



Let the children come to me.

MATTHEW 19:14

OLS CCD 2021 - 2022 Family Handbook (Last Updated 09/02/21)

Contact Information

OLS Religious Education Department Address:

Our Lady of Sorrows Church
Religious Education Office
217 Prospect Street
South Orange, NJ 07079

OLS Phone and Fax Numbers:

Main Church Number: 973-763-5454
Fax: 963-763-9506

Staff:

Jennifer Noll - Catechetical Coordinator

Email - jennollols@gmail.com
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Colleen McDonald - Administrative Assistant

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Office Phone: 973-763-5454 x285

The Religious Education Department offices are located in the lower church. If you would like to meet in person, please schedule an appointment. For security reasons, please enter through the 4th Street doors and stop by the main parish office before being directed back to our offices.

Other Sources of Parish Information Include:

Website: olschurch.com, great for basic OLS parish information, contacts, updates and the latest bulletin. For items relating to the CCD program, please click on the "Religious Education" tab on the OLS website home page.

Facebook Page: *Our Lady of Sorrows Church: South Orange, NJ*, great for the most up-to-date parish-wide information and updates (Note: There are several different *Our Lady of Sorrows* pages - ours has around 800 members.)

YouTube Channel: *Our Lady of Sorrows South Orange*, great for watching Mass when you're sick

Parish Mission Statement

We, the people of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, are a community of Catholic believers and disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. Brought together in Baptism and nourished by the Eucharist, the source and summit of our faith, we strive, with the help of divine grace, to live the Gospel joyfully, faithfully and sacramentally everyday.

Believing fully in God's divine power and provision, we embrace our mission as disciples to proclaim to all nations the good news that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, knowing that salvation is for everyone and that in the Holy Spirit all things find unity and harmony. We seek to make the Church "a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel" (Joy of the Gospel).

Under the patronage of Our Lady of Sorrows, we seek to faithfully serve the Lord through serving others in our community and beyond and strive to do this with humility as we believe that everything we do is for the glory of God.

Program Goals

Our parish catechetical program seeks to support and enable, in a formal manner, the faith life initiated by the parents of the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows. In addition to supporting the Parish Mission Statement of Our Lady of Sorrows, we strive to bring each child in our program into a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ by 1. Promoting Knowledge of the Faith 2. Providing Liturgical Education 3. Supporting Moral Formation 4. Teaching Children How to Pray 5. Preparing Students for Community Life and 6. Preparing Students to Spread the Gospel to Others by Word and Example.

Registration

Our catechetical program offers religious instruction for children in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Registration for CCD is online for both new and returning students. A link to the online registration form can be found on the parish website under the *“Religious Education”* tab.

Families must be registered at either Our Lady of Sorrows or St. Joseph’s parish in Maplewood in order to attend religious education classes at OLS. Parish registration information can be found at the bottom of the home page on the OLS website. Parish registration is free. All families new to the CCD program are asked to provide a copy of their child’s Baptismal Certificate if the registrant was baptized at a parish other than Our Lady of Sorrows. Returning students must register annually for the program.

Early registration helps to ensure that your child can be placed on the class day of your choice. We may not be able to accommodate day preferences for those families registering closer to the beginning of the religious education school year. Class size is dependent upon the number of volunteer catechists that our program has each year.

Fees

Please see the table below for the fee schedule for the 2021 - 2022 school year:

Register Before July 15, 2021	Register After July 15, 2021
1 Child - \$140	1 Child - \$170
2 Children - \$230	2 Children - \$260
3+ Children - \$315	3+ Children- \$345

No child will be refused admission into the program due to financial hardship. Any families who need to pay in installments or who are in need of financial assistance are asked to contact Colleen McDonald. All requests will be kept confidential.

Volunteer catechists pay only \$25 for the entire family! Team teachers pay \$45 for the entire family.

Schedule of Classes

Monday:

Grades K - 8 meet from 3:55 - 5:15 pm, classes originate in the OLS church

Tuesday:

Grades 1 - 8 meet from 3:55 - 5:15 pm, classes originate in the OLS church

Cancellation of Classes

The dates for the CCD year are set in advance and our calendar is based around the South Orange / Maplewood (SOMA) public school calendar as well as the Our Lady of Sorrows School calendar. A calendar for the 2021-2022 school year can be found at the back of this handbook. It is also posted on the Our Lady of Sorrows Church website.

If the SOMA schools are closed for inclement weather, there will be no religious education classes held on that afternoon and a notification email will be sent to all student households and volunteers by the religious ed department. If a decision is made to cancel classes for any reason (ie. power outage, street closures etc.) separate from the school district, an email will also be sent to all families and volunteers.

Families will also be notified by email of any class closures due to Covid. Given the ever-changing nature of education in the Covid era, it might be a good idea to check your email before leaving for CCD each week.

Student Arrival - Afternoon Classes

CCD will begin at 3:55 pm in the OLS church. Catechists and students should enter the church through the main Prospect Street doors. All students are asked to arrive on time as our Opening Prayer Service and Gospel Reading will begin promptly at 4:00 pm. Students who arrive prior to the start of the program are asked to wait with a caregiver until the start of classes. Students may wait on the playground prior to the start of CCD, but must be accompanied by a caregiver.

Snack for Afternoon Classes

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, **snacks will no longer be offered in CCD.** As a result, CCD is ten minutes shorter than it was in the past. Please use the extra time between school and CCD to give your child a snack before arriving at CCD. Students may carry individual water bottles.

Student Attendance Policy

The Archdiocese of Newark has asked that each child enrolled in a parish religious education program receive thirty-five hours of instruction during the year. Our Lady of Sorrows utilizes a spiral curriculum in which each grade level builds upon the knowledge obtained the year before. As a result, **regular class attendance is expected. Please make every effort to arrive at CCD on time.**

Attendance is taken each week by our catechists. Student attendance is then transferred to each child's permanent record. We understand that children get sick and that scheduling conflicts, transportation issues or quarantine restrictions may affect your child's ability to attend class. We ask, however, that you make every effort to ensure your child's consistent participation in our program. If you know that your child will be absent for several weeks in a row, please contact your child's catechist or Jen Noll and your child can be temporarily moved to our remote homeschooling program.

Please note that **if a child has 5 or more unexcused absences he or she will not receive credit for having completed that grade unless alternate arrangements are made with the Catechetical Coordinator to make up all missed work. The loss of credit may affect your child's ability to receive his or her sacraments in the usual time frame.** It is the policy of Our Lady of Sorrows parish that the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are received in the second year of religious education, generally in the second grade. Children must have completed at least one year of formalized religious education and be currently registered at a Catholic School or in a parish religious education program before receiving these Sacraments.

Regular CCD attendance may also affect a player's ability to remain eligible to play for CYO sports teams. The OLS Religious Education Department regularly shares attendance information with CYO program administrators during the sports season.

This year, in response to the pandemic, there will be no snack during CCD. As a result, each CCD class is ten minutes shorter than it was in the past. The loss of these ten minutes will be offset by the addition of five Sunday Masses with Children. As a general reminder:

In addition to ongoing attendance in religious education classes, children should also participate regularly in Sunday Mass, Holy Days of Obligation and Reconciliation.

Student Dismissal

CCD ends at 5:15 pm. At the end of class, all K-8th grade catechists will dismiss their students from the Our Lady of Sorrows School - not the church. Younger students will be dismissed from the cream double doors leading to the OLS cafeteria. Older students will be dismissed from the side 4th St. door entrance. Please meet your children outside the school. You may find it helpful to designate a pre-arranged meeting spot. Please utilize the crosswalk near the school as there will be a crossing guard present from 3:45 - 5:30 pm.

If there are any legal custody decisions affecting the right of any individual to pick your child up from the program, please provide Religious Education Department staff with a copy of the legal decision and a list of specific individuals authorized for pick-up and we will keep your child inside the school until positive identification is made.

Early Dismissal

If you need to pick your child up from CCD before the end of class, please send him or her into CCD with a signed note indicating the new pick-up time and the name of the individual who will be picking your child up early. Students leaving early can be met at the double doors leading from the OLS School cafeteria.

Behavioral Expectations

At Our Lady of Sorrows we aim to treat each other the way that Jesus would want us to: with loving kindness, dignity and respect. The "Golden Rule" should be at the heart of every interaction we have with one another.

Parents are asked to ensure that their children attend classes regularly. They are asked to communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect their children's performance or behavior within the classroom with the Religious Education Department staff and their catechists. **Parents are also reminded that they have the primary responsibility for the education of their children in the faith and are encouraged to take an active role in their children's learning.** This includes regular participation in Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation. Any parents wishing to become more involved in our program are encouraged to contact Jen Noll. The catechists in our program are all volunteers who are generously giving their time and talents in the service of the Church and should be treated with kindness and respect.

Students are expected to behave in a Christian manner at all times by showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students. They are expected to attend class regularly and to actively participate in classroom activities and discussions. Students are expected to respect the property of the Our Lady of Sorrows School building and the property of their peers in both the school and the religious education program. The use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited. Students are not allowed to be in possession of weapons of any kind.

Catechists are expected to provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that the children in their care can grow in their faith. They are asked to prepare a lesson plan for each class period and to teach the designated curriculum. Catechists should be good role models for their students and are asked to model appropriate Christian behavior at all times.

The Catechetical Program is expected to support families in the faith formation of their children. It will foster a learning environment which provides for mutual respect and reverence for the dignity of each person. The Religious Education Department will provide quality instruction by trained catechists and maintain communication that is regular and informative.

In the classroom, the catechist is primarily responsible for discipline. The catechist will handle all minor discipline problems.

A disruptive child is one who disturbs or interrupts the orderly course of events in the classroom and prevents other members of the class from learning about their faith during a catechetical session. Such behavior includes restlessness, disrespect and rude or inappropriate language and gestures. The definition also extends to acting as a catalyst for another's behavior.

Corporal punishment is defined as any punitive touching (such as pushing, slapping, grabbing) and is strictly forbidden.

Students may not be disciplined by excluding them from the catechist's visual or physical space of supervision (ie. putting a child out in the hall).

Procedural strategies for disruptive students are listed here in order of action and implementation:

- Preliminary effort by the catechist in the classroom
- Intervention of the Catechetical Coordinator
- Parent notification by the Catechetical Coordinator
- Parent is requested to be in the classroom with their child
- Temporary home study
- Parent/Child visit with the pastor to discuss improvement plan
- Long-term home study

Masses with Children

Opportunities are presented throughout the liturgical year for children to participate at Mass as Ministers of Hospitality, Proclaimers, Readers and Ushers during specially designated 10:00 am Sunday liturgies. Participation is open to all children in the parish. **This year our CCD students are urged to attend the five scheduled Sunday Masses with Children** in order to further their connection with their parish family and the Lord. The Masses with Children for the coming year are listed in the CCD calendar.

Look for emails from Mrs. McDonald for more information about how to sign your child up to play a more active role during these kid-centric Masses. As our 10:00 Mass is livestreamed on the parish's YouTube channel, families of students who sign up to help at our Masses with Children will be asked to sign an *Authorization, Consent and Release for Electronic Communication Involving Minors* form.

Students who arrive without their families may sit in designated CCD pews with members of the catechetical team. These students must be picked up inside the church by a parent.

Curriculum

All students will be given a student workbook at the start of the year. **Students are asked to bring their books to and from CCD each week so that they will have access to their books in the event that we need to move to a remote format on short notice or they need to quarantine for any reason.**

The CCD program will be using the Loyola Press "*Sunday Connection*" resource materials for its beginning liturgical services. Families wishing to delve a little deeper into each Sunday's Gospel may also want to use this feature to enrich their family's discussions. Links to this resource are included in the weekly family newsletter.

Grades K-8

The OLS CCD program uses the "***Christ our Life***" (COL) book series for grades K-8. The COL series uses a spiral curriculum "revolving around the four fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: Creed, Sacraments, Morality, and Prayer." The latest version of the series focuses on "The New Evangelization" and seeks to help children to share the light of Christ with others. Loyola Press, publishers of the COL curriculum, has a website with many additional resources available for families. Visit www.loyolapress.com/christourlife for more information.

The following topics are highlighted in each of the following grades:

Kindergarten:	God Loves Us		
1st Grade:	God is Good - Salvation	5th Grade:	We Worship - The Liturgy of the Mass
2nd Grade:	God Cares - Eucharist and Reconciliation	6th Grade:	God Calls a People - The Old Testament
3rd Grade:	We Believe - The Catholic Faith	7th Grade:	Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life
4th Grade:	Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes	8th Grade:	The Church Then and Now and the Holy Spirit

Abuse Prevention and Reporting

Pursuant to state law, we are required to report suspected child abuse. Department of Religious Education staff members and volunteers will also follow the policies of the Archdiocese of Newark with regard to matters of abuse. All employees and volunteers are required to read and sign an acknowledgement that they have reviewed the Archdiocese of Newark's policy *Prevention of Abuse of Minors; Guidelines for Working with Minors*, and *Reporting of Incidents, Allegations and/or Concerns*. This policy can be accessed on the Archdiocese's website at www.rcan.org.

All of our catechists and volunteers working closely with children are required to attend the program *Protecting God's Children*. This training session makes participants aware of the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, and the five steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse. Trained facilitators incorporate policies and procedures into the training: defining child sexual abuse, addressing the reporting of child sexual abuse, the screening and selection of employees and volunteers, and victim advocacy. Recertification is required after a period of five years.

All volunteers must also complete a volunteer application and submit to a criminal background check.

Medical - General

All student medical and emergency contact information will be kept on-site in the cafeteria with Religious Education staff during regular CCD hours. This medical information will remain confidential unless permission to share it has been given by the parent. **Please make sure that your child's emergency contact information is up to date.** Please inform the Religious Education Department of any changes.

Department of Religious Education Staff are certified in the administration of First Aid, CPR and epinephrine. Any student in need of medical attention will be directed to staff members for assistance.

Catechists and staff members in the CCD program do not dispense or administer medication to students. With the exception of those students requiring the use of epinephrine whose parents have submitted a *Self-Administration by Child/Adolescent of Epinephrine* form, students are not allowed to self-administer medication.

Medical - Archdiocese of Newark Policy Regarding Epinephrine

If your child has allergies which may require the use of an Epi-Pen, please review the Archdiocese of Newark's *Policy Regarding Epinephrine Pre-Filled Auto-injectors in Catechetical Settings* policy which can be found on the OLS website. A copy of this policy will also be sent to all families who indicate on their CCD registration form that their child(ren) may require the use of epinephrine. Families must return a signed copy of the *Epinephrine Administration Consent Form* to the Religious Education Office prior to the start of classes. This form must be renewed on a yearly basis.

Under the policy there are three options a parent may choose from:

- Option A- Medical Professional or "Designee" present during Religious Education Classes
(Note - both Colleen McDonald and Jennifer Noll are certified in the administration of epinephrine)
- Option B- Self administration of Epinephrine with a Pre-filled Auto-injector
- Option C- Parent/Guardian present during Religious Education Classes

Should the administration of epinephrine be required, emergency ambulance services must be called immediately via 911 and the patient must be transported to the hospital emergency room for further treatment once the epinephrine has been administered - even if the student's symptoms appear to have resolved. Arrangements for the safe storage of Epi-Pens during CCD should be made with the staff.

Medical - Covid Guidelines

Given the ever-changing and evolving nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, please see our weekly newsletter for the most up-to-date guidelines. Please note that this handbook is a working document. Covid guidelines are subject

to change based on guidance from the Governor's office, NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, Local Departments of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Archdiocese of Newark.

At time of the drafting of this handbook, students should:

- come to CCD wearing a mask
- practice social distancing of 6' in public spaces and 3' in the classroom
- wash their hands regularly and use the hand sanitizer available at the entrance to the church and throughout the OLS School
- stay home when sick or exhibiting any signs of Covid
- quarantine after travel to areas outside of the SOMA district approved area or after contact with a Covid-infection individual (if unvaccinated)

If your child has been at CCD and has tested positive for Covid please notify Jen Noll as soon as possible so that we can conduct contact tracing and alert local health authorities and the Archdiocese of Newark.

Communication

Between Catechists and Families:

Each catechist will receive contact information for the students in his or her class. Catechist communication regarding individual classroom happenings varies in frequency and type depending upon the catechist. **If you have any questions or concerns about what's happening in class, please reach out to your child's individual catechist first.**

Between the Religious Education Department and Families:

The Religious Education Department uses email as its primary form of communication with families. **Please check your email regularly for updates from our office as last minute closures and class cancellations due to Covid may arise throughout the year.**

Please be sure to check your inbox regularly for our weekly e-newsletter. Our newsletter is filled with important program updates and supplemental faith-based resources. It is sent out every Wednesday during the school year and bi-monthly during the summer via Mail Chimp. Mrs. McDonald also sends out a link to the newsletter on Fridays for all those whose email providers may filter out communications generated from third-party providers. Additionally, our newsletter can always be found under the "Religious Education" tab on the parish website. We urge you to make sure you read our newsletter frequently to be kept abreast of all CCD and sacramental preparation updates. Please contact Mrs. McDonald if you are having newsletter delivery problems.

From time to time, paper flyers for upcoming events and service projects will also be used to publicize upcoming activities and events. If you need to get in touch with Religious Education Department staff for any reason, please use the contact information provided at the beginning of this handbook or see Jen Noll or Colleen McDonald after CCD. You can also schedule an appointment to speak with us in the office.

Student Gmail Collection

While we have every expectation of being able to hold in-person classes throughout the year, we'd like to be prepared *just in case* we need to change the format of our classes and switch to virtual learning program administered through Google Classroom for an extended period of time. Google Classroom may also be utilized in cases of prolonged absence from CCD classes for any reason. Parents will be asked at the beginning of the year to complete a Google Form for each registered child identifying a student Gmail account so that student can be added if necessary to our Google Classroom classes.

Families are asked to read the Archdiocese of Newark's Digital Communication policy and to sign a written *Acknowledgement of the Digital Communication Policy* as well as an *Authorization, Consent and Release for Electronic Communication Involving Minors* Form just in case their children need to switch to a digital learning format for any length of time.

Social Media / Publicity Policy

After registering, families will be asked to provide OLS with authorization to use their child's likeness in parish publications, including web and print media. Any families who do not want their child's image used in parish publications should indicate that on the Media Release form. Religious Education Department staff and catechists are asked to consult the photo authorization list before using any student's likeness.

Cell Phone Policy

In general, students should refrain from using cell phones, except in case of emergency, during CCD. CCD phone usage is prohibited in the OLS church. It is up to each individual catechist to determine the specific cell phone policy for his or her class. If the use of cell phones becomes a problem, your child may be asked to place his or her cell phone in a basket at the start of class. Students may use their cell phones at the beginning or end of class to communicate with parents or caregivers.

Service Projects

There are two OLS CCD program-wide service projects:

- OLS Food Pantry - The CCD program will offer support for the OLS food pantry throughout the year. Additionally, a food drive will be held in November to help the food pantry in the creation of Thanksgiving dinner baskets. Students in the program are asked to bring in specific food items based on their grade level.
- OLS CCD Christmas Service project - Each year the CCD program will work in conjunction with the OLS School to create Christmas "goodie bags" for homebound members of the OLS community. Students are asked to bring in specific small holiday gift items based on their grade level.

Catechists are also encouraged to engage their students in additional meaningful, age-appropriate classroom service projects if such activities fit into their lesson plans.

Christmas Pageant and Pizza Social

Children in Grades K-8 in the Religious Education program and OLS School are invited to participate in the OLS Christmas Pageant. Information about the pageant will be sent home beginning in November. This year, interested students only need to attend a rehearsal on the Friday evening before the show and a short refresher rehearsal immediately before the pageant. In a break from tradition, this year's pageant will be held before Christmas on Sunday, December 12, 2021. A parish-wide pizza social will be held immediately following the pageant in St. Joseph's Hall - if Covid restriction allows.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways for families to become involved in the faith formation of the children in our community. Please look over our list of volunteer opportunities and see if there is an option which fits your interests and schedule. Interested individuals should contact Jen Noll or indicate their willingness to volunteer on the online registration form. Thank you in advance for your consideration and help.

Full-time Catechist	Team Teaching Catechist	Substitute Catechist
One-on-One Special Needs Tutor	Classroom Aide	Floater (Office helper / Substitute)
Service Project Volunteer Coordinator	Hall Monitor	Christmas Party Volunteer
Christmas Pageant Helper	One-Time Event Volunteer	Sacramental Retreat Volunteer

ACRE Exam

The Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) is an integrated, multi-level survey instrument (not a standardized test) developed by the National Catholic Education Association. It is designed to provide parish, school and diocesan religious educators with valuable information on the participants' knowledge of the faith, liturgy and sacraments, moral formation, prayer, Christian community, missionary spirit. Information regarding participants' religious beliefs, attitudes and practices; and perceptions of themselves, their parish community and their school or parish religious education program is also gathered.

If the Archdiocese mandates that the ACRE be administered during the year, all 5th and 8th grade students (including homeschooled students) will be contacted via email with specific information about the ACRE.

Homeschooling Policy

The Church has long recognized the role parents have played in bearing the primary responsibility for the education of their children. At Baptism, parents accept the serious responsibility for the formation of their children in faith. Indeed, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#2223) states that, "Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by *creating a home* where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for *education in the virtues*." Thus, those parents who desire to be both the informal and formal catechists of their children have the ability to do so through the OLS homeschooling program.

The National Directory for Catechesis states that, "If Catholic parents choose to provide catechesis for the children in their home, that catechesis must be both complete and authentic...Parents who choose to be not only the primary educators of their children but also their catechists must adhere to all guidelines for catechists as outlined by the diocesan bishop." To that end, parents and students participating in the OLS homeschooling program will:

- Be provided with the same USCCB approved curriculum for their studies that is used in the OLS CCD program
- Be provided with information about how they can participate in additional community, service and faith formation opportunities open to other children of the parish
- Have access to the same resources for lesson planning and preparation as students in the OLS CCD Program
- Be presented with opportunities for adult continuing education and certification offered by the Archdiocese and the parish

Families wishing to participate in the OLS homeschool program must register their children with the OLS Department of Religious Education. The fee schedule is the same as the OLS CCD program.

According to the Archdiocese of Newark's policy governing parish homeschooling programs "children who are catechized in the home-school setting should be interviewed by the pastor or his delegate to evaluate their progress and ensure that a thorough and complete catechesis is being provided." (*Catechetical Administrative Manual* section 923.00) In order to ensure that a timely and thorough catechesis is being maintained, members of the OLS homeschooling program are asked to:

- Schedule a meeting with a parish priest when first registering for the homeschooling program
- Provide Religious Education Department staff with a student Gmail address to be used with Google Classroom, the homeschooling management system and to submit assigned online chapter reviews and video responses
- Schedule a year-end meeting with the OLS Catechetical Coordinator in May or June 2022 to discuss both the homeschooling process and the key material pertaining to the student's specific grade level in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the catechesis being provided in the home
- Take the ACRE exam if it is being administered (applies only to 5th and 8th grade students)

Sacramental Preparation

According to the regulations of the Archdiocese of Newark, a child must receive the sacraments in their home parish (the parish in which his or her family is registered). This is true for all children- including those who attend Catholic schools.

In order to register for the preparation of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, the baptized children of OLS must have received at least one previous year of formal religious instruction *and* be currently enrolled in a religious education program. Traditionally, these Sacraments are celebrated for children in second grade. So, in order to make these Sacraments at the traditional time of second grade, a student needs to be

enrolled in religious education classes beginning in 1st grade. Students must also meet the attendance requirements for 1st and 2nd grade in order to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in 2nd grade. **Both the child and the parent(s) should be actively participating in the Sunday liturgy and parish life.** Enrollment for both of these Sacraments takes place each fall at the first of two required parent information meetings.

In accordance with guidelines from the Archdiocese, preparations for First Reconciliation must take place before First Eucharist. Preparation for each Sacrament must be separate and distinct.

First Reconciliation

“The preaching of Jesus Christ begins with the words: ‘Reform your lives and believe in the good news.’ (Mark 1:15) In response to this call Christians accept the good news of God’s love for them and seek to cultivate a spirit of conversion and repentance throughout their lives...The Sacrament of Penance celebrates the reality of our ongoing conversion and our fundamental reconciliation with God.” (Archdiocese of Newark, Catechetical Administrative Manual, section 0580)

The Our Lady of Sorrows sacramental preparation program for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is, in keeping with the acknowledgement that parents are the primary catechists of their children, a home-based course of study. Parents must attend a **mandatory** meeting in the fall. This year’s meeting will take place via Zoom. An overview of the Sacrament will be given at this meeting along with an explanation of the specific policies and procedures for reception of the Sacrament. First Reconciliation workbooks and worksheets will be sent home with the child prior to this meeting. Please mark your calendars now with all of our important First Reconciliation dates.

Parents have the option of attending one of two scheduled Zoom First Reconciliation parent meetings this year:

- **Thursday afternoon, September 30, 2021, 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm** via Zoom **OR**
- **Thursday evening, September 30, 2021 at 7:00 pm** via Zoom

Our parish uses the Loyola Press published curriculum **God’s Gift: Reconciliation** for its home-based course of study. Students receive a workbook and have approximately two months to complete their home-based course of study for First Reconciliation. Families are also provided with the magazine “*God’s Gift Together*” which contains articles, lesson plans and tips for making this time of preparation more meaningful for everyone involved. Parents and students should bring their completed coursework with them to the mandatory First Reconciliation Retreat.

All children celebrating their First Reconciliation are asked to attend the First Reconciliation Inscription Mass for a special blessing. This year’s Inscription Mass will be held on: **Sunday, October 3, 2021 at the 10:00 Mass with Children.** Families should then plan on attending the short Reconciliation activity held in the lower church following Mass.

The First Reconciliation Retreat will be held on: **Saturday morning, December 4, 2021 at 8:45 am - 12:00 pm in the Upper and Lower Church.**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be held on: **Saturday morning, December 11, 2021 at 10:00 am in the Upper Church.**

The **registration fee for First Reconciliation for the 2021-2022 school year is \$60.**

First Eucharist

“As people of God, we are privileged to come to the table of the Lord and be nourished with Christ, the Bread of Life. We celebrate the sacred meal which Jesus gave to His Church on the night of the Last Supper. The Eucharist is the heart of Christian life.” (Archdiocese of Newark, Catechetical Administrative Manual, section 0571)

The Our Lady of Sorrows sacramental preparation program for the Sacrament of First Eucharist is also a home-based course of study. Parents must attend a First Eucharist **mandatory** parents meeting via Zoom in the

winter. An overview of the Sacrament will be given at this meeting along with an explanation of the specific policies and procedures for reception of the Sacrament. Please mark your calendars now with not only this meeting, but with all of our other important First Eucharist dates.

Parents have the option of attending one of two scheduled First Eucharist parent meetings this year:

- **Thursday afternoon, February 3, 2022, 1:00 - 2:15 pm via Zoom OR**
- **Thursday afternoon, February 3, 2022, 7:00 - 8:15 pm via Zoom**
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Our parish uses the Loyola Press published curriculum **God's Gift: Eucharist** for its home-based course of study. All students receive a workbook with stickers similar to the one used to prepare for the Sacrament of First Reconciliation.

All children making their First Eucharist are asked to attend the First Eucharist Inscription Mass for a special blessing. This year's Inscription Mass will be held on: **February 13, 2022 at the 10:00 Mass with Children. Families are then asked to attend the First Eucharist activity held in St. Joseph's Hall immediately following the Mass.**

Students have a little under two months to complete their home-based course of study for First Eucharist. **Parents and students** should bring their completed coursework with them to the **mandatory** First Eucharist Retreat.

This year the First Eucharist Retreat will be held on: **Saturday morning, April 2, 2022 at 8:45 am - 12:00 pm in the Upper and Lower Church.**

The registration fee for First Eucharist for the 2019-2020 school year is \$65.

The Sacrament of First Eucharist will take place on Saturday, May 7, 2022. There will be three First Eucharist Masses celebrated on that day at 10:00 am, 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm.

First Communicants must also attend a **mandatory** rehearsal for First Eucharist. Children must attend the practice corresponding to the specific Mass they have signed up for. For example, if your family selected the 10:00 am Mass, your child must attend the practice scheduled for Tuesday, May 3rd. We will run through the entire Mass and students will have an opportunity to practice any readings they elect to have as well as the receipt of Communion. Children should be accompanied to their First Eucharist practice by a parent or an adult who will also be present on the day of First Eucharist.

The dates for First Eucharist in 2022 are as follows:

Sacrament of First Eucharist	Practice Date
Saturday, May 7, 2022 at 10:00 am Mass	Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 6:00 - 7:15 pm, upper church
Sunday, May 7, 2022 at 1:00 pm Mass	Wednesday, May 4, 2022, 5:30 - 6:45 pm, upper church
Saturday, May 7, 2022 at 3:00 pm Mass	Thursday, April 15, 2021, 5:30 - 7:00 pm, upper church

On May 8th, the children will be invited to wear their First Communion clothes to Mass and celebrate their Second Communion along with other members of the parish. The Mary Crowning will also take place at the 10:00 am Mass.

Confirmation

Upon successful completion of the OLS CCD program through 8th grade, students are able to join the OLS Youth Group. The Youth Group meets on Sunday evenings from 7:30 - 9:00 pm beginning in September. Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation takes place throughout the first two years of a student's participation in the program. Students celebrate Confirmation at the end of 10th grade. Any questions about the OLS Youth Group program should be directed to Chris Kaiser, OLS Youth Minister, at Christopher.Kaiser@shu.edu.

Right to Amend:

This family handbook is a primary means of communication and is meant to provide you with helpful information. It is not meant to include all the rules and guidelines for the Archdiocese of Newark or the Our Lady of Sorrows parish. The OLS Religious Education Program reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary. Families will be advised if changes are made to the information contained herein as soon as practicable.

Additionally, given the ever-evolving nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, details in the medical section in particular are subject to change based on guidance from the Governor's office, NJ Department of Education (NJDOE), NJ Department of Health (NJDOH), Local Departments of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Archdiocese of Newark.

CCD 2021-2022 Calendar

CCD Homeschooling Program	Monday CCD 3:55 - 5:15 pm	Tuesday CCD 3:55 - 5:15 pm
September 19 7:45 pm Zoom Parent Meeting	September 19 7:00 pm Zoom Parent Meeting	September 19 7:00 pm Zoom Parent Meeting
Week of September 19 Complete Chapter 1	September 20	September 21
Week of September 26 Complete Chapter 2	September 27	September 28
Mass with Children October 3, 10:00 am	Mass with Children October 3, 10:00 am	Mass with Children October 3, 10:00 am
Week of October 3 Complete Chapter 3	October 4	October 5
Week of October 10 Complete Chapter 4	October 11 Living Rosary / Movie	October 12 Living Rosary / Movie
Week of October 17 Complete Chapter 5	October 18	October 19
Week of October 24 Complete Chapter 6	October 25	October 26
Week of October 31 NO CCD - District Break	November 1 NO CCD - District Break	November 2 NO CCD - District Break
Mass with Children November 7, 10:00 am	Mass with Children November 7, 10:00 am	Mass with Children November 7, 10:00 am
Week of November 7 Complete Chapter 7	November 8	November 9
Week of November 14 Complete Chapter 8	November 15	November 16
Week of November 21 Complete Chapter 9	November 22	November 23 NO CCD - Thanksgiving
Week of November 28 Complete Chapter 10	November 29	November 30
Week of December 5 Complete Chapter 11	December 6	December 7
Christmas Pageant Practice December 10, 5:30 - 7:00 pm	Christmas Pageant Practice December 10, 5:30 - 7:00 pm	Christmas Pageant Practice December 10, 5:30 - 7:00 pm
Christmas Pageant Events December 12 3:00 - 4:30 pm Practice 4:30 - 5:00 pm Show 5:30 - 7:00 pm Pizza Party	Christmas Pageant Events December 12 3:00 - 4:30 pm Practice 4:30 - 5:00 pm Show 5:30 - 7:00 pm Pizza Party	Christmas Pageant Events December 12 3:00 - 4:30 pm Practice 4:30 - 5:00 pm Show 5:30 - 7:00 pm Pizza Party
Week of December 12 Complete Chapter 12	December 13 CCD Reconciliation (Advent)	December 14 CCD Reconciliation (Advent)
Week of December 19 NO CCD	December 20 NO CCD	December 21 NO CCD

Week of December 26 NO CCD	December 27 NO CCD	December 28 NO CCD
Week of January 2 NO CCD	January 3 NO CCD	January 4 NO CCD
Week of January 9 Complete Chapter 13	January 10	January 11
Mass with Children January 16, 10:00 am	Mass with Children January 16, 10:00 am	Mass with Children January 16, 10:00 am
Week of January 16 Complete Chapter 14	January 17 NO CCD - MLK Day	January 18
Week of January 23 Complete Chapter 15	January 24	January 25
Week of January 30 Complete Chapter 16	January 31	February 1
Week of February 6 Complete Chapter 17	February 7	February 8
Mass with Children February 13, 10:00 am	Mass with Children February 13, 10:00 am	Mass with Children February 13, 10:00 am
Week of February 13 Complete Chapter 18	February 14	February 15
Week of February 20 NO CCD - President's Day	February 21 NO CCD - President's Day	February 22 NO CCD - President's Day
Week of February 27 Complete Chapter 19	February 28	March 1
Week of March 6 Complete Chapter 20	March 7	March 8
Week of March 13 Complete Chapter 21	March 14	March 15
Week of March 20 Complete Chapter 22	March 21 CCD Reconciliation (Lent)	March 22 CCD Reconciliation (Lent)
Week of March 27 Complete Chapter 23	March 28	March 29
Week of April 3 Complete Chapter 24	April 4 CCD Stations of the Cross	April 5 CCD Stations of the Cross
Week of April 10 NO CCD - Easter Break	April 11 NO CCD - Easter Break	April 12 NO CCD - Easter Break
Week of April 17 NO CCD - Easter Break	April 18 NO CCD - Easter Break	April 19 NO CCD - Easter Break
Week of April 24 Complete Chapter 25	April 25	April 26
	May 2 Last CCD Class	May 3 Last CCD Class
Mass with Children May 8, 10:00 am	Mass with Children May 8, 10:00 am	Mass with Children May 8, 10:00 am

Important OLS Sacramental Preparation Program Dates 2021-2022

Date	Event	Time	Location
September 30, 2021	First Reconciliation Parent Meeting	1:00 - 2:15 pm or 7:00 - 8:15 pm	Zoom
October 3, 2021	First Reconciliation Inscription Mass and Activity	10:00 - 11:30 am	Upper Church followed by St. Joseph's Hall
December 4, 2021	First Reconciliation Retreat	8:45 - 11:45 am	Upper and Lower Church
December 11, 2021	Sacrament of First Reconciliation	10:00 - 11:00 am	Upper Church
February 3, 2022	First Eucharist Parent Meeting	1:00 - 2:15 pm or 7:00 - 8:15 pm	Zoom
February 13, 2022	First Eucharist Inscription Mass and Activity	10:00 - 11:30 am	Upper Church followed by St. Joseph's Hall
April 2, 2022	First Eucharist Retreat	8:45 - 11:45 am	Upper and Lower Church
May 3, 2022	First Eucharist Practice for 10:00 am Mass	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Upper Church
May 4, 2022	First Eucharist Practice for 1:00 pm Mass	5:30 - 7:00 pm	Upper Church
May 5, 2022	First Eucharist Practice for 3:00 pm Mass	5:30 - 7:00 pm	Upper Church
May 7, 2022	Sacrament of First Eucharist	10:00 am Mass 1:00 pm Mass 3:00 pm Mass	Upper Church
May 8, 2022	Mass with Children Second Eucharist May Crowning	10:00 am Mass	Upper Church