



Sacred Heart—St. Joseph Church Religious Education

Directors — Paul Allen &
Donna White

A NOTE TO PARENTS:

“Parents are the most influential agents of catechists for the children. They have a unique responsibility for the education of their children: they are the first educators, or catechists. They catechize primarily by witness of their Christian lives and by their love for the faith.”

—National Directory for Catechesis, page 234.

As Christians, our understanding of the *vocation* implies much more than a job or career. It deals with our very purpose in God’s plan. Parenthood is a call from God to use your gifts and talents to serve his kingdom. It requires a lifelong commitment to nurture, teach, and eventually release a child to pursue his or her own vocation. It is a gift and privilege from God filled with grace and blessings. Our parish has a deep respect for your vocation. Catholic parents transmit the faith, convey truth, share the Word of God, and introduce their children to the sacraments. We recognize that the role of catechists is to assist you in your efforts to help your children grow in faith.

With just 60 minutes a week, there is no possible way we can be the only teachers in your child’s life. It has to start at home, we are merely here to support what you’ve been teaching them since their baptism. We will help you recognize your role and responsibility as the chief catechists in your child’s life. We are here to support your efforts to help your children learn and grow in their Catholic faith.

For children in their Sacramental years, parents and family members play a critical role in supporting their children’s faith and participation in the Body of Christ.

A PARENT’S ROLE:

- READ all correspondence from directors or teachers, for children who are in 2nd grade or younger, all students must be picked up **IN THE CHILD’S CLASSROOM**. This assures us that you are receiving important news and notes about your child.
- Attend and participate in parent meetings.
- Witness your own faith with the example of your words and actions.
- Pray often as a family.
- Read carefully any communication provided from the directors or teachers.
- Attend mass and receive the Eucharist.
- Be actively involved in the life of your parish. Encourage children to do the same.
- Make attendance at Sunday School classes and seasonal events a priority for your child.
- Volunteer (if possible) to help the catechists at weekly sessions, service projects and activities.
- Teach children traditional prayers at home and reinforce prayers learned in class.
- Take an active interest in your child’s religious faith education, work closely with the catechists, and incorporate what your child is learning into home life.

We use the *Christ Our Life* series. Each chapter includes wonderful features to help families to stay informed and challenge you to participate fully in the faith formation of your child.

A Note to Families (Grades 1-6) will be sent home at the beginning of the program. This note highlights the focus of each grade level and points out the features that are designed especially for families. **Family Letters (Grades 7-8)** are available online*.

Building Family Faith (Grades 1-4), Things to Do at Home (Grades 5-6), and the Reach Out section of the Summary page (Grades 7-8) help families reinforce lesson content and spark discussion at home. Each includes a lesson summary along with suggestions for reflection, prayer, and activities to put faith into action as a family.

A **Family Feature** offers stories, activities, and ways to apply what children have learned at home. These pages often focus on social justice issues and Catholic Social Teaching.

Catholic Prayer for Catholic Families is provided free to every *Christ Our Life* family. This important guide to prayer contains traditional prayers plus suggestions for everyday prayer. Each grade level has their own prayers they should know from memory.

Online Resources

Go to www.loyolapress.com, click on the Faith Formation tab, find Christ Our Life 2016 and click on New Evangelization, from the left-hand menu, click on Children & Parents, then click on their grade level. This is a wonderful resource for parents, including online games and chapter reviews that strengthen the child's knowledge of the chapter.

*Please note that Confirmation Students do not use the *Christ Our Life* series. For their curriculum, please go to the Sunday School website www.shsjcc.org and click on the Confirmation Prep tab.

Thank you parents for partnering with us to help your children enter into a deeper relationship with God. We are looking forward to another great year!

From the Directors,

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The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason, the family home is rightly called, "The domestic church," a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues, and Christian Charity.
(Catechism of the Catholic Church page 1666)