purchases, resource materials, catechist training, facility costs, and other miscellaneous items during the year. It helps to defray facility costs and salaries of paid staff.

- A replacement fee is charged for lost books.
- A financial concern should not prevent a child's registration with our Program. If there is a difficulty, please contact Mrs. Hallowell at the PREP office. ***Any financial concerns and payment arrangements for the 2009-2010 school year must be discussed before April 30, 2009.***
- There is a full tuition discount for children of weekly catechists and a partial tuition discount for children of weekly assistants. This discount applies to all children within the family.
- A tuition discount will be offered to families who complete their registrations at the registration event in March. After March, tuition will increase based on specific dates. Save money by registering early!

### SESSIONS AVAILABLE

- Sunday (S):** 10:25-11:45am (Grades K-6)  
**Wednesday (WA):** 4:45-6:00pm (Grades 1-6)  
**Wednesday (WP):** 6:30-7:45pm (Grades 1-6)

### ARRIVAL

- Safety is a primary concern! Please respect the rules and policies we have developed to insure the safety of the PREP students and staff.
- Students will not be permitted into the school building before: 10:15am on Sundays; 4:30pm for the Wednesday (WA) session; 6:15pm for the Wednesday (WP) session.
- All children must be brought into the building by a parent. They should not be dropped off outside and permitted to walk in without a parent.
- **Students are not permitted in the classroom without a teacher/aide!** If the teacher/aide has not yet arrived, the parent is expected to stay with his/her child until the teacher/aide arrives.
- ***We will not be held responsible for any child left in the building or the parking lot without the staff's knowledge or supervision.***
- Children should arrive on time since classes begin promptly. Lateness interferes with a child's progress and is disruptive to both the catechist and the rest of the class.

### DISMISSAL

- Children are to be picked up at the classroom. The teachers need to be made aware of carpools and any changes in driving arrangements. In particular, ***the teachers need to know if a child may be released to someone other than his/her custodial parent.***
- LEGALLY, NO CHILD MAY LEAVE THE BUILDING ALONE. Consequently, children may not wait for parents outside the school.
- EARLY DISMISSAL: If for some urgent reason a child needs to be excused early from class, please give the teacher as much advance warning as possible.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Parents should consult the Church Bulletin and the PREP website weekly for information regarding the program/classes. Any changes in the school calendar will be sent home with the students. Parents who regularly check their child's folder, the website, or the church bulletin will be kept abreast of all pertinent information and special events.

## **EMERGENCIES**

- When in doubt, call the PREP Office @ 215-536-6498.
- **IF THERE IS NO PUBLIC SCHOOL, THERE ARE NO PREP CLASSES.** This rule holds true even if the weather and roads return to normal later in the day.
- Class cancellations will be posted on the website and families will be notified by a phone call from the teachers and an email from the DRE.
- *When classes are in session*, the emergency number is 215-536-6052 (School).

## **ATTENDANCE**

Thirty hours of religious instruction are required by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Office of Catechetical Education. It is also recommended that a child repeat the level if frequent absences occur (10-15%). Typically, this means three unexcused absences. Our attendance policy therefore includes:

- When a child misses a class, they are required to make up any missed material.
- If long term absence occurs due to illness or family situation, parents must contact the grade level coordinator to arrange a suitable way to complete grade level requirements.
- Children must meet attendance requirements, complete all the assigned work and exams, and have a passing grade before they are promoted to the next grade level.
- If children miss more than 10-15% of the session, they will **not** be promoted to the next grade level until parents meet with the Director to resolve the matter.
- The reception of a Sacrament may be postponed based on excessive absences!!

## **EXAMINATIONS/PROGRESS REPORTS**

- Examinations are given to students in Grade Level 1 through Confirmation based on the material outlined in their texts. These tests are given periodically to help teachers evaluate the students' grasp of the religious content, attitudes and skills taught in the classroom. However, it is important that parents and students understand that living their Catholic Faith goes beyond success or failure on a test. The ultimate measure of success is the good Catholic lives of our children.
- A Progress Report will be sent home in late January and at the close of the academic year.
- The PREP is a "cumulative" educational program that requires a certain level of knowledge to be acquired at each grade level in order for the program to be successful. Therefore, the PREP Staff of St. Isidore reserves the right to deny advancement to any child who does not have an adequate knowledge base.

## **FAMILY ROLES**

Most of our catechists are parents who work and are busy with family responsibilities. They have spent time preparing their classrooms, their lessons, and their hearts. They have also committed additional time to workshops, seminars and meetings in order to provide their group with the best faith-sharing leadership possible. In order to support the commitment these dedicated members of our parish have made to our youth, we are outlining the following responsibilities:

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- ***Homework!*** Please cooperate with our teachers and the spiritual goals that have been set for your children by enforcing the completion of all assignments.
- Drop off and pick up children at the classroom.
- ***Encourage respect for teachers and classrooms!*** We share the classrooms with St. Isidore School teachers and students. We must respect everything in the classrooms.
- Send children to all classes on time.
- Check child's folder every week for assignments, notices and calendar updates.
- In the event of an absence, contact the teacher and make sure all missed work is completed.
- Attend all required meetings.
- Notify the PREP Office of changes in address, phone numbers, custody issues, etc.
- ***Attend Mass regularly as a family.*** The best religious education that your children can receive is consistent Mass attendance.

## **SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION**

Parents are expected to follow Saint Isidore Parish policy with regard to sacramental preparation and celebration with their children. This policy will be explained more fully at the parent sessions held in conjunction with each sacrament.

- Registration in the parish is required and baptismal certificates will be needed to be presented for verification for all children unless they were baptized in Saint Isidore Parish.
- Since Catechesis (religious education) involves much more than classroom preparation, **THE MOST IMPORTANT PREPARATION FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH IS ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE SUNDAY LITURGY.** Attend Mass regularly.

## **FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST:**

- Two years of preparation are required for the reception of the sacrament of Holy Eucharist. Guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and our Parish Council concerning baptized children specify that the Sacrament of Reconciliation should be received prior to First Eucharist, a sacrament of initiation.
- The child must be baptized.
- The child's minimum age is seven (7) years old.
- The family must be registered in Saint Isidore Parish.
- The education level is a two –year process of religious education that traditionally begins in the fall of Grade 1. First Communion is held at the second grade level.
- **Upon the recommendation of the teacher, the candidate will be presented to the pastor for approval to receive the sacrament. We reserve the right to postpone any student who can not demonstrate a proper disposition and level of knowledge.**

- If the child is above seven (7) years old and is not yet in second grade, a testing of the child's proficiency in Religious Education through second grade will then be held.
- Children with Special Education needs will be recognized. Feel free to call the PREP Office to discuss the situation.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

- Parents(s)/Guardian(s) is/are expected to bring the child in to worship every week.
- Parents(s)/Guardian(s), through their example, is/are expected to challenge their child to lead a Catholic life.
- Parents(s)/Guardian(s) of children in the PREP is/are expected to fulfill the goals of good Stewardship (time, talent, & treasure).
- In regard to transfer or home schooling, the Director of Religious Education and the Pastor will evaluate cases on an individual basis.
- Parents are to attend any required meetings in regards to sacramental preparation. Any parent who misses a required meeting needs to schedule an educational session with the DRE before their child may receive the sacrament.

### **FIRST PENANCE/EUCHARIST FOR NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS**

For students in fourth grade and above who have not received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and/or Eucharist, we coordinate a special Sacraments Program with special emphasis on family involvement. Please contact our office for more information.

### **CONFIRMATION:**

- The student must be baptized.
- The student must have received First Penance and First Communion.
- The student must have reached sixth grade educational level.
- The family must be registered in St. Isidore Parish.
- Because Sacramental Education is an on-going process, a child is required to continue his/her education from First Communion through Confirmation.
- Each child is required to have a Catholic sponsor who has obtained a Letter of Eligibility.
- **Upon the recommendation of the teacher, the candidate will be presented to the Pastor for approval to receive the sacrament. We reserve the right to postpone any student who can not demonstrate a proper disposition and level of knowledge.**
- A child who has not completed the required educational process must be tested in order to receive Confirmation.
- Transferred and home schooled students will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- All Confirmation students must have a satisfactory attendance record. Three or more absences will be considered an inadequate preparation for the reception of the sacrament, and therefore, Confirmation may be deferred until the following year.
- All candidates are also required to complete a Confirmation formation program, attend a retreat, and offer 20 hours of community service.

\*Children with Special Education needs will be recognized and resolved on an individual basis. Feel free to call the PREP Office to make arrangements.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

- Parents(s)/Guardian(s) is/are expected to bring the child in to worship every week.
- Parents(s)/Guardian(s), through their example, is/are expected to challenge their child to lead a Catholic life.
- Parents(s)/Guardian(s) of children in the PREP is/are expected to fulfill the goals of good Stewardship (time, talent, & treasure).
- In regard to transfer or home schooling, the Coordinator of Religious Education and the Pastor will evaluate cases on an individual basis.
- Parents are to attend any required meetings in regards to sacramental preparation. Any parent who misses meeting needs to schedule an educational session with the DRE before their child may receive the sacrament.
- Parents(s)/Guardian(s) is/are expected to guide the candidate in the selection of a sponsor.
- Parents(s)/Guardian(s) is/are expected to oversee the candidate's fulfillment of requirements, including the quality and completion of service hours.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are expected to submit all paperwork when due.

### **EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE SPONSOR**

The role of the Confirmation sponsor is similar to the role of a godparent at Baptism. The sponsor should help the candidate throughout his/her life to fulfill his/her baptismal promises. The sponsor should be one whose positive influence on the candidate is permanent and strong; hence it is not just an honorary title, but a responsibility to set a good Catholic example.

- In conformity with the new Code of Canon Law, parents may not be sponsors.
- The sponsor must be at least 16 years old.
- The sponsor must be a Catholic, who has been confirmed, received the Eucharist and practices the Faith. "Practicing" means, in the case of an adult, that they must be registered in a parish, frequenting the Sacraments, regularly attending Mass, and participating in a valid marriage.
- The sponsor must present a Letter of Eligibility from the pastor of their present parish to their child's teacher or the DRE within the time frame established by the Director of St. Isidore PREP.

### **PROXY SPONSOR**

The name of the proxy-sponsor is to be submitted to the office. A proxy-sponsor must satisfy the same requirements as a sponsor including the letter of eligibility. (See above.)

## CURRICULUM

Saint Isidore PREP uses “Faith First: Parish Edition” textbooks and the Archdiocesan Guidelines to instruct our children. Confirmation students (grade level 6) use an additional text designed specifically for Confirmation preparation. The following summarizes what is primarily stressed in each grade:

- Kindergarten Prayer, Mary, Christian Community, Feast, Creation, The Bible, The Liturgical Year, Sacraments, the Holy Family, Worship, the Trinity, and the Easter Season. **Prayers:** the Sign of the Cross, the Father, the Hail Mary, and Grace Before Meals.
- Grade 1 God the Father, Creation, Living in God’s World, God the Son: Jesus Christ, God, the Holy Spirit, Sacraments of Initiation, Saints, Lent and Easter, and Mary. **Prayers:** the Hail Mary, the Rosary, the Sign of the Cross, and the Father.
- Grade 2 Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, Blessed Trinity, Sacraments, Sacramentals, the Mass, Mary, Saints, Types of Prayer, Advent and Lent. **Prayers:** the Sign of the Cross, the Glory Be to the Father, the Act of Contrition, the Father, the Hail Mary, the Rosary, the Angelus, the Stations of the Cross, and Grace Before Meals.
- Grade 3 The Trinity, Sacraments, God’s Law, Christian Community, Mary, Advent, the Commandments, the Commandment of Love, Lent, Prayers at Mass, and Saints. **Prayers:** the Rosary, the Sign of the Cross, the Father, the Hail Mary, the Doxology (Glory Be...), the Act of Contrition, Grace Before Meals, the Hail, Holy Queen, the Angel of God, and the Apostles Creed.
- Grade 4 God the Father, Commandments, Grace, Sin, Conscience, Contrition, and Jesus Christ Our Redeemer, the Beatitudes, Works of Mercy, Virtue, Mary, Models of Prayer, Advent, Lent, and Saints. **Prayers:** the Hail Mary, the Hail Holy Queen, the Rosary, the Angelus, the Father, and the Act of Contrition.
- Grade 5 Sacraments, Sacraments of Initiation, Mary, the Mass, Advent, Lent, and Kinds of Prayers. **Prayers:** the Rosary, the Hail, Holy Queen, the Angelus, and the Memorare.
- Grade 6 Preparation for Confirmation, the Bible, New Testament and Old Testament, Advent, Lent, Definition of Prayer, Dogmas Believed, Days in Honor of Mary, and Christ Fulfills the Old Testament. **Prayers:** the Hail Mary, the Hail Holy Queen, the Rosary, the Memorare, the Angelus, and the Magnificat.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE FORM**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE  
ST. ISIDORE PARISH  
531 W. BROAD ST.  
QUAKERTOWN, PA 18951  
215-536-6498**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Dear Director of Religious Education:**

**I have read the Family Handbook for the St. Isidore Religious Education Program and have taken the time to explain the policies to my child/children. We understand that we are required, by our registration, to adhere to the policies in the Family Handbook.**

**Please sign and return this form with your oldest child by the first class in October. Keep your handbook in a handy place for reference. This Handbook is designated to be used throughout your child's attendance in PREP.**

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student(s) Name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_