

## Our Lady Queen of Angels Church

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(Correct as of 1 July for 2011-2012 Religious Education school year)

**The first day of Religious Education will be on Sunday, 11 September 2011**

**from 9:00 am to 10:20 (This time would complete the required hours from the Diocese)**

**=Some Religious Education optional Rules and Regulations School Year 2011-2012**

**Policy: Nothing is Mandatory. If a child wants to have good Religious Education grades and Biblical Spirituality that they live out, then they have to do it the old fashion way:**

**“They Need To Earn It.”**

The Church Canon Law requires before two people get married in the Catholic Church, they promise the following: “Will you accept children lovingly from God and bring them up according to the law of Christ and His Church?” Every couple is required to say “yes” and put their signature of promise to the paper. The Church Canon Law also requires that no child is to be baptized in the Catholic Church unless a parent/guardian says “yes” to: “Do you promise to raise this child in the practice of the Catholic faith?”. If they said “No”, we would not be authorized to baptize the child. In both cases, this would be a formal religious education program if offered by the Catholic Church. If a parent/guardian is not willing to sign this form and follow the rules and regulations of this Church program, then the parents are willing to break one of the most serious promises to God that they will ever make in their life. To separate their children from God’s teachings in the Roman Catholic, is considered a serious Mortal Sin. The choice is yours.

The American Conference of Catholic Bishops have completed studies that show more than 50% of Catholic Children leave the faith after high school because they do not know their faith. Much of the blame is placed on the bishops and priests because they are not fulfilling the requirements of helping the parents to train the children in the practice and tradition of the Catholic Church. Some of the things that the American Bishops have asked the priest to do is train the children in attending Mass every week and religious holidays, attend formal religious education programs and complete the chapters in the bishop approved text books, to have social youth ministries, learn the 3500 year tradition of service to one another (corporal works of mercy), more creative liturgies & music, sacramental completion, and help fulfill the promises/commitment that parents make at the time of marriage and baptism.

This is why we say, “to be eligible for our Religious Education Program, a parent must sign for each of their children that they promise, this year, to raise the child in the Catholic faith by following the Religious Education Program of Our Lady Queen of Angels Church”. The most serious problem of our Religious Education Program has been the lack of support from many of the children’s parents, grandparents and family members.

Please remember: Our Christian-Jewish tradition for over 3,850 years has been preaching and teaching to people about how to experience God in this life so they will know Him in heaven. It is nothing new for people to say “I don’t like the Church telling me what to do”. This is a part of: “Original Sin”, wanting to be independent of God and not dependent upon God. May those who “grow in wisdom and grace” as Jesus did, says the Bible, someday find themselves in Heaven or will they be separated from God for all eternity? Scripture says that for those who refuse to teach the ways of God to their children will suffer down to the 10<sup>th</sup> generation. If we look around, we will see this separation from God in some of our family and neighbors or read about these people in the newspaper. The choice is yours.

Parents and children in this Church’s Religious Education Program should be financially contributing members.

Note: No person has the right to go to one of our Religious Education Volunteer Teachers with their criticisms and complaints about the teacher. They must go only to the Pastor. This is not the Public School System, so if you drive out one of our teachers, there may be no one to teach that class of children. This acting out on the part of an adult will not be tolerated.

**Parents and Grandparents have 3 choices for their children’s relationship with God and how they will live out their faith through our Religious Education Program** (unless they are expelled from our Religious Education program). We cannot customize 50 different programs to meet the desires of families and students.

1. Follow the optional rules and regulations as best you can and hopefully your child will be graded appropriately. To complete this option, parents need to complete the monthly Religious Education Accountability Form. On this form parents will also write all changes, corrections, etc. for the Religious Education Team to consider. You may make some changes, especially for reasons like excuses, but the excuse not be accepted by the Religious Education Team, for example “we forgot” or the “dog ate the papers”, etc..
2. At the end of each semester, if your child is receiving an over all “F” (Flunking or Failure Grade), the child will be removed from the Religious Education list of students. They may only attend Youth Ministries programs as a guest of another student in the regular Religious Education Program. At this point, your child can come and go and do what he or she wants and no grades will be given them because they are no longer considered a member of our Religious Education Program.

3. We have attempted a “Home School Religious Education Program”, but we have had no success with any students. At this time we have no one willing to coordinate such a program. The home is called to be the first church, so families always have the option to use the internet or other sources to train their children in the religion practices they want to teach them. If a family wants to purchase a book and do their own thing with a text book, you need to request the book. (Two classes are exempt from any type of home schooling, they are: First Holy Communion and Confirmation.)

The Diocese requires every church to have a minimum of 40 hours of Religious Education class room time every year. If we add up all our Sunday class room dates, less the Sunday holiday dates, we have about 34 classes. At one hour and 20 minutes a class, we should have our 40 hours of Religious Education class room time. If a child comes late or leaves early or a religious education teacher is dismissing before 10:10 am, then the child is not receiving there required 40 hours of class room time. When children sign in and give time of arrival, on the attendance sheet and they are more than 10 minutes late, they should receive an “F” or Flunking” punctuality for that day.

The grading system we used in the past has not worked as well as it could have, so we are continuing with changes from last year. We will continue to use the Letter Grade System from A to F (Flunked & Failed) (just as the school uses) for only 5 classes (for CCD class attendance, textbook assignments at the end of each chapter, Masses attendance, social Ministry programs, service hours for church and non church). We will round off grades as best we can. The other classes will be Pass or Fail grades for: punctuality, class conduct, confessions and parent or family member involved in one social ministry program.

All records of what a child does is registered by the parents using the Religious Education Accountability Form (REA). This form is submitted by the first weekend of every month. If a parent has any corrections for the child’s grades, make the change on the same form. If a parent uses any other form to notify the rectory, their notes will be returned to them. If a parent needs another copy of the REA Form, contact the rectory, or use the computer form.

A child who may or may not follow the optional Rules and Regulations Policy should not drag down the grade average for the entire class because the child and/or family does not care about the other students trying to achieve a high grade point average for the class. Children in Regular Religious Education Classes compete for class scores, which earns the class special prizes and other benefits, example, the class with the highest points, all members of the class go Free to the Summer recreation program.

This is healthy competition and it means that every child should be accountable to the class for their action and participation. Every child and parents knows the scores of others in the class because of the Religious Education Classes Report Card. (Most competitive sports programs work the same way, everyone knows each others scores, and some have to sit on the bench because of low performance.) If a child is in the in the First Holy Communion Class or Confirmation Class and they are pulled from the roster, they will not be considered for First Holy Communion or Confirmation. Parents are to be involved in the Religious Education process with their children.

= **Religious Education Class**: Starting again this September, when students come to religious education class, they report directly to the Activities Center where a table will be reserved for their grade (unless the Activities Center is set up for an event, only then will children report to their classrooms). Students are expected to sit at that table and work quietly on their chapters in the textbook (if their text books are in their teacher’s mailbox, then the student should take the text book from the mailbox so they can work on it). Students will not report to the classroom until the religious education teacher comes to their table to get them. Students who arrive late will be graded appropriately. If the teacher does not arrive, the students must remain in the Activities Center at the assigned table where they will work on their textbook, even if they sit there the entire class time of one hour and ten minutes, or they will be marked absent from class.

All teachers are asked to remember to check their mail boxes before class starts so that they can pick up their attendance/grade sheets and any information that needs to be distributed to the students that day (If you cannot make it, send a student). Please, please, all teachers need to turn in their attendance/grade sheets at the end of the class. Again this year, it is necessary. If the sheets are not turned in, we will mark all the students absent.

A child’s class attendance grade starts with the first class in September and ends with the last class in the Spring. If a child misses a class, they need a written excuse from a parent as to why the child missed their Religious Education Class (just like school). Only 3 valid written excuses from a parent will be accepted for any one semester. If there are more than that, and the parent has not talked personally to the Pastor, then at the end of the semester, the child will receive a “F” (Flunked & Failed) for only that semester (there are 3 semesters, September to December (Fall), January to May (Winter-Spring) or the end of the class school year) and the Summer semester from June to August).

**This year the only Sundays that there will not be Religious Education Class dates are: Dec. 25 Christmas, Jan1, New Year/Epiphany, Apr. 8, Easter, (Note May 6, First Holy Communion is only a Rel. Ed. Day off if a student has a brother or sister in the First Holy Communion Class), May 13, Mothers Day, May 28, Memorial Day. That’s It. Remember we have NO SNOW Days.**

=**Mass on Weekend and Holy Day Masses.** Grades will be given for attending 52 weeks a year. If a child wants credit and a letter grade for attend Mass, they will need to put their Church Contribution Envelope in the

basket (if a child does not learn to support the Church and return some of their “treasure” as a child, then they most likely will not do so when they are adults. Without your support of time, talent and treasure, there will be no church). Every child is expected to go to Mass every week and Holy Days and support their Church. (For about 3,500 years, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment of God has been: “Remember to keep Holy the Sabbath” and Tithing, or the giving of 10% of your income for the faith.) If a child needs to go to another Catholic church for some reason, he or she is required to bring in a copy of that church's bulletin, signed by the priest or deacon at that Mass or if there is another valid reason for a child missing a Mass, then the parent should put into writing a detailed explanation as to the valid reason for missing. Only 3 valid written excuses from a parent will be accepted for any one semester. If there are more than that, and the parent has not talked personally to the Pastor, the child will receive a “F” (Flunked & Failed) for that semester (there are 3 semesters).

This year a new change because of cheating on the part of many, Mass attendance proof will be based not only on the church contribution envelope, but the students will need to sign out at the end of Mass. Clip boards will be at the back of the Church and at the Chapel, the children will have to go to the ushers pew at the right side, back of the Church. The envelope and signature will be verification. We thank you for your understanding and support.

**Holy Days of Obligation and Special Spiritual Days for grading purposes this year will be: Nov. 1 or 2, All Saints Day, Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Day, Dec. 8, Immaculate Conception, Dec. 25, Christmas, January 1, New Years, Feb. 22, Ash Wednesday, April 5, Holy Thursday, Apr. 6, Good Friday, Apr. 8, Easter Sunday, May 17, Ascension Thursday, August 5, Assumption of Mary. When a child misses these Mass dates, often it is because they forgot to read the Rules and Regulations. “Forgot” is not an excuse and will not be accepted.**

**=Social Church Ministries Grades** for attending Central City Youth Ministry programs and events:

Continuing this year, letter grades will be given for each program, but the parent needs to write the social ministry program on the Religious Education Accountability Form (REA). The child must also sign the attendance sheet that will be made available also listing the arrival and departure time if they want credit. The child must attend at least one hour of the event if they want credit. Too many children in the past have been signing in, getting something to eat and walking out. All guests children must also sign in and say what child sponsored them. Parents and grandparents have the responsibility to make the decision if they want their children to be known as an “anti-social” person.

This year all children are asked to have a parent or grand parent involved in Social Youth Ministry programs. We have been mailing information to all the parents asking them which ministry they are willing to be involved with. This will also be a Letter grade.

**=Service Hours or the “works of mercy”**: Service Hours are assigned to every student in the Regular Religious Education Program. See below the number of Service Hours needed if students want good grades. Again this year, 50% of all Service Hours need to be Church related and 50% in other approved Service Hours. Students will receive monthly grades based on the number of service hours needed that will be dividing by the number 12, for each month of the year. At the end of the year, for a passing grade, there must be at least 50% Church related Service Hours. Other service hours can be completed by using additional Church related Service Hours.

There is NO REASON why any student does not complete his or her service hours. Remember, every child is required to submit his or her Service Hours in writing on a Religious Education Accountability Form. No one in the Religious Education Program will do this for you. It is students and parent's responsibility to make sure this is done.

Religious Education School Year 2009-2010 Required Service Hours (Remember, 50% must be Church related) are:

- First to Fourth Grade (Elementary Group) – 12 Hours
- Fifth to Eight Grade – (Junior Group) 24 Hours
- Ninth to Twelfth Grade – (Senior Group) 36 Hours

A few examples for First to Fourth Grade (Elementary Group) could include: Color pictures, make drawings or write short letters for all occasions to people who are sick, homebound or in nursing homes, sick in hospitals, Activities Center Youth Volunteer Workers, parish volunteer ministries, Altar Servers, Cub and Brownie Scout work, etc.

Older children can do service work in the Activities Center for one of the many dinners and events we have, service work at our Community Thrift Store, Service Work with the Boy or Girl Scouts, visiting people who are sick in a nursing home, all types of Christmas or Easter projects, helping a neighbor (but not relatives or any work that you get paid for), some school and sports service projects where you are working to serve others (but these must first be approved by calling the Church Rectory), other projects where you serve or help other people (but never for relatives or if you get paid for it.) If you are not sure of a project is acceptable, contact the Church Rectory first.

**=Grades for Completing your Religious Education Text Book Assignments.** Again this year all students in the Regular Religious Education Program will help to purchase their own books for only \$15 each (contact St. Vincent de Paul at the rectory if you cannot afford the book 754-5224). At end of the school year, the child can keep what ever they have left in the book. These new text books are from grades 1 to 11. Assignments

will be given for the end of every chapter. Students will be responsible to complete the assignments in every chapter in the book, even if the teacher does not cover all the chapters in class. The student will be graded for every chapter, not just what the teacher covered. They will have till the end of August to submit all the completed assignments. Teacher, who receive written copies of papers must return these assignments to the Rectory for the Religious Education Team to review and grade for report cards (letter grades for this). When students report to the Activities Center at their assigned table, they should be working on the text books and completing the assignments. If they do not understand some aspect of the text, they may want to ask the teacher, parent, or someone who may know. Children who do not complete their textbook assignments may be pulled out of class the following year, so that they can complete all their assignments.

**=Conduct Grades of Pass or Fail will be given for the Religious Education Classes.** We have found this is the most effective way to discipline the children. We have had everything from fist fights to bullying of the teachers and other students in the class room. With conduct grades, it has now brought an end to most of these problems and grading will be continued. Conduct can be a legal issue and some children may be expelled until the parents talk with the Pastor.

**=Grades for Being Late at Religious Education Class.** It has become necessary for us to grade by Pass or Fail students on their punctuality. Tardiness is out of control. Responsible children do not walk into class late at the public school and it should not be done here. Grades will be 5 min. late should result in an “Fail” Grade. All classes begin at 9:00 am sharp and end at 10:20 am, not earlier. If a teacher is late, then all the students wait in the Activities Center for him or her. If a teacher is late, then all students should be writing the answers to the questions at the end of last weeks chapter that was covered. The students must sign the back of the attendance sheet and list their time of arrival and time of departure.

**=Parent, Grand Parent or family member is to be involved in a social ministries program and this will be a of Pass or Fail grade.** This year we are asking that a parent, grandparent or family member from Grade 1 to 11, be involved in at least one social ministry program or be involved as a Religious Education Teacher or leadership in one of Cub or Boy Scout Programs. Most of the students already have someone involved, but we are asking the rest of the students who do not have any family involved, to get involved. If you do not volunteer, we will call on the students parents.

**= Confession before Christmas and Easter:** Pass or Fail Grade will be given for this organized Sacramental experience. Many will realized the power and peace this experience can bring them. In the confessional, some children may only ask for a blessing from the priest and the priest will give them penance and may ask for their Act of Contrition. A child that does know his or her Act of Contrition will be given a copy of the prayers and asked to memorize it for the next time they come to Confession (they and their parents should have worked together in the Second Grade on this prayer). Some children who do not know their Act of Contrition this year, may be pulled out of class and a teacher will work with them till they learn it.

**=First Holy Communion & Confirmation Students** who miss more than 3 classes and 3 Masses a semester, without a valid excuse from parents, may not receive First Holy Communion on the First Sunday of May or Confirmation when scheduled. A requirement that is explained to the parents the first weeks of school are: First Holy Communion & Confirmation Students cannot flunk any of their classes. They will have to wait for the following year to make this Sacrament unless they work out the problem with the Pastor and Religious Education Team. All children who are scheduled to make their First Holy Communion will become Altar Servers for our Church and/or Chapel (very few exceptions because of serious reasons). They will be assigned a mentor helper so they should not be fearful. Children who are Altar Servers get to know the priest much better, are more interested in the Mass, learn discipline and conduct in front of other people, gains self confidence and more inspired to a vocational call to priesthood, diaconate, religious life and lay vocation to service in the Church for the rest of their life. This also helps to fulfill their Service Hours that are Church related. Confirmation Students will all follow the requirements for the course work or they will not be Confirmed.

**=12<sup>th</sup> Grade Religious Education Students** will be assigned to assist in some aspects of the teaching in the Religious Education Program. They will be contacted individually by the Religious Education Team.

**Note: No Snow Days off because we never cancel Mass. If Teachers are not able to attend a class, for what ever reason, the students assemble in the Activities Center at their assigned table and work on their text book assignments at the end of every chapter. Someone has to ensure the teacher’s attendance form is completed and submitted (students may ask another teacher to do this). If teachers are not able to make their Religious Education Class, they must call another teacher to take their class. Do not call the Rectory because there is no one here to take your call on weekends. Please do this as service to your children.**

At the end of this Religious Education School year, we will have a “Pastors Honor Roll” for all children who make all A’s & B’s for the year. We will publish their names in the Church Bulletin. There may also be prizes given to these children. We will also publish the names of children in every class who passed every Religious Education Subject. Those who flunked something, their name will not appear in the Bulletin and of course everyone will know they “had a problem”. Special prizes will be given out at the end of the Religious Education School Year.

**Our prayers are with you all. The Religious Education Team**