



OUR LADY OF SORROWS

Religious Education

Family Handbook

2019 - 2020

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Contact Information

OLS Religious Education Department Address:

OLS Phone and Fax Numbers:

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

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

The Religious Education Department offices are located in the basement of the church. Go through St. Joseph's Hall to the double doors marked "Parish Offices". After being buzzed in, proceed down the hall to the double doors at the end of the hall. Go through those doors. The Religious Education Department Offices are on the left.

Parish Website:

- olschurch.com
- For items relating to the CCD program, including the yearly calendar and online registration link, please click on the "Religious Education" tab on the OLS website home page. Information is updated periodically.

Staff:

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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 now online for both new and returning students. A link to the online registration form can be found on the parish website: <http://www.olschurch.com> under the Religious Education tab. You can also input the following link into your computer's browser: <https://forms.parishgiving.org/form-3676671>. Please contact the Religious Education Department directly if you do not have computer access and a member of the staff will input your information directly into the system.

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. Any family wishing to become members of the Our Lady of Sorrows parish can obtain the necessary paperwork at either the Parish Office or the Department of Religious Education Office. Registration is free.

All families new to the program are asked to provide a copy of their child(ren)'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 2019 - 2020 school year:

Register Before July 15, 2109 (Early Bird Registration)	Register July 15, 2019 and Sept. 15, 2019 (Standard Registration)	Register After Sept. 15, 2019 (Late Registration)
1 Child \$140	\$170	\$200
2 Children \$230	\$260	\$290
3 + Children \$315	\$345	\$375

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. Please note that a special online registration code is required for all families seeking financial assistance.

Thinking of becoming a catechist? **Families of our volunteer catechists pay only \$25 for the entire family! Team teachers pay only \$45 for the entire family.**

Schedule of Classes

Monday:

Grades K - 7 meet from 3:45 - 5:15 pm, classes originate in the OLS School cafeteria
 Grades 7 & 8 meet from 7:00 - 8:30 pm, classes originate in the OLS School cafeteria

Tuesday:

Grades 1 - 6 meet from 3:45 - 5:15 pm, classes originate in the OLS School cafeteria

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. Sometimes these calendars overlap, sometimes they don't. A calendar for the 2019-2020 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 or evening 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 with also be sent to all students households and volunteers.

Student Arrival - Afternoon Classes

CCD will begin promptly at 3:45 pm in the OLS cafeteria. Catechists and students should enter the building through the double doors leading directly into the school cafeteria. All students are asked to arrive on time. Students who arrive prior to the start of the program are asked to wait with their caregiver until their individual catechist arrives. Students may wait on the playground prior to the start of CCD, but must be accompanied by a caregiver. Any parent who needs to have their child arrive at CCD prior to the 3:45 start time on a regular basis should contact the Religious Education Department to make specific arrangements for care.

Student Arrival - Evening Classes

Evening CCD classes will begin at 7:00 pm. Catechists and students should enter the building through the double doors leading directly into the school cafeteria. All students are asked to arrive on time.

Student Attendance Policy

The Archdiocese of Newark has mandated 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.

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 or transportation issues 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 the Catechetical Coordinator to learn how to make up any missed material.

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.

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

Please make every effort to arrive to CCD on time. We begin each session with a reading of the previous Sunday's Gospel and a short prayer service in the OLS cafeteria. Snack will follow.

Student Dismissal - Afternoon

CCD ends at 5:15 pm. At the end of class, all K-7th grade catechists will escort their students back to their cafeteria tables from their individual assigned classrooms. With an increased focus on safety, **all students must be signed-out of CCD in the cafeteria by a caregiver unless the Religious Education Department staff have received written permission in advance that a particular student is authorized to walk home alone.** Please sign your children out of the program in the cafeteria next to their names on their class's attendance sheet. This procedure helps the staff ensure that all students are accounted for at the end of each session. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience.

Religious Education Department staff will also be at the cafeteria doors reminding students and caregivers about our dismissal procedure. They will also verify that students are being accompanied out of the building by a caregiver and will act as a backup system to ensure that students without prior authorization to do so do not leave the premises unattended.

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.

Student Dismissal - Evening Classes

Evening CCD ends at 8:30 pm. At the end of class, all students must sign themselves out before leaving the building.

Monday evening middle school catechists will wait with their students on the sidewalk across from the parking lot to make sure that every student is picked up in a car or walked home by an adult. Students should not walk home by themselves.

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.

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 can be met in the cafeteria. Please sign students out on the attendance sheets located on assigned cafeteria tables.

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 child's performance or behavior within the classroom with the Religious Education Department staff and their catechist. **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

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 to 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 three years.

All volunteers 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

The Archdiocese of Newark has issued a new *Policy Regarding Epinephrine Pre-Filled Auto-injectors in Catechetical Settings*. If your child has allergies which may require the use of an Epi-Pen, please review this new 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 new 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 religious education department.

Snack for Afternoon Classes

Each week catechists assign a different student to bring in a snack and a beverage for the entire class as well as any necessary paper goods like cups and napkins. Please be on the lookout for Snack Reminders or catechist emails regarding snack.

A few general food requests:

- **All snacks should be nut-free**
- Families of students with any food allergies are asked to check the label of the snacks provided or to send in a substitute snack from home
- Please provide healthy food choices (fruits, vegetables, crackers, pretzels etc)
- Please provide a beverage to go along with your snack (water or 100% fruit juices are preferred)

- Please save sweet treats for celebrations like birthdays or holiday celebrations
- Please refrain from bringing in sweets during Lent

The Religious Ed Department will have back-up snacks and drinks on hand in the Resource Room if needed.

Snack for Evening Classes

Given the close proximity to the dinner hour, there is no designated snack time for evening CCD students. If middle school catechists wish to incorporate a snack into their class time, however, they may do so at their discretion.

Social Media / Publicity Policy

Families will be asked at the time of registration 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 at time of registration. 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. This includes time spent in the cafeteria. 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.

Curriculum

All students will have access to a workbook for their use during class.

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 by visiting www.loyolapress.com. Click on the "*Catholic Resources*" tab and then "*Liturgical Year*". The "*Sunday Connection*" button will lead you to this great Gospel resource.

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

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.

This exam is administered to all 5th and 8th grade students (including homeschooled students) during the second half of the year.

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. This year we have converted our weekly email updates into a digital newsletter format in an effort to provide parents with additional information about not only the CCD program, but also about topics relating to the Catholic faith. Please check your inbox for our newsletter weekly.

From time to time, paper flyers for upcoming events and service projects will also be used to publicize activities and to provide snack reminders. 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.

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. Please see the "Other Important Dates" list at the end of this handbook for dates for 2019-2020.

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.

Epiphany Pageant and Pizza Social

Children in Grades K-8 in the Religious Education program and OLS School are invited to participate in the annual OLS Epiphany Pageant. Information about the Epiphany pageant is sent home via email and is posted in the weekly bulletin beginning in December. This year, interested students only need to attend a rehearsal the Friday evening the week of the show and a short refresher rehearsal immediately before the pageant. A parish-wide pizza social is held immediately following the pageant. This year's Epiphany Pageant will be held on January 5, 2020.

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
Epiphany Pageant Helper	One-Time Event Volunteer	Sacramental Retreat Volunteer

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. Please see the "Fees" section on page 3.

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 insure 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 completed worksheets (or online chapter reviews) in the middle and at the end of the school year
- Schedule a year-end meeting with the OLS Catechetical Coordinator in May or June 2020 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 (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. 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 also be distributed at 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 First Reconciliation parent meetings this year:

- **Wednesday evening, October 2, 2019 at 7:00 pm**, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church **OR**
- **Thursday afternoon, October 3, 2019 at 1:00 pm**, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church

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. Additional resources for families can be found on the Loyola Press website: www.loyolapress.com/godsgift. Parents and students should bring their completed coursework with them to the mandatory First Reconciliation Retreat.

All children making their First Reconciliation are invited to attend the First Reconciliation Inscription Mass for a special blessing. This year’s Inscription Mass will be held on: **Sunday, October 20, 2019 at the 10:00 Mass with Children.**

The First Reconciliation Retreat will be held on: **Saturday morning, December 7, 2019 at 8:45 am - 12:00 pm in the Upper and Lower Church.**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be held on: **Saturday morning, December 14, 2019 at 10:00 am in the Upper Church.**

The **registration fee for First Reconciliation for the 2019-2020 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. Please note that registration materials for First Eucharist are given out at the fall parent meeting for First Reconciliation so that parents can review their calendars and select one of four offered dates that works best for their family’s schedule. Parents must also attend a First Eucharist **mandatory** meeting 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. First Eucharist workbooks and worksheets will also be distributed at this meeting. 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:

- **Wednesday evening, January 29, 2020 at 7:00 pm**, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church **OR**
- **Thursday afternoon, January 30, 2020 at 1:00 pm**, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church

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 invited to attend the First Eucharist Inscription Mass for a special blessing. This year's Inscription Mass will be held on: **February 9, 2020 at 10:00 Mass with Children**

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, March 21, 2020 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.

There are four dates in 2020 for the celebration of First Eucharist. First Communicants must attend a **mandatory** rehearsal for First Eucharist. A parent or "significant other" who will be present at First Eucharist should also be in attendance.

- **Saturday evening, May 2, 2020 at 5:30 pm Mass, Upper Church**
Rehearsal - Wednesday evening, April 29, 2020 at 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Upper Church
- **Sunday morning, May 3, 2020 at 11:30 am, Upper Church**
Rehearsal - Thursday evening, April 30, 2020 at 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Upper Church
- **Saturday evening, May 9, 2020 at 5:30 pm Mass, Upper Church**
Rehearsal - Wednesday evening, May 6, 2020 at 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Upper Church
- **Sunday morning, May 17, 2020 at 11:30 am Mass, Upper Church**
Rehearsal - Thursday evening, May 14, 2020 at 5:30 - 7:00 pm, Upper Church



CCD Calendar 2019 - 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY
September 23	September 24
October 7	October 8
October 21	October 15
October 28	October 22
November 4	October 29

November 11	November 12
November 18	November 19
November 25	December 3
December 2	December 10
December 9	January 7
January 6	January 14
January 13	January 21
January 27	January 28
February 3	February 4
February 10	February 11
February 24	February 25
March 2	March 3
March 9	March 10
March 16	March 17
March 23	March 24
March 30	March 31
April 6	April 7
April 20	April 21
April 27	April 28
May 4	May 5

Other Religious Education Department Dates for 2019-2020

10:00 Mass with Children

- October 20,, 2019 (at the First Reconciliation Inscription Mass)
- November 10, 2019
- January 12, 2020
- February 9, 2020 (at the First Eucharist Inscription Mass)
- April 19, 2020
- June 21, 2020 (at the Father's Day Mass)

First Reconciliation

- MANDATORY Reconciliation Meeting for Parent(s)
Wednesday evening, October 2, 2019, 7:00 pm, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church
- OR**
- Thursday afternoon, October 3, 2019, 1:00 pm, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church
- First Reconciliation Inscription Mass

October 20, 2019 at 10:00 am Mass with Children

- MANDATORY First Reconciliation Retreat for Parent(s) and Child
Saturday morning, December 7, 2019, 8:45 am - 12:00 pm, Upper and Lower Church
- Sacrament of Reconciliation
Saturday morning, December 14, 2019, 10:00 am, Upper Church

Epiphany Pageant

- Epiphany Pageant Practice
Friday Evening, January 3, 2020, 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm for Grades 4 through 8 (Main Roles)
Friday Evening, January 3, 2020, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm for Grades K - 3
- Epiphany Pageant
Sunday Afternoon, January 6, 2020, meet in St. Joseph's Hall 3:00 pm, pageant begins at 4:00pm
- Pizza Social, immediately following pageant, St. Joseph's Hall

First Eucharist

- MANDATORY Eucharist Meeting for Parent(s)
Wednesday evening, January 29, 2020, 7:00 pm, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church
OR
Thursday afternoon, January 30, 2020, 1:00 pm, Ann Seton Room - Lower Church
- First Eucharist Inscription Mass
February 9, 2020 at 10:00 am Mass with Children
- MANDATORY First Eucharist Retreat for Parent(s) and Child
Saturday morning, March 21, 2020, 8:45 am - 12:00 pm, Upper and Lower Church
- Sacrament of First Eucharist
 - Saturday evening, May 2, 2020 at 5:30 pm Mass, Upper Church
Rehearsal - Wednesday evening, April 29, 2020, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Upper Church
 - Sunday morning, May 3, 2020 at 11:30 am Mass, Upper Church
Rehearsal - Thursday evening, April 30, 2020, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Upper Church
 - Saturday evening, May 9, 2020 at 5:30 pm Mass, Upper Church
Rehearsal - Wednesday evening, May 6, 2020, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Upper Church
 - Sunday afternoon, May 17, 2020 at 11:30 am Mass, Upper Church
Rehearsal - Thursday evening, May 14, 2020, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, Upper Church

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.