



St. Gertrude Parish Office of Religious Education

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Welcome to St. Gertrude's Parish Religious Education Program! We are happy to partner with you as we educate your child to live their Christian faith. The Church teaches that parents are the first and foremost catechists of their children. Parents communicate values and attitudes by showing love for Christ and His Church and for each other, by reverently receiving the Eucharist, and by fostering justice and love in all their relationships. The active involvement of parents in the parish, their readiness to seek opportunities to serve others, and their practice of prayer, all teach children the importance of faith.

The Faith Formation/Religious Education Program of St. Gertrude's Parish is based on the belief that the formal aspects of the parish program are not meant to be a substitute, but rather **a support and enhancement of the life of faith formation being lived in the home environment**, the "domestic church". All those who touch the life of a young Catholic in some way – parents, catechists, clergy, parish volunteers, and fellow parishioners must take their role seriously and responsibly by fully living their baptismal commitment and giving witness to the place and importance of following Jesus Christ. As Catholics, we believe that a crucial aspect of this living faith is participation in the life of the local Church community—the parish—during attendance at Sunday Mass.

The practical aspects of our Faith Formation/Religious Education Program are described below. As you read through them, please remember that these details are but one small facet of the total faith formation of your child(ren).

- **Communication:** We encourage parents to be in communication with the child's Catechist. The Parish Office of Religious Education will communicate with parents by email.
- **Program Closings:** If the Locust Valley School District is closed, the Religious Education Office will also be closed. In the event of a closing here due to a late storm, the office will contact you through email when classes are cancelled.

- **Cell Phones/other electronic devices** are not to be used at ANY time during the classes. If a child is caught using the cell phone it will be taken by the catechist. It will not be returned to the student until the end of class time.
- **Behavior:** Students are expected to act courteously during the hour they are here for religious instruction, and to treat their catechists with the same respect that they would a school teacher.
- **Arrival/Dismissal:** All students need to enter the school building through the doors by the Religious Education Office. For the safety of your child(ren), these doors will be open 5 minutes before the start of class. All students need to exit the school building through the doors by the Religious Education Office only.
 - Note: When an urgent reason necessitates a child's early release a parent is required to please notify the office. Each child must be signed out for an early dismissal.
- **Visitors:** No unauthorized persons will be allowed in the classroom unless they have been previously authorized by the Catechetical Leader.

We are grateful to the families who have chosen to partner with us as we hand down the faith to a new generation. May God bless us in this noble endeavor.

Sincerely,
 Dr. James R. Sheehan
 Director of Religious Education