

QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE

PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM PARENT HANDBOOK



**Year Round PREP
2017-2018**

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Parish Religious Education Program of Queen of the Universe is to partner with parents and guardians to foster an environment in which each child in the program can build and develop a relationship with God through education, training, prayer and service.

Classes are held on Monday evenings for children in grades 1-6 from 6:45 to 8:00 PM in Holy Family Regional Catholic School.

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION: GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

“The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering with special care a vocation to a sacred state” (Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, par.11).

Family Faith Formation has many names: intergenerational catechesis, whole-community catechesis, and total community catechesis. It is rooted in the idea that faith formation is a lifelong pursuit. There is no graduation; there is no final exam. It cultivates a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church through participation in parish life, education in Scripture and the Catholic Tradition, connection with the Mass and other sacraments, development of prayer life, formation in the moral life, and engagement in social justice (*National Directory of Catechesis*, 20). Faith Formation begins with baptism, grows with formal education, and develops throughout life.

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS

At the Baptism of your child, you promised to accept the responsibility to train your child in the practices of the faith. We recognize that parents are the primary teachers of their children in the ways of faith. The Parish Religious Education Program is designed to assist you, the parents in that task. PREP does not take the place of parental involvement. And so we expect parents:

- To ensure that their children are present with the parish community at Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday.
- To participate fully in the Family Faith Formation Program (see pages 9 & 10) each year. This will require attendance at two meetings annually. In the year of sacramental preparation: if parents decline to attend the Family Faith Formation meetings, we may have no choice but to defer the Sacrament to a later year.
- To make up a sacramental retreat, the parent or guardian and the child will attend the make-up retreat, when scheduled.
- To impress upon their child the need to respect everyone in the Parish Religious Education Program including other children.
- To respect each person's possessions by not damaging the property of Holy Family School classrooms and desks they share. Parents will be responsible for all damage.

REGISTRATION POLICY

A child entering PREP at the first level must provide a Baptism certificate. Parents are required to register each child every year.

Students begin PREP at the first level. Second level students prepare for First Reconciliation in March. Third level students prepare for First Holy Communion in May. Levels four and five are consecutive toward the preparation of the reception of Confirmation in the Spring of level six.

All time is consecutive. If a student leaves the program after level three and does not attend level four and five, that student cannot come back for level six and Confirmation preparation. On returning, that student will be placed in level four, continue to level five and after two years prepare for Confirmation in level six.

If a student enters PREP in the 2nd grade without attending PREP level 1, he/she will be placed into level 1 and move consecutively from level to level for reception of the sacraments.

FINDING GOD

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**Level One: God Found Everything Good-
God & Creation**

**Level Two: I am the True Vine-
Eucharist and Reconciliation**

**Level Three: Fishers of Men-
Church & Holy Spirit**

**Level Four: Blessed are the Poor-
Beatitudes & The Ten Commandments**

**Level Five: The Bread of Life-
Sacraments & Worship**

**Level Six: I Am Who Am-
The Old Testament.
&
Decision Point**

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

ONE HOUR A WEEK OF FORMAL RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IS VERY LITTLE. SO WE ASK YOU TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN ARRANGE THEIR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AROUND PREP TIME.

Faith Formation received in the Parish Religious Education Program of Queen of the Universe is ongoing in that each session builds upon the previous session. It is imperative that children attend their program sessions weekly and remain in the program consistently from year to year.

If your child is unable to attend a session for any reason, a parent must complete the following:

1. Call 215-945-2704 or email guprepadm@gmail.com to report the absence. The child's name, PREP level and room number should be given.
2. If a child fails to report to a session, the absence will be recorded as unexcused unless a doctor's note is provided upon returning to the program. Death in the family or illness is excused absences. Sports events, dance classes and the like are not excused absences.
3. **Two unexcused absences in the first semester and two unexcused absences in the second semester may require the child to repeat the PREP level and not be eligible to receive a sacrament if the child is in a sacrament year.**
4. Extended absences due to illness may require a meeting with Mrs. Raffin as soon as possible.

GENERAL

ARRIVAL

For Arrival, all students should enter the building either by the back door by way of Apple Road or the front door by way of Trenton Road.

Parking attendants are on duty in the back parking lot (Apple Road) and in the front parking lot (Trenton Road). Students are dropped off in the fire lane and cars continue to move to Trenton Road. If parents need to park, please use the lanes near the rectory. **Absolutely no stopping or parking in the fire lane or around the circle.**

Always remember: There is no access between the back parking lot (Apple Road) and the front parking lot (Trenton Road). If you come in Apple Road, you leave by Apple Road; if you come in Trenton Road; you leave by Trenton Road.

Be cautious when dropping off your children. Remember, your child is like any other child. The speed limit is 10 m.p.h. in the parking lot at all times.

Students do not enter the classrooms until the catechist opens the door to the classroom.

LATENESS

Classes begin promptly at 6:45 PM. Students should be in their seats by 6:40 PM. After 6:45 PM, students will only be able to enter the building by the main door off the main parking lot. Ring the bell to the right of the door for admission.

If your child is going to be late, call or e-mail the PREP office. Upon arrival, students who are late are required to come to the PREP Office with their parent or guardian for a note to be given to their classroom teacher.

DISMISSAL

At 7:52 PM Levels 1 and 2 will be dismissed by the main intercom to go to the large hall for pick up by parents or guardians. At 7:55 Levels 3, 4 and RCIC will also be dismissed by the main intercom to go to the large hall for pick up. At 8:00 levels 5 and 6 will be dismissed and will go directly to the parking lot. Attendants will be at the back door to Apple Road and at the front door to the large parking lot. Children of catechists or parking volunteers will report to the PREP office to be picked up there after their parents have completed their volunteer assignments.

For dismissal, Apple Road students use the back door of the school and Trenton Road students use the front door of the school. Parking attendants will guide the cars coming to pick up students.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early dismissal should be considered an unusual occurrence. If students need to be dismissed early, parents are required to phone or e-mail the PREP office to let the office know of the early dismissal. At the time of the dismissal, parents or guardians are to meet the child in the PREP office.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Emergency cancellations for power outages, snow, ice, etc. will be handled through the e-mail addresses we will have on file for the child/children. If your family e-mail or phone numbers have changed, please notify the PREP office immediately.

DISCIPLINE

There is a NO TOLERANCE POLICY for behaviors that are contrary to Catholic faith and morals. Parents and guardians will be contacted immediately. Weapons or any sharp objects whether real or a facsimile which can inflict harm to another are forbidden.

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA SAFE ENVIRONMENT GUIDELINES FOR CATECHISTS AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

PA State Police Criminal Record Check; PA Child Abuse Clearance Check; (every five years). There is no charge for this clearance, if you are a volunteer.

Federal Criminal Background Check for those who live outside of PA. There is also no charge for this clearance, if you are a volunteer

Required Training: (One time only)

Safe Environment: Protecting God's Children; Mandated Reporter

PERTINENT MEDICAL HISTORY

It is essential for the good of your child that pertinent medical history is made known to the PREP office at the time of registration so that we can better place your child. Permission for the child's name and/or picture to be used in Church publications is also required on the registration form.

PRIMARY CUSTODY

It is the responsibility of both biological parents to provide the Parish with the latest, most up to date Custodial Order or Custody Agreement. If a court order prohibits our releasing a child into the custody of a non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official copy of the court order or custody section of the divorce decree.

TRANSFERS

If a family is preparing to move from Queen of the Universe Parish, parents should notify the PREP office. Student records of attendance and levels completed will be forwarded to the new Religious Education Program upon the request of the parents.

MOVING INTO QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE PARISH

If a student is moving into Queen of the Universe Parish and has attended PREP in another parish a note from the director of the previous PREP must be provided stating he/she has successfully completed the previous levels. A child's baptismal certificate is also required.

CELL PHONES

All cell phones must be turned off and out of sight between 6:45 PM and 8:00 PM. If the phone becomes a distraction during class time, the catechist will take the phone and return it at 8:00 PM.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued in January, 2018 and May, 2018. Report card grades are determined by tests, home assignments, attendance and classroom participation.

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

Sacrament Preparation – designed for families with children who are receiving a sacrament during the upcoming academic year.

Sacrament meetings begin with a large general meeting to introduce the outline of sacrament preparation. A subsequent meeting will focus on the individual sacraments and be more intimate.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SATISFACTORY PARTICIPATION

It is required that all families of Queen of the Universe who have children in PREP or in Holy Family Regional School, in 2nd, 3rd, and 6th grades, participate in Family Faith Formation activities. At least one parent must attend each event. However, all parents

and others interested in the child's religious education (i.e., Confirmation sponsors, grandparents, or other close relatives) are cordially invited and strongly encouraged to attend. The parish is the primary source and means of catechesis (*General Directory*, no.158).

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION AND PARTICIPATING FAMILIES

While the family is the first teacher of the faith, it is the Church's grave responsibility to determine the suitability of a candidate for receiving the sacraments. Parents must participate in Family Faith Formation in order for their children to be able to receive the sacraments.

At the same time, Queen subsidizes the religious education of its children from participating families. Participation is gauged by attendance at Mass and Family Faith Formation events. Failure to participate satisfactorily in Family Faith Formation may result in loss of subsidy.

CHILDCARE

Qualified childcare is available at each meeting for families with younger children who are not yet in school. Please come early to register your child with our childcare coordinator. No children should remain in the parish hall during the Family Faith Formation meetings.

REGISTRATION FEES

If paid by May 8, 2017:

One Child... \$150.00 Two children...\$175.00
Three or more children ...\$225.00

If paid after May 8, 2017

One Child...\$190.00 Two children...\$215.00
Three or more children ...\$265.00

No registration fees for 2017-18 will be accepted unless all previous years' fees have been paid in full. Future registration fees may also reflect a family's active participation and contribution to the church.

All fees including sacrament fees must be paid in full. If all fees are not paid, your child will not be admitted to a classroom. If a payment plan is needed because of hardship, you are required to speak with Fr. Wackerman.

LEVEL SIX ACTIVITY FEE

Confirmation - \$60.00

PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM (PREP) DIRECTORY

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