

*Holy Cross
St. James
Sts. Peter & Paul*

*Religious Education
Parent Handbook
2025-2026*

Non-discrimination Policy

The Linked Parishes of Holy Cross/St. James/Sts. Peter & Paul Religious Education Program of the Diocese of Evansville admits students of any race, color, sex, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the program. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, nationality, and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admission programs, or other parish-administered programs.

Admissions/Class assignment

Admission/assignment to classes is based on the students' age/class they attend in school. Students are automatically promoted to the next grade at the end of each year. Any class assignments will remain in place for the entire year unless extraordinary circumstances occur. Any change in classes must first be addressed by the CRE, Asst. to CRE and the Pastor.

Arrival of Students

Students should be dropped off in front of church between 6:15 and 6:30 p.m. Music will be offered or the rosary will be prayed at 6:15 and opening prayer and announcements will follow in church. Students will then be dismissed with their catechists to their respective classrooms.

Do not park in the parking lot inside the playground. This area is used for dismissal.

Dismissal:

Holy Cross/St. James' students will be picked up in **FRONT** of school. Parents are to enter Haubstadt using Main Street. Turn west onto Gibson Street and then north again onto Vine Street. Cars will exit out onto West Street. **Sts. Peter & Paul students** will be picked up in **BACK** of school. Parents are to enter Church St. from Race St. & turn into the parking lot in **BACK** of school heading north. They will pick up their students at the **School Entrance # 8** & exit to the right on W. Oak St.

At time of dismissal, students may leave in the following ways:

- A. Will be picked up in the HC/St. James' Line (**Front of school**).
- B. Will be picked up in the Sts. Peter & Paul Line (**Back of School**).
- C. Will be driving self from Religious Ed class.
- D. Will be riding home with and Older Sibling, who is attending Rel Ed classes. (Younger siblings K-6 should meet your sibling in the front lobby of school.)
- E. Students Grades 7 and up may walk home or to a grandparents' home.

Attendance

Regular attendance at class is essential to a student's success. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Attendance is recorded each time class meets. Attendance records are kept on file in the religious education office at the completion of the year.

Prompt arrival at class is expected of all students. **If students arrive late, they should report to the office so they will not be counted absent. Parents should report absences to the Religious Ed Office by emailing lschneider@evdio.org or calling 812-768-6457.** Irregular attendance will be brought to the attention of the Coordinator of Religious Education by the Catechist and addressed with the parents.

Behavior & Discipline

Our focus is Religious Education. This includes not only the passing on of our Catholic religion, but also, living as disciples. The behavior of students should reflect respect. The principles are: respect others and their belongings; respect all parish/school property; be prepared to learn by being prepared for class; share your faith; do your own work; show appropriate behavior in the classroom, hallway, Church, all parish places. Language and actions should also be respectful and courteous to all people, students, Catechists, visitors, parish staff.

Each student has a responsibility to his/her fellow students and to the Catechists and staff to create and maintain a Christian atmosphere. The following behaviors are not part of a Christian atmosphere: disrespect/inappropriate language; vandalism; cheating; excessive talking and noise in the classroom, hallway, or other areas; disruptive behavior in class or the building; fighting.

If the catechist feels a student is not following these behaviors, he/she will issue a warning to the student, discussing if necessary how the student is being disruptive. The catechist will also discuss the issue with the CRE. If the student continues to be disruptive/disrespectful, the student will be sent home with a Code of Conduct Form (see attachment) signed by the teacher and the CRE, requesting a parent to join their child in class the next week. This is the only way the child can return to the classroom. Three forms on file can lead to dismissal from the program. **This policy will be strictly enforced.**

Parents are our resource for help with a behavioral need. The Catechist with the Coordinator of Religious Education will seek the parents' suggestions as to the cause of inappropriate behavior. This collaboration will result in positive approaches to working with/ending the behavior and be a benefit to the students.

Cancellation of Classes

The Coordinator of Religious Education, Asst. to CRE and/or Catechists will inform families of the cancellation of classes due to weather or any other emergency by School Messenger. We ask that you provide us with an emergency contact number and keep this updated throughout the year to we can reach you in the event of an emergency.

When Gibson County schools are NOT in session due to bad weather, Religious Education Classes may still have class depending on the conditions at class time. **If weather conditions develop rapidly, please use your own discretion as to whether it is safe for your student to attend Religious Education classes that evening. Always notify us if your student will not be attending class.**

Care for Facilities & Materials

We share our classrooms, library, gathering areas, and rest-rooms with all of the members of our parish. Students are expected to keep the classroom and spaces they use as clean as or cleaner than they found them. Students are not allowed to have or chew gum in any classroom. Students are expected to take good care of their textbooks and all other materials they use.

Class Time

Wednesday evening at 6:30-7:45 p.m. is Religious Education for all students from K-12, at the Sts. Peter and Paul Campus. Please arrive promptly at 6:30 p.m. for prayer.

Code of Christian Conduct

The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally based religious education can only be served if students, parents, and religious education personnel work together. Normally, differences between these individuals can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, the Religious Ed program may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require parents/guardians to withdraw their child.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the student behaves in a manner, both on and off campus that is consistent with the Christian principles of the religious education program as determined by the school in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any student parent handbook.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the parents/ guardians of a student shall also conform themselves to standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the religious education program, as determined by the religious education program in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to, any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the religious education program to assist the student in meeting the academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the religious education program.
2. Students and parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the religious education operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive.
3. These expectations for students and parents/guardians include, but are not limited to, all religious education sponsored programs and events.

The religious education program reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, which actions fall short of meeting the Christian principles of the religious education program. Failure to follow these principles will normally result in a verbal or written warning to the student and/or parent/guardian and normally will first result in disciplinary action short of a requirement to withdraw from the religious education program. Also, the religious education program reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate action without a warning and/or without an intermediate step short of withdrawal (see attachment).

Communication

Communication among families, Catechists, the Sacramental Coordinator, and the Coordinator of Religious Education is encouraged. The religious education program is in place to support you, the parents, who are the primary educators of your children. Communication among everyone will help everyone meet the needs of the students.

Bulletin/Parish Newsletter:

News items and information related to the religious education program will be published in the weekly parish bulletin at church and the quarterly parish newsletter that is sent to your homes. Please watch these publications for dates, information, and articles.

Websites:

Parents/students can also use the websites of our parishes.

Holy Cross - www.holycrossparish.info

St. James – www.stjameshaubstadt.com

Sts. Peter and Paul – www.stsppchurch.com

Diocesan Newsletter/Local Media:

We also encourage communication through the use of the “Message”, the diocesan paper, or perhaps local media. Please read, decide, and sign the Media Release section on the bottom of the Handbook Agreement signature sheet for this option.

Emergency/Disaster Safety

Emergency drills will be conducted periodically. The religious education program has an emergency plan. Students are to follow instructions of their Catechist. The School Reach program will be used in the event of other urgent matters that need the parents’ attention. Further instructions will be given by phone call or text.

Emergency Information

Parents/guardians are required to complete an Emergency Information Form AND an Emergency Information and Medical Treatment Consent Form as part of the registration process. A copy of these forms is kept in the religious education office and in the classroom for Catechist information. Please advise us of any changes throughout the school year.

Illness or Injury or Accident

Accidents or injuries occurring to students while at religious education class will be reported to the Coordinator of Religious Education and will be recorded. Duplicate copies of reports will be made so a copy can be kept at the parish and another given to the parents and another given to the diocesan insurance agent as necessary. Only emergency care can be given in the classroom/at the parish. No medication, including aspirin, ibuprofen, or acetaminophen, etc. may be given without written permission of parents/guardians. Reporting to parents/ guardians will occur through the Coordinator of Religious Education or Catechist.

Illness

Do not send your student/students to class if they are showing any signs of illness or running a fever. They must be fever free for 24 hours before coming to Religious Ed class.

Mission and Stewardship

The religious education program supports families and the parish in their education and practice of stewardship and missionary support. Holy Cross/St. James/Sts. Peter & Paul parishes are active in supporting people and agencies in need. This mission spirit will be continued and encouraged in our religious education program. Volunteers for: Dinners, Auction, Children’s tithing envelopes, mission projects etc. Any official mission/stewardship program will be published in the parish bulletin or newsletter or information will be sent home with the students.

The religious education program supports and educates the students whenever possible in the understanding and practice of stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

Off Limit Areas

The parish property/school is maintained and operated for the benefit of our students. However, common sense and safety considerations dictate the designation of a few off limit areas where students are not allowed. These areas include:

ALL Parish offices, the boiler room, storage areas, teacher’s work rooms, kitchen and maintenance area and closets, and the septic system area outside. Students are expected to cooperate and refrain from being in these areas. Catechists will supervise students as they use or access rooms and spaces in the parish.

Registration and Fees

Registration of students for religious education program is required. Registrations are now available on-line and will be emailed to current students. All new students may obtain a registration on-line at www.holycrossparish.info www.stjameshaubstadt.com or www.stsppchurch.com. Registration fees are charged for all students to help cover the cost of textbooks and materials. Additional fees may be charged for students in sacramental preparation programs to help defray the costs of supplementary materials and retreats.

Search Policy

The Coordinator of Religious Education, Asst. to CRE and Catechists may search students and their personal belongings if they have a reasonable suspicion, based upon the totality of the circumstances, for suspecting the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or religious education program safety rules.

Backpacks

Students should avoid bringing backpacks to Religious. If it is necessary for them to bring them, they should be left in the back of church during Opening Prayer/Announcements and left at the door of the classroom during class. Students **should not** have the backpack with them at their desk/chair/pew during class.

Electronic devices (Phones, airpods, etc.)

The office phone may only be used by students at the discretion and supervision of the Catechist and/or Coordinator of Religious Education & Asst. to CRE. The phone may only be used in case of emergency. Most student situations can result in the call being made for them. The only phone that is made available is in the religious education office.

NO cell phone usage permitted in the classroom. If they ring during class time they will be held by the CRE until class is over.

NO airpods, headsets, headphones, etc. are to be used during Religious Ed classes or in church.

Journals

Journals or writing activities that are done in the classroom may be read by the Catechist. Confidentiality does not extend to students' writing. Any information in a journal or writing that may indicate harm to self or others will be reported to the Pastor, Coordinator of Religious Education, parish staff, parents, and the appropriate authorities.

Vandalism

Willfully damaging or destroying parish property is cause for immediate suspension and possible expulsion. Damage caused by vandalism by a student is to be paid for by the student. If a student accidentally causes damage, he/she should report the damage to his/her teacher immediately so that it is not misconstrued as vandalism.

Visitors

Anyone who comes to visit during religious education class time should report to the front desk upon entering the building. Please see the Coordinator of Religious Education or the Asst. to the Coordinator of Religious Education.

Withdrawals

If a student will be withdrawing from religious education classes during the year, parents should notify the Coordinator of Religious Education as soon as possible.

Zero Tolerance

Possession of and/or bringing onto parish grounds any form of drugs, alcohol, guns/weapons, or any substance that could pose a danger to oneself or to another person is grounds for automatic suspension and/or expulsion from the religious education program.

Any form of bullying will not be accepted.

Bullying Statement: Bullying is an intentional act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another person. It is a consistent pattern of disrespect of one or more students by another. It is an abuse of power which can take many forms: physical (hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting); verbal (taunting, teasing, degrading social or sexual comments, rumor spreading); non-verbal (threatening gestures, exclusion, Internet, Text Messaging via cell phones, Instant messaging or any type of social media). Bullying may constitute grounds for detention, suspension, or expulsion. Our School embraces the following as school rules against bullying:

We will not bully others.

We will help students who are bullied.

We will include students who are easily left out.

When we know somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and at home.

Please contact Fr. Andrew Thomas, Administrator, a member of the Religious Ed Office or one of the teachers, or any adult involved here if you feel threatened.

Sample

Code of Conduct Form

CONDUCT WARNING

Student _____ Grade ____

Issued by _____ Date ____

This warning is being given for the following reasons:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rudeness/Disrespect | <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive talking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive behavior | <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to work on assignments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damaging property, materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to participate in class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Using obscene language/gestures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsanitary/impolite behavior | Other _____ |

Comments:

Teacher Signature

CRE Signature

Student Signature

Parent Signature

A copy of this warning document is on file. If this document is not signed and returned, a phone call will follow. Please return this document to the teacher when you join your child in class next week. A parent must join the child in class. This is the only way the child can return to the classroom. Three forms on file can lead to dismissal from the program.