

## Religious Education / CCD Parent & Student Handbook



St. Henry Catholic Church  
1500 S. Andrews Avenue  
Pompano Beach, FL 33069  
(954) 785-2450

[www.sainthenrys.org](http://www.sainthenrys.org)

**Attendance:**

Our English program begins promptly at 10:00am on Sundays in the parish hall. Students should arrive no later than 9:50am to ensure that class begins on time. Class ends at 11:25am. Students will be escorted to church to attend the 11:30am Mass together. Parents are encouraged to attend Mass with their children.

Our Spanish program begins promptly at 12:00pm on Sundays in the parish hall. Students should arrive no later than 11:50am to ensure that class begins on time. Class ends at 1:25pm. Students will be escorted to the church to attend the 1:30pm Mass together. Parents are encouraged to attend Mass with their children.

Children in the English class will be dismissed after the 11:30am Mass and children in the Spanish class will be dismissed after the 1:30pm Mass to their parents or assigned guardian on the south side of the church. Children must be picked up promptly after Mass. Children that are continually late in being picked up after Mass maybe asked to leave the program.

A calendar with class dates was distributed with registration packets. If a calendar is needed, please contact the church office or visit our website [www.sainthenrys.org](http://www.sainthenrys.org).

**Expectations:**

Students should be prepared to learn and participate in class. Toys and other distractions should be left at home and maybe held by the teacher until after class if brought into class.

Parents are expected to participate in the religious education of their child and are expected to attend weekly Mass and participate in church activities.

**Discipline:**

It is within the context of God's Law of Love that we expect students to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner. Respect for classmates, teachers, and church property is mandatory.

Students using obscene language, physical violence, dis-respect to classmates or teachers, vandalizing property or other inappropriate behavior will be brought to the Director or Pastor. Parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately and the child may be asked to leave the program.

**Registration:**

1. Complete registration form
2. Complete handbook and dress code form

3. Provide a copy of birth certificate
4. Provide a copy of baptismal certificate
5. Provide a copy of first communion certificate if registering for confirmation
6. Provide a fee of \$75 per child
7. Pre-registration is required

**Hurricane Information:**

If our area is under a Hurricane warning, there will be no class. Please watch the local news for weather postings and do not venture out in bad weather.

**Sacramental Class** (required TWO consecutive years of class):

Attendance is critical for students that are preparing to receive a sacrament and therefore, students who miss more than three classes may be requested to withdraw from the class.

Parent meetings will be required throughout the year. Advanced notice will be given, so that all parents will have the opportunity to attend if arrangements need to be made.

Students preparing for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion will also be preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance or Forgiveness). Two consecutive years of religious education are required before any Sacrament may be received by a student.

Students preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation will require two consecutive years of religious education before becoming eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Students are not eligible for the preparatory year of Confirmation prior to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Textbooks:**

All textbooks or workbooks will be provided by the religious education program and students are to take care that all books and materials are not damaged. Students and/or parents may be charged for any books / materials that are damaged or destroyed. Any books or materials that are brought home must be returned by the next class date or as instructed by the teacher.

**Volunteer Participation:**

Our staff is made up of volunteers. If you would like to join our team of volunteers, please contact the church office. The Archdiocese of Miami requires fingerprinting background check and Virtus training, which are provided free of charge.

### **St. Henry Church Mission Statement:**

“Drawn together by our common bonds of Faith, Hope and Love, we strive to serve God and one another as members of a parish family under the patronage of Saint Henry. With ardent faith we celebrate the Eucharist, sharing the mystery of Christ’s presence in our Holy Communion. Compelled by the love of Christ, we reach out beyond the walls of our church and minister, not only to members who are unable physically to attend and participate actively in the Liturgy, but also to people near and far, who need our service.”

It is important to remember that religious formation is the core of the religious education program’s educational mission. This formation is accompanied through the building of a community of faith within the religious education program and through instruction of the children in age-appropriate understanding of the Catholic faith. The Catholic religious education program should be one, which represents the individual child, which provides personal support and a sense of belonging to each child.

### **General Expectations:**

We expect that each family become actively involved in St. Henry Church’s Religious Education Program and Parish, in order to model a living, conscious and active Christian faith and to reinforce the values and attitudes for living that faith. The children and families also agree to act in accordance with these values and attitudes.

### **Custody Issues:**

Both parents are required to sign the child’s registration form. If parents are divorced or separated, one parent must provide legal evidence of custody arrangements. If he or she has the sole right to a child, a copy of such agreement must be on file in the parish office. Full rights apply to either parent unless a court order specifically revokes these rights. In the latter case, it is the custodial parent’s responsibility to provide evidence of such court order.

### **Administration:**

The Director of Religious Education, at the direction of the Archdiocese of Miami and the pastor, is responsible for developing and implementing the religious education plan and curriculum and may assign such tasks to other catechists. Certified Catechists must adhere to and complete the Catechist certification program as outlined by the Archdiocese of Miami.

**Registrations:**

No person on the grounds of race, color, or national origin are excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in receiving service from the religious education program. It is the goal of the parish to provide religious education to every child in the parish. In rare cases, the parish may not be able to invite a student into the program if the parish does not have the resources or accommodations to meet the needs of the child. The pastor has the final decision in matters of admission or dismissal to the program or to the reception of a sacrament.

**Transfers:**

Parents are to contact the Catechetical leader of their prior religious education program and request a letter to be sent to St. Henry's church office regarding the status of the child's previous religious education.

**Parental Communication:**

Persons with concerns with regard to a catechist should first attempt to address the concern directly with the catechist. Only after such attempts have failed, should the parent contact the Director of Religious Education. If the person continues to be dissatisfied, then contact should be made with the church office and pastor. All concerns will be addressed.

**Early Release of Students:**

A child will not be released early without the permission of the parent or guardian. The program will only release the child to the person who has placed the child in the religious education program. Any other person seeking the release of the child must have the written approval of the parent or guardian.

**Safe Environment – Teaching Touching Safety Lessons:**

Teaching children to protect themselves is part of the mandate of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in June 2002. The Archdiocese of Miami is committed to the safety and well-being of its children and vulnerable adults and has implemented the Safe Environment Program to minimize risk and barriers. During this CCD school year, we will teach two lessons on "Touching Safety" for all grades. These sessions are merely to reinforce what you teach at home. Parents can have their child "opt out" of these two lessons. For more information on the Touching Safety program, visit [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org).

**Confidentiality:**

Catechist must keep confidential information entrusted to them as long as no one's life, health or safety is at stake or where disclosure is otherwise required by law or Archdiocesan policy. In these cases, parents will generally be promptly notified of catechist's concerns. According to the State of Florida and Archdiocesan policy, all Catechists must notify the authorities when a child informs us of abuse.

**Conduct:**

A student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside of the religious education program, that is contrary to the moral code of the Catholic Church may be asked to leave the program.

**Field Trips:**

Archdiocesan policy forbids overnight field trips for any age group of students. Policy also discourages field trips for elementary age students. Field trips are privileges given to students and are not a right of students to participate. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.

Students are required to sign and submit a permission slip which releases the religious education program, catechists, parish, pastor, Archdiocese of Miami and any other related party from liability to participate in the field trip. Students who fail to submit the proper form will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. Telephone calls or texts are not accepted in lieu of written permission.

**Search and Seizure:**

In case of reasonable suspicion of dangerous materials, report the suspicion to the proper authority, and inform the pastor and the Archdiocese of Miami. The religious education program, catechists, pastor and any appointed individual by the pastor has authority to access any lockers, handbags, electronic devices, cell phones, desks, cars or other object that has been brought to the program. Designee may remove or confiscate any object which is illegal or contrary to policy.

**Reporting Physical or Sexual Abuse:**

"A Catechetical Leader (CL) who has been notified, or know, or have reasonable cause to suspect, that a child or vulnerable adult has been a victim of sexual abuse, shall immediately make any report required by law directly to the Department of Children and Families (DCF)." The parish pastor, Archdiocesan Office of Catechesis and the Archdiocesan Office of Safe Environment should also be notified. A CL must

contact the Office of Safe Environment in case of doubts about the archdiocesan policy on reporting procedures.

**Harassment:**

“The Archdiocese of Miami religious education programs are committed to providing a safe, Christian, healthy and respectful environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, our parish will not tolerate harassment of employees, or volunteers or students occurring in the religious education program or at religious education program sponsored events.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, and/or visual that is based on a person’s protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status or other protected group status. The Archdiocesan religious education programs will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual’s work performance, or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

**Cooperation with Legal Authorities:**

It is the practice of the religious education program to cooperate with any local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers that contact the religious education program in the course of any criminal investigation. The religious education program will attempt to notify the parents of any student sought to be interviewed in the course of a criminal investigation on the religious education program premises, unless directed by an investigator involving sexual or physical abuse. The religious education program will attempt as well to have a representative present during such an interview, unless this is not permitted by the investigators, which is often the case in investigations involving sexual or physical abuse.

**Student Withdrawal:**

“The Catholic Church considers the parents to be the primary catechists of their children. The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the religious education program.”

Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the religious education program administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken. As a part of this partnership, parents are expected to pay the tuition that is charged for the Religious Education Program.

**Substance Abuse Policy:**

“All Archdiocesan religious education programs are committed to a drug free environment. Any student selling drugs on religious education program property or at religious education program functions may be immediately expelled. All Archdiocesan procedures must be followed when it comes to child safety.”

The use or possession of illegal drugs or illegal mood altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over the counter drugs by any student on parish property or while attending or participating in any religious education program sponsored activity is forbidden. Transgression of this rule will result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from religious education program, even for a first offense.

**Weapons Policy:**

“Weapons are not permitted anywhere on religious education program grounds. Students who bring weapons on religious education program grounds, who are in possession of weapons, or who threaten others with weapons or items used as weapons may be expelled from the religious education program.”

**Anti-Bullying Policy:**

Please refer to the Archdiocesan Anti-Bullying Policy.

**Medication Procedures:**

The administering of medicine to a child outside the doctor’s office or a health institution is a parental responsibility and should not be delegated to religious education program personnel except under unusual circumstances. Only when absolutely necessary is the religious education program willing to accept responsibility for administering prescription medications, and then under the following guidelines:

- The religious education program will never administer / dispense medicines (Including ‘over the counter drugs’ to students without specific written authorization by both a licensed physician and the parent of the student. An “authorization for medication” form must be completed and submitted by the parent. The name of the medication and the dosage must be indicated on the form.
- All medication must be brought to the office with a parent’s authorization
- Only prescription medication must be in the original bottle, which must be labeled and must have the exact dosage.

- The religious education program will not dispense medication, so students are responsible for their own medication.
- All medications will remain in a secured location. (By exception, students who are asthmatic may carry a prescribed inhaler with them during the religious education program day.) A written log will be kept of dispensed medications.

### **Student Religious Education Records**

The following records are kept in the office file of the student: sacramental records, health records, and an emergency information sheet. Only the contents of the official file will be forwarded to a new religious education program.

### **Use of Student Pictures and Video**

The religious education program reserves the right to use student pictures in publications. Any parent who wishes to opt out must notify the Director or Coordinator of the Religious Education Program in writing prior to the beginning of the religious education program year.

### **Emergency Information**

The policy of the religious education program with regard to program closings in cases of emergency is to follow Public School decisions in the county in which the religious education program is located. Parents should listen to broadcasts and keep their children home on days when the local public schools are closed.

### **Safety Plan**

The parish intends to provide a safe environment for the children attending the religious education program. For this reason, the Religious Education program has developed a safety plan. A copy of this is available in the office where the parent may read it.

### **Religious Education Program Policy & the Right to Amend**

Since situations can arise that were not foreseen at the time of writing this Handbooks, the religious education program reserves the right to initiate, change or modify the policies as needed. Parents and students will be notified of any amendments.

The Director of Religious Education and/or the Pastor are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rules for just cause at his/her discretion.

**Tear off Sheet**

In order to ensure that parents have read and accepted the handbook, this tear-off sheet is required to be signed by the parent and returned with the registration forms.

Please sign and return this form, along with your child's CCD registration form.

**Parent / Student Handbook acknowledgement form**

This is to certify that I have read the Parent/Student Handbook and that I will abide by the rules and regulations.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**CCD CLASS DRESS & BEHAVIOR CODE**

Students of St. Henry Church CCD (Religious Education) classes are expected to dress appropriately when attending CCD classes. Shirts must have a sleeve and bottoms are to be of acceptable length. Inappropriate clothing includes: too short, too tight, visible underwear, tears in jeans or other clothing, or similar. Inappropriate footwear include: flip flops, shoes with holes or dirty, etc. Students deemed to be dressed inappropriately will not be allowed in class until proper attire is worn.

Students of St. Henry Church CCD (Religious Education) classes are expected to display appropriate behavior while attending CCD classes and attending Mass. No running, jumping, horse play, yelling, name calling, or other inappropriate behavior will be allowed. Parents will be called to pick up students exhibiting this behavior from class. Continually misbehavior may result in dismissal from the CCD program.

Parent / Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_