

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

Religious Education Handbook

2012 – 2013



“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 19:14)

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My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Listen to the call of God in the Scripture:

“These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord our God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you.

Hear O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one, Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:1-10)

The above is an instruction that Moses received from God. The Lord is teaching Moses as to how we should endeavor to instill in the hearts of our children the knowledge of His laws and commandments. We should leave no stone unturned to hand over the faith we have received.

Family is the first school of learning and parents are the first and best teachers. So make sure not to leave this responsibility entirely to the CCD teachers. We have very little time here at CCD. Let all of us hear the instruction from the Lord and obey His command in teaching our children about the law of the Lord. Please give ear to the call of the Church and to the CCD Director when they call you for your assistance. Let us together share our responsibility of handing over the faith to our children and building up a church family according to the whispering of the Holy Spirit and in the light of His Holy Word.

Wishing all of you a fruitful CCD year.

Love,

Fr. Peter Thenan

Mission Statement

The Religious Education Program at Our Lady of Good Counsel is committed in continuing the mission of Jesus Christ by providing for the children and youth of our parish a catechetical program of instruction for all grade levels.

Vision

We believe that our values, beliefs, and traditions are best passed on when families and the parish community work together as partners in the faith formation of the parish children and youth.

This program will form in the children a foundation, which includes the teachings of scripture, the traditions of the Church, and the teachings of the Church at age-appropriate levels.

Recognizing that faith formation is a life-long process and that parental involvement is essential to the formation process, we hope to create an atmosphere where children and their families can grow in their appreciation and understanding of their faith and their role in the life of the community.

Religious Education Curriculum

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Church Activity</u>
Kinder	To introduce God of Creation.	Offertory of Gifts
1 st	To develop an awareness of God the Creator as our Father.	Offertory of Gifts
2 nd	To present Jesus as our model for Christian living, through the Sacraments of Baptism, Penance, and Eucharist.	Offertory of Gifts
3rd	To deepen our understanding of the Sacraments in the Church.	Altar Society, Lector
4 th	To help children form their consciences according to the teachings of the Church, and to learn the basics of morality as taught in the Old and New Testaments – Commandments.	Altar Society, Lector
5 th	To help children experience and understand the sacraments and become more conscious and active participants in the Church’s Sacramental life - Holy Mass.	Altar Society, Lector
Intermediate 6 th & 7 th	To understand the Old Testament as the revelation of God in the history of people, a revelation fulfilled in the New Testament - Salvation History.	Altar Society, Lector, Youth
Junior High 8 th	To deepen the knowledge of the Gospel and to lead them to a fuller participation in the life and mission of Jesus Christ.	Altar Society, Lector, Youth, Choir, Ushers
High School 9 th , 10 th , 11 th , 12 th	To be confirmed in the Holy Spirit and begin to discern the mission to which we are called by God – Church.	Altar Society, Lector, Youth, Choir, Ushers

REQUIREMENTS FOR CCD 2012 - 2013

1. **Two consecutive years of preparation** will be required for the Sacraments.
2. Admission fee per child of a parishioner is \$15.00. The fee for each additional child is \$5.00. A late registration fee of \$10.00 will be applied.
3. Classes will be held on Sunday morning from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
4. Students will begin Sacramental studies for First Holy Communion in 1st grade. Second year preparation and First Communion will take place in 2nd grade.
5. First year preparation for Confirmation begins in the 9th grade. The Sacrament of Confirmation will be received in the 10th grade.
6. **All families must be registered members of our OLGC and fully support our CCD Program.** Students and their parents must attend the Sunday Mass immediately after CCD. Every student will have a Mass Attendance Card. Attendance is closely monitored and documented. If students fail to attend Mass, they shall repeat the same grade level the following year.
7. All Religious Education students who have received the Sacrament of First Communion must attend the **Advent** and **Lent Penance Services**. Date to be announced.
8. **The children are to be taught to give an offering every Sunday.** The children's offering will be collected and donated to charity to help the deserving poor, as decided by the community.
9. **No child can be absent from the class more than 4 times in the CCD school year. In case of absence from the class more than 4 times, the child will repeat the same grade level the following year.**
10. Parents should respect the calls for meetings and parental classes. They should participate and support all the Parish activities throughout the year.
11. 2nd year Confirmation students will be required to attend a Spring Retreat and perform 10 hours of community service or parish functions.
12. Parents are required to practice the prayers with the children at home, as class time is limited. The prayers that the children receive at the beginning of the CCD school year should be learned by heart. **To qualify for the reception of First Communion, the 1st and 2nd year Sacramental child will be required to take a pre-test in December and a post-test in April.**
13. The Sacrament of Confirmation will be announced as per the schedule of Bishop Michael Mulvey.

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

CCD RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 1.) Students must attend the Sunday Noon Mass immediately after CCD, as well as all Holy days of obligation.
- 2.) No horse play or rough play on Church grounds or in the classroom.
- 3.) Public display of improper affection is not permitted.
- 4.) Foul or bad language is intolerable and unacceptable.
- 5.) Students are expected to show respect towards all teachers and staff, as well as with each other.
- 6.) Students must be attentive and not disruptive in class or during Mass.
- 7.) Always dress appropriately and modestly for CCD and Church.
- 8.) Arrive promptly for class and Church every Sunday.
- 9.) No cell phones, text messaging, or electronic devices are allowed in the class or Church.
- 10.) No chewing gum or eating candy in class or during Mass.
- 11.) No more than four absences in a CCD school year.
- 12.) All students are subject to the Religious Education student removal process.

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

CHURCH GUIDELINES:

- 1.) All students are expected to attend Mass with their parents every Sunday. It is mandatory in keeping with the Church's teaching. Teachers and the Attendance Clerk will keep track of the Mass attendance of the children. If a student attends Mass other than OLGC during the school year, we will allow only 3 bulletins per year to show proof of attendance from that other Church.**
- 2.) CCD families must be registered members of our OLGC and fully support our Church. All families must also use the Church Offering Envelopes and contribute weekly to help maintain the existence of the Church.**
- 3.) Church is the house of God, and the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacraments. Hence, reverence to God is obligatory.**
- 4.) Make the sign of the cross with the holy water. Always genuflect as you enter the Church and whenever you crisscross the Blessed Sacrament.**
- 5.) Respect and Honor God by avoiding loose talk, unwanted conversation, chewing gum, and eating candy, and turn off all cell phones and electronic devices inside the Church.**
- 6.) The Church is also a place for prayer. Maintain strict silence at all times inside and around the church. Converse in a low tone if necessary only so that others are not disturbed.**
- 7.) Parents please encourage and assist your children for their own good to involve in all sacramental, spiritual, liturgical life and community activities of the Church. This would help them to grow as part of this church and as years go by, they would stand in pride to be members of their Church.**

[The Children's Mass will be designated for every Sunday a 12:00 p.m. During this time, you will see your children organizing and participating in the Liturgical celebration with the help of the Religious Education Fraternity. We look forward to your valuable suggestions and constant cooperation, so that we can strive together single-minded for the well being and good of all our children.]

FIRST YEAR PREPARATION

PRAYERS

“As our body cannot live without nourishment, so our soul cannot spiritually be kept alive without prayer.” (St Augustine)

Prayer draws into the soul of the Holy Spirit and raises man to God. Therefore, let us teach our children not only to pray, but to engage in memorizing the prayers as it is an essential support to the life of prayers which in turn will possibly stand by and lead them to be men and women of prayer.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

MORNING OFFERING

God, my father, I give you today, all that I think and do and say. And unite with all that was done by Jesus Christ, Your dearest Son. Amen.

GRACE BEFORE MEALS

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

WHO IS GOD?

God is the all-powerful Spirit who created everything that exists. He is our Father who is with us always and awaits us in heaven to share His everlasting joys with us.

WHAT ARE THE SACRAMENTS?

The sacraments are external sacred signs instituted by Christ to sanctify us and give us internal grace.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Eucharist
4. Reconciliation
5. Anointing of the Sick
6. Holy Orders
7. Matrimony

WHO GAVE US THESE SACRAMENTS?

Jesus gave us the Sacraments and continues to give each one of them. He does this through the Church which is His Mystical Body.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. I am the Lord your God; you shall not have other gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

SECOND YEAR PREPARATION

THE APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins, because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

What is the sacrament of Confession/Penance/Reconciliation?

The sacrament of confession is the sacrament of God's loving forgiveness by which we are set free from sin and reconciled with the Church which we have wounded by our sins. This sacrament helps us to grow in God's grace, and it strengthens us to avoid sin and to lead holier lives.

Who may receive the Sacrament of Confession?

Any Catholic who has committed sin may receive the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

Who is a penitent?

A penitent is someone who is sorry for his or her sins.

What are the three acts of the penitent?

The penitent's three acts are contrition (sorrow), confession (telling our sins), and satisfaction (making up for the harm done when possible, and doing or saying the **penance given by the priest.**)

What steps does a person follow in receiving the sacrament?

- 1.) An examination of conscience
- 2.) An act of contrition – sincerely sorry for sin
- 3.) A promise not to sin again
- 4.) Confessing our sins to the priest
- 5.) Accepts the penance

What is an examination of conscience?

An examination of conscience is a review of one's past thoughts, words and actions. It is here one evaluates one's commitment to Christ as well as how one's duties were accomplished.

What is an act of contrition?

An act of contrition is the sorrow for sin especially because sin displeases God, who is all-good and loving, and deserves all our love.

Who acts for Jesus in this sacrament?

The priest acts for Jesus in the sacrament of penance and Reconciliation. When we confess our sins to the priest, we are confessing them to Jesus, who forgives us through the priest.

What is the seal of confession?

The seal of confession is the most solemn obligation of a priest to keep secret what has been revealed to him in confession. The priest may never break this seal even to save his own life.

What does absolution mean?

Absolution means “releasing.” Through this sacrament, we are released from our sins - set free from them.

What is a penance?

A penance is something which must be done or accepted to make up for confessed sin. It should correspond to the type of sins and their gravity. Generally penances take the form of prayer, acts of mercy or self-denial.

The confession formula:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Bless me father for I have sinned. It has been (Mention how many weeks, months or years) since my last confession. I have performed my penance. (If not say, I have not performed my penance.)

Since then I accuse myself of the following sins (Confess your sins here) For these and all the sins which I cannot remember now, I ask pardon of God, penance and absolution from you father.

What is sin?

Sin is disobedience to God, and offense against him. It is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience.

What is actual sin?

Actual sin is the personal sin which we commit.

Are there different kinds of personal or actual sin?

There are two kinds of personal or actual sin, mortal and venial.

What is mortal sin?

Mortal sin is a grave offense against God’s law by which we prefer something created to the Creator.

How can we know if a sin is mortal?

A sin is mortal or grave when these three conditions are present:

- *Grave matter*, that is serious wrong or what is thought to be seriously wrong;
- *Full knowledge*, that is, before or while committing it, the person clearly is aware that it is wrong;
- *Complete consent*, that is, the person freely gives full consent to it.

What are the effects of mortal sin?

By mortal sin a person turns away from God and so loses the gift of charity and sanctifying grace. Mortal sin takes away the merit of the person's previous good actions and deprives one of the right to eternal happiness in heaven. Sincere repentance can reverse these effects.

What is venial sin?

A sin is venial when one of the conditions for a mortal sin is missing. For example, the thought, desire, word, action or omission is wrong but not seriously so, or it is seriously wrong but a person does not clearly see this, or does not fully consent to it.

What are the effects of venial sins?

Venial sin lessens our charity and weakens our practice of the Catholic faith. It makes us weaker when faced with temptations to serious sin, and hinders our spiritual growth.

What are sins of omission?

Sins of omission are the failure to do something one should have done.

What is the Holy Eucharist?

The Holy Eucharist is a sacrament, a sacrifice, and the abiding presence of Jesus himself, God and man. He is truly and completely present under the appearances of bread and wine, to make us more like Himself and to join us to one another.

What is the Mass or Eucharistic Celebration?

The Mass or Eucharistic is:

- the sacrifice of the cross taking place today on our altars;
- a memorial of Jesus, resurrection and ascension;
- a sacred banquet in which the food we receive is Jesus himself.

When was the Eucharist first celebrated?

Jesus celebrated the first Eucharist at the Last Supper on Holy Thursday evening, the night before he died.

Who were present at the first Eucharistic Celebration?

The apostles were present at the first Eucharistic Celebration.

Why is the Mass so important?

In the Mass, Jesus himself is made present and prays to the Father for us.

Should a Catholic ever stop going to Mass?

No Catholic should stop going to Mass, for any reason.

Are Catholics obliged to participate in the Mass?

Because of the importance of the Mass, the Church obliges us to participate in the Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.