

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Church of St. Benedict Religious Education Program! This handbook will help to familiarize you with the various elements of our program: philosophy, policies, procedures, schedules, and stewardship, which are designed to meet both the spiritual well being of your children as well as their physical well-being.

As we enter into our new year, I would be remiss if I neglected to express my gratitude to the dedicated men and women who have answered God's call to share their faith with the youth of this parish. Truly, I am elated by the gifts and talent, which they bring to our program. I am confident that your children will benefit richly from the Catechists with whom they will journey in faith.

Please be sure and review this handbook. It contains information regarding the mandatory curriculum from the Diocese of Tulsa to help raise safety awareness to our children. Please be sure and review the Discipline Policy and Attendance procedures. After you have finished reading the handbook, please discuss its content with your children who are enrolled in the program. *Please keep the handbook in a convenient location so that you can refer to it as needed.*

***On the back page of the handbook is a release for you to review and sign. Please return this page as soon as possible.***

The Religious Education staff wishes to serve you in any way possible. Should you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me either at the office (455-4451 ext. 226) at home (286-6932) or in case of emergencies my cell phone (269-5433). You may also contact Maureen Loeffler, Religious Education Secretary 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the church office.

Sincerely in Christ,  
*Carol Bryan*  
Director of Religious Education

## **PARISH MISSION STATEMENT**

*As a Eucharistic community, we grow in deeper communion with God and His Church when we recognize our call to holiness.*

*As God's stewards, with the help of His grace, we strive to fulfill our particular call to discipleship through prayer and work.*

*Being formed in gospel identity, we are commanded to share the Good News of Jesus with others.*

## **PHILOSOPHY**

*The Church of Saint Benedict, in accordance with the decree of Vatican II, acknowledges that parents are the primary educators of their children.*

*Therefore, it is the role of the St. Benedict Religious Education Program to support parents in the religious formation of their children by enhancing their teaching of Scripture, doctrine, morals, and attitudes and by providing opportunities for service activities and the experience of Catholic community.*

*Our Program is based on love of God, love of neighbor, and respect for individual uniqueness.*

**PARENT and STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Academics . . . . .	1
Accidents . . . . .	2
Emergency Procedures . . . . .	2
Documentation . . . . .	2
Medication . . . . .	2
Admission . . . . .	2
Payment of Fees . . . . .	2
Attendance . . . . .	3
Student Drop-off/Pick-up . . . . .	3
Class Dismissals & Class times . . . . .	3
Behavior Rules . . . . .	4
Corporal Punishment . . . . .	4
Search and Seizure . . . . .	4
Discipline . . . . .	4
Cell Phones . . . . .	5
Catechist (Teacher) Responsibility . . . . .	5
Class Cancellation (Due to Snow etc.) . . . . .	6
Communication . . . . .	7
Picture Taking . . . . .	7
Emergency Plan for Fire . . . . .	7
Tornado/Severe Storm Warning . . . . .	7
Chaperones/Volunteers . . . . .	7
Field Trips . . . . .	8
Stewardship . . . . .	8
Youth Activities . . . . .	9
Youth Mass & Youth Mass Planning . . . . .	9
T.Y.M.E. . . . .	9
Schedule . . . . .	10
Children's Liturgy . . . . .	11
Dead Theologian Society . . . . .	11

# PARENT and STUDENT HANDBOOK

## Academics

The Church of St. Benedict Religious Education Program uses the following publishers and curriculum: *Who Am I?* Pre-K curriculum from Ignatius Press, Sadlier publication *We Believe* K-6<sup>th</sup> grades Parish Program, 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grades Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Catholic Youth Bible, 11<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation Confirmed in a Faithful Community curriculum from St. Mary's Press. Supplemental resources are used to help teach stories from the Bible, our Catholic Traditions and Prayers. Speakers are invited or videos used at the discretion of the catechist and/or DRE.

Diocese of Tulsa mandates we teach the Protecting God's Children Touching Safety Curriculum to students in Kindergarten through 11<sup>th</sup> grade. This is a mandatory program to raise awareness of our parents and students. Letters are sent to the parents informing them of the day curriculum will be presented in class. Parents always have the option to withhold their child from the class. Parents who opt-out are given curriculum to teach their child. The material is emailed to all parents to ensure they have the curriculum to teach or review with their child.

Often students will bring home materials from class. Please look over the work carefully, talk to your child about the lesson, and encourage his/her effort. Remember that sharing your faith with your children is one of the greatest gifts you can give them. Please invite your children to discuss what they learned in their R.E. classes. Family time, which encourages reflection, faith sharing, and prayer is a rewarding experience and a source of spiritual enrichment for the entire family.

As part of the curriculum we have retreats on site & off site for the students to attend: *5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grades have a daytime retreat; 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades have a lock-in retreat; 9<sup>th</sup> grade attends True Love Waits retreat; 10<sup>th</sup> grade attends the High School retreat.*

## Accidents:

### • **Emergency Procedures**

First Aid Kits are marked and located on top of the refrigerator in kitchens. Minor cuts and bruises might need a Band Aid and some TLC. If the injury is more serious, the parent or emergency number will be called by the DRE. Gloves will be used when any injury involves bleeding.

### • **Documentation**

If treatment is given for an injury a written notation of the aid, including the date and a description of the treatment, will be given to the DRE who will notify parents.

### • **Medication**

It is recommended that medication be taken at home before arrival for class. **No medications are administered by parish staff or volunteers.**

## Admission

The Religious Education Program welcomes the children of St. Benedict parishioners and guests who are interested in learning more about the Catholic Church and its teachings.

**Class Guests:** *Please ask the Catechists if you want to bring a guest to class.*

## Payment of Fees

As part of the parish stewardship we ask for a fee of \$25 per family. Children preparing for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are given extra Prayer Books as well as attend two Prayer Days to assist with the cost we ask for an additional \$20 fee. Those preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation receive Sponsor books as well as textbooks, gown usage at the Confirmation Mass and attend a retreat to assist in the expense we ask for a \$65 fee.

*However, no student will be turned away if this fee is burdensome to the family. Please contact the Pastor or DRE for more information.*

## Attendance

**Just as in regular school you report your child's absence we ask you call the church to report the absence. Please call 455-4451 ext 226 to leave a message to report an absence or email [carolbryan@saintben.org](mailto:carolbryan@saintben.org)**

If we do not hear from you, Office Volunteers will call to inquire if all is well with the absent student, as well as to verify the absence. If your student has difficulty attending on a regular basis please discuss this with the Catechist or call the DRE.

### **• Student Drop-off/Pick-up**

Students may come to class 5-10 minutes early. Please do not simply drop them off 20 – 30 minutes early. This places the church in a liability situation.

Parents are to be very careful as you drop off and pick up your student(s) in the parking lot. This is a very dangerous situation for children.

Please do not park in front of the main building. This causes a traffic jam especially before the Noon Mass.

Parent escorts elementary students (Preschool – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) to the classroom upon arrival. The responsibility for supervising students will be assumed by the RE staff after the child enters the classroom.

### **• Class Dismissals**

**Preschool, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders must be picked up at the classroom by the parent upon dismissal.** This gives Catechist opportunity to visit with parents if needed.

This is in keeping with the VIRTUS (awareness) program. The Catechists want to know the student is leaving with their parent or guardian. Please assist us by instructing your older child to remain on the upper walkway near the building to await their ride.

**If you are picking up your children in the parking lot, please DO NOT block the driveway while waiting.** Instead, park in a designated space. Parking in front of the church causes traffic problems during Mass times and is a safety hazard for the children. Your cooperation is appreciated.

No student will be dismissed from class early unless the parent picks up the child from the classroom.

Students who have been dismissed from class and have not been picked up will remain with the Catechist or DRE.

If you are carpooling, please notify the Catechist. We ask your cooperation in picking up children promptly or at the appropriate dismissal time.

**Class Times:**

**Sun:** 10:30 a.m. - 11:40 a.m. 4 yr. – 10<sup>th</sup> grades  
6:30 p.m. - 7:45 p.m. 4 yr. – 11<sup>th</sup> grades

**Wed.:** 6:30 p.m. - 7:45 p.m. 4 yr. – 8<sup>th</sup> grades

**Behavior Rules:**

Students are expected to exhibit self-discipline and cooperative behavior, which helps create a classroom environment conducive to prayer and learning. Students are expected to be polite and respectful to the teacher, volunteers, and other students. The property of our church and others is to be respected as well. Conduct unbecoming to a Christian student will not be tolerated.

Students must be supervised from the time of arrival to the time of departure.

**• Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is any punitive touching. All corporal punishment is forbidden.

**• Search and Seizure**

If there is suspicion of wrongdoing (weapons, drugs, alcohol), teachers will ask the individual to cooperate. If the student refuses, the teacher will contact the DRE who will contact the parent. If there is no cooperation, the DRE has the right to suspend the student from the program.

## • Discipline

The Director of Religious Education will assume that any discipline problem or incident referred by a Catechist is disruptive and counter-productive to the class. The DRE will handle such problems in a firm, loving, and consistent manner.

Discipline problems will be handled in the following manner:

Catechist will discuss the situation with the student(s) involved. Catechist will speak with the parents in private following the class. Catechist will inform the DRE and document the incident with date, behavior and action taken.

Catechist is to inform the DRE immediately. The DRE will call the parents and meet with the parents and student to discuss the problem. The student may return to the class the following class time once the student has agreed to behave appropriately in class.

The Pastor will meet with the parents to discuss providing home-study materials for the student. Parents will home-school student until such time as they feel that the student will behave appropriately in class.

Just as in regular school, Cell phones are not to be used in class. No texting etc. If they are used then Catechists and Assistants or myself, will take possession of them and return them at the end of class.

### **Catechist (Teacher) Responsibilities:**

The catechists in the St. Benedict Religious Education program are volunteers. They have participated in diocesan preparation programs and/or in-service teacher meetings. They provide the needed services of teaching and supervision when your child(ren) attend Religious Formation classes. Please give them your support and reinforce their efforts by helping your child(ren) with any homework; in the memorization of prayers or basic doctrine; in participation at Mass; and in being an active participant in learning the Good News of Jesus.



Catechist responsibilities include:

- Plan and implement catechetical lessons following diocesan curriculum and parish religious education program directives
- Follow Diocesan/Parish policies and guidelines
- Keep attendance records
- Active supervision of students
- Report suspected child abuse/neglect to DRE
- Respect copyright laws

Catechists have completed:

- Statement of Understanding/Consent  
(Diocesan Abuse Policy)
- Background check
- Provided two references
- VIRTUS Training “Protecting God’s Children”

### **Class Cancellations:**

If it is necessary to cancel classes due to hazardous weather conditions (Snow or wicked weather) check the listings on your local television stations it will be listed as the Church of St. Benedict.

The general rule is:

**If the Broken Arrow schools are closed, classes will be canceled.**

### **Remember, Mass is never canceled.**

Steps in keeping you informed when class is canceled:

- Catechist and Assistants will be notified by email and phone.
- Catechists and Assistants will phone parents.
- Wednesday classes: an email will be distributed notifying parents.
- Sunday classes: announcements at Mass, weather permitting an email distributed to parents.

### **Communication**

To assist with communicating on a regular basis an R.E. / Youth Newsletter is mailed to your homes every two months. This information is also located on the Parish website: [www.saintben.com](http://www.saintben.com) Emails will be sent from the Director to help families keep up to date. If you do not see one of the emails – please check your Junk/Spam File in your email program.

#### **• Catechists / Parent Communication**

Catechists have been encouraged to write letters introducing themselves and briefly go over the curriculum for the year. Please help us keep your children safe this year by communicating with the Catechist or the DRE of any events or changes that has happened recently in your child(ren)'s life.

#### **• Picture Taking**

Sometimes pictures may be taken of students for use in publications or on bulletin boards. *Parents indicate on the form in the back of the book if you have any objections to having a picture of their child(ren) published or posted.*

### **Emergency Plan for Fire Drill Evacuation & Tornado Procedures**

As required by the Fire Marshall's Office, evacuation procedures are posted in each classroom. Directions for evacuation procedures are given to each Catechist, Adult and student assistant to keep in their notebooks. Your children will practice the procedure during the first of the school year. If you have any questions regarding the procedures, please call the church office.

### **Chaperones/Volunteers:**

Any field trip or service activity sponsored by Youth or R.E. must be coordinated through the Youth or DRE's office. Chaperones must be Covered Volunteers (individuals who have completed proper paperwork and attended VIRTUS training). For the safety and protection of the students, Chaperones/volunteers must be 21 years or older and out of high school.

Volunteer drivers must be 25 years or older and must be a Covered Volunteer with proper paperwork completed. All vehicles must have two covered volunteers per carload. Volunteer drivers transporting children in their vehicle assume full responsibility and liability if an accident occurs. All drivers must have a completed insurance information form on file with the DRE/Youth Minister. Vehicles must be currently registered, and provide a seat belt for each passenger. Drivers must ensure that each passenger correctly uses a seat belt during transit.

The following number of chaperones per students will be required on field trips:

<u>Grade level</u>	<u>Number of Chaperones</u>
4 <sup>th</sup>	2 adult for every 5 students
5-9 <sup>th</sup>	2 adult for every 7 students
10-11 <sup>th</sup>	2 adult for every 10 students

**Field Trips:**

Each field trip off the property of St. Benedict Church grounds must have an educational purpose. Parents will receive a "Release of Liability Form" denoting the reasonable expectations of the trip, such as time leaving, time returning, and mode of travel. Each student must have a signed form to participate, no permissions will be granted over the telephone.

Students attending field trips will be expected to exhibit appropriate Christian behavior. Misbehavior may result in the loss of the privilege to participate in future field trips or if needed, parents will be called to pick up their child(ren).

**Stewardship:**

Our Stewardship program is for all children of all grades to participate in throughout the year. Stewardship is being Christ for others by means of sharing our time, talent and treasure. God blesses each child with gifts and as adult Christians we need to teach children how to be good stewards of these gifts.

Teaching children to be good stewards of their **TREASURE** can be a rewarding and challenging experience. Explaining that all lasting treasures are those in heaven with our Lord God. Children's Envelopes may be found by the front doors.

Stewardship Collections: Each month we will collect food or gifts for the poor or for those in the service. Students receive fliers at the end of each month. The classes who collect the most are given Pizza or for the morning classes Donuts. This is a way they may share their **TIME & TALENT**.

### **Youth Activities:**

St. Benedict's Middle and Senior High Youth Groups meet in the Youth Room in the St. Scholastica Building. All Youth Group activities are posted on the website or be sure and check the R.E. & Youth Newsletter to find out about the up coming events.

Students are encouraged to bring a friend (Catholic or non-Catholic) to all Youth Group activities.

Middle school youth group meet on Friday evenings and High School youth group meet on Wednesday evenings.

### **Youth Mass:**

Students in 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade rotate the opportunity to serve as ministers at the Youth Mass during the school year at Sunday 5 p.m. Mass on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of most months. When RE is in session following Mass there is Pizza available for \$1.00 per slice. Lemonade and water are available for drinks. Please purchase tickets prior to Mass.

**Youth Mass Planning:** Volunteers present Mass Etiquette during R.E. class a week prior to the Youth Mass their grade is to serve. Students volunteer to help sell Pizza tickets, serve as Ushers, Lectors, and Gift Bearers; all students are asked to help

### **T.Y.M.E.:**

Students in the 5<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> grades attend the **T**otal **Y**outh **M**inistry **E**xperience during R.E. classes a couple of times a year. TYME is an enhancement to their Religious Education. Students in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and some in 11<sup>th</sup> grade assist the Youth and Religious Education Director in creating grade appropriate activities and Catechesis (learning) and social time.

### **Retreats:**

TYME Retreats are scheduled during the school year as part of the curriculum. Grades are grouped together – 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grades, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades and high school.

The Retreats and Lock-ins are on site with the exception of the High School Retreat in the Spring which is held off site.

### **Schedule:**

A copy of the yearly schedule is mailed with the Sept/Oct. Newsletter and may be found on the St. Benedict website.

Religious Education Classes begin on Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> and ends Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Classes are held on a weekly schedule with the following exceptions: No R.E. classes on Fall Break (Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>); Thanksgiving (Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>); Christmas (Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> – Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>); Ash Wednesday (Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>), Spring Break (March 18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>) & Easter (April 8<sup>th</sup>).

### **Special Projects:**

In addition to regular class work, the Religious Education Program offers extra activities for the students and parents.

2<sup>nd</sup> grade First Reconciliation and First Eucharist Parents attend three parent meetings as part of their child's preparation.

2<sup>nd</sup> grade First Reconciliation and First Eucharist students participate in a daytime Prayer Day prior to receiving the

sacraments. The First Eucharist Prayer Day also includes a Last Supper Journey for students and parents.

Confirmation students attend an overnight retreat.

4<sup>th</sup> grade participates in the Jesse Tree activity during class.

5<sup>th</sup> grade participate in Vocation Awareness Day.

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grades participate in TYME day retreat.

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades participate in TYME lock-in retreat.

9<sup>th</sup> grade participates in the True Love Waits retreat.

High School participates in TYME retreat.

***Christmas Plays:*** We offer three Christmas plays –one for each RE session which allows for more children to be involved. Sign up for the plays begin in November. I visit the classes and ask for volunteers.

***Children's Choir:*** Children from RE and Catholic schools sing during the three Christmas plays. Sign up begins first of November or end of October.

***CC (Children's Catechumenate)*** is a program for those un-baptized and over the age of 7 as well as for those who are baptized and have not received any religious formation and wish to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.

***Summer Programs:*** Vacation Bible School and Totus Tuus are summer catechetical programs for children preschool through high school.

***Rosary Boxes:*** Class Rosary Boxes are sent home for the family prayer. Students in the classes rotate the opportunity to bring home the box and set up a prayer table and pray the Rosary with their family. Each classroom has a Rosary Box for Catechist to instruct students how to pray the Rosary.

**Children's Liturgy:**

Children from Kindergarten to 4<sup>th</sup> grade have the opportunity to take part in a Children's Liturgy once a month at the **9:15 Mass** during the school year. Father will dismiss them from Mass to follow the Catechist to McGuire Hall, where they will continue the reverence of being in Church but listen to readings on their level of understanding. Children will return during the collection.

**DEAD THEOLOGIAN SOCIETY (D.T.S.)**

The St. Benedict Chapter of the Dead Theologians Society meets every Tuesday in the St. Scholastica building. High School and Young Adults of our parish gather at 7 p.m. with social time in the Youth Room. Each evening, until 8:30 p.m., a different Saint is discussed such as St. Anna Maria Taigi to St. Veronica, often followed by question and answer opportunities. Members process to the Chapel reverently praying a decade of the Rosary to participate in Adoration.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This is verifying you have received your Parent and Youth Hand book for **2011-2012**. By signing below you are indicating you intend to review the book with your student(s).

Photo permission: Please make an X next to your wish.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my permission for my student(s) picture to be taken during R.E. class, field trips, special activities or service projects. I understand these photos will be group settings. I also understand these group photos may be on the Church of St. Benedict website or the parish Ora et Labora Newsletter.

\_\_\_\_\_ I object to my student(s) having their picture taken and therefore wish the photos not be on the parish website or in the parish newsletter.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Parents/Guardians' Signature

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Please print your child(ren) name(s)