



Welcome Back!

Saint Lawrence Parish Religious Education Program

Family Information Packet **2024-2025**

Dear Parents and Students,

We now turn our attention to the continuation of the formal religious education of the school age children of our parish with our five summer sessions and our monthly Sunday sessions from October through April. Our humble attempts to pass on the truths of the faith can only make sense in light of a loving family. Let us pray for one another in the days and months ahead that we can be the presence of Jesus for one another, allowing the love and kindness of God's Spirit to grace our homes, our neighborhoods, our religious education program and our world.

God bless us all!

The Goals of the Saint Lawrence Parish Religious Education Program

We see this program as an extension of the parents' responsibility to proclaim the message of our salvation for they are the primary teachers of their children.

In accordance with archdiocesan policies and guidelines, our goals are:

- to offer to the children in our parish who attend public school or are home schooled formal religious instruction in accordance with our Catholic tradition.
- to offer additional opportunities throughout the year to develop their faith and become involved in the Christian community.

Please take time to review the packet as it includes new information and important dates.

Attendance

Because the information your child is receiving each session includes material they need to know in order to receive their sacraments, their attendance is important. We have found that their comprehension and retention is increased when learning takes place within the classroom setting where they are able to ask questions and interact with the other students and their teacher. Please contact your child's teacher if they are not able to attend class. If you are aware of an upcoming date when your child will be unable to attend, please let the teacher know ahead of time to aid them in planning their lesson. All missed work will need to be completed at home per the teacher's instructions. **New!** - Please note that if your child misses more than two of the total twelve sessions (each monthly session and each summer day session counts as one session), in addition to making up the missed work, he/she will be required to schedule a makeup session by contacting the Director of Religious Education, Gina Wydner. Makeup session scheduling will take into account the student's availability. If your child needs to arrive late or leave early for any session, any time more than 15 minutes missed will count as a half session; this will count towards the two allowed absences and beyond that, towards required makeup sessions. Attendance is recorded each session and may be filed with the Office of Religious Education in Philadelphia.

Homework

Each child in our religious education program will receive a workbook to use in class and keep at the end of the year. They may bring it home after each session and so will be able to review information and/or complete homework. In order for them to retain the material covered in class, parents should discuss with their children the lesson presented to them that session. Our dedicated catechists offer their time to provide this instruction to assist children in faith formation. However, as parents, you are your child's first teacher of the Catholic religion.

Drop-off and Pick-up

All students will meet along the front walkway in front of the flagpole by 10:45 AM each Sunday session and 8:30 AM each summer session if the weather is good with the exception of the Class and Mass sessions which require arrival in time for 9:30 AM Mass. If the weather is inclement, please bring your child to the back entrance to the Parish Hall and accompany students in grades 1-4 downstairs; students in grades 5-8 may be dropped at the door to enter on their own. Prior to arrival at Saint Lawrence, please use the below chart to determine if your child should attend their class that day (if not attending due to symptoms, please inform Mrs. Wydner by email for follow up within the week):

Group A 1 or more symptoms, Do not attend	Group B 2 or more symptoms, Do not attend
Cough	Chills
Shortness of breath	Rigors (shivering accompanied by rise in temp)
Difficulty breathing	Myalgia (muscle aches)
Loss of smell	Headache
Loss of taste	Sore throat
Fever (100.4 or greater)	Nausea or vomiting
	Diarrhea
	Fatigue
	Congestion or runny nose

Parents, guardians, or older siblings must pick up students in grades 1-4 at their classroom door; students in grades 5-8 may leave by the right rear door to meet their parents or guardians in the parking lot; a teacher or assistant will be stationed at the door to monitor pickups. Please pick up your child(ren) promptly at 12:15 for our monthly sessions from October through April, and by 12:00 for the summer sessions.

Inclement Weather

In the event of bad weather and the need to cancel classes, we will notify you by mass email. Please be sure we have your current email address on file. You may call a teacher or director if you are unsure or not notified. In the event of an unusual circumstance, teachers will call.

First Holy Communion

Second or third grade is the usual time for a child in our program to receive First Eucharist. Diocesan policy requires that each child be in preparation for two years. Our teacher(s) will provide information to all candidates and their families for First Eucharist preparation.

Our next First Holy Communion will be scheduled for the spring of 2026.

Reconciliation

The children will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (penance) for the first time in second or third grade, prior to receiving First Eucharist. Our teacher(s) will help prepare the children for this day of celebration. This will be scheduled for late winter or early spring in 2026.

Confirmation

Our 7th and 8th grade students will continue their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation with this second of the two year program. Confirmation has been scheduled for Sunday, March 9, 2025 at the 9:30 AM Mass. Practice date to be determined.

Class and Mass Days

Attending Mass is a vital part of our identity as Catholics. It is our hope that as we make efforts to teach our faith to our parish children, that we have parent support in teaching these same values of Christ.

Therefore, we have scheduled two days during the October through April sessions this year in which the children will attend Mass at 9:30 AM followed by their normal class. At this time, the children will attend Mass with their class and teacher; family members are welcome to join their child's class.

Class and Mass Days are scheduled for December 3, 2023 and February 4, 2024.

Safe Environment Lesson

In accordance with diocesan policy our students must participate in a program entitled *Keeping God's Children Safe*. It is an age appropriate lesson about unsafe and inappropriate touching by strangers, as well as people we know. If you choose not to allow your child to participate in this class, you must sign and return the parental opt-out form prior to the scheduled class and your child will be given a different lesson that day in a separate room. The Safe Environment Lesson will take up approximately half of the session and all students will rejoin their normal class at its conclusion. The opt out form is an important part of your child's records that will be on file with the archdiocese if you do choose to opt out.

The Safe Environment class for the children is scheduled for Sunday, January 5, 2024.

Community Service Projects

Our Parish Religious Education Program will choose one to three service projects each year to benefit our community or charities. Information will be sent to all families with the details. We encourage all families to participate.

Altar Servers

Boys and girls in 4th grade and older are encouraged to become an Altar Server. Children may choose at which Masses they would like to serve, as well as how often they would like to serve. Even one time per month would be a big help as ***we are in need of servers***. Please contact the Parish Office or let a teacher know about your interest.

2024-2025 Schedule

Summer week of morning sessions to be held on June 12-14 and June 17-18, 2024, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM.

Monthly sessions from October 2024 through April 2025:

October 6	Opening Day of PREP instruction-normal session, 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM
November 3	Normal session, 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM
December 1	Mass and Class session, arrive for 9:30 AM Mass, pickup at 12:15 PM (Caroling)
January 5	Safe Environment Lesson for all grades followed by normal instruction
February 2	Mass and Class session, arrive for 9:30 AM Mass, pickup at 12:15 PM
March 2	Normal session, 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM
April 6	Normal session, last of 2024-25 year, 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

Note: Additional requirement, all students to attend one of the offered Stations of the Cross during Lent.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children. We feel truly blessed to have this opportunity to get to know them in our time together each session. Please contact us if you have any questions about our PREP program.

Saint Lawrence Parish Religious Education Program – Acknowledgment Form

I acknowledge that as parent and/or guardian of the below student(s), I have received and read the Family Information Packet for the 2024-2025 PREP year and understand all the requirements noted in the packet.

Student Name(s): _____

Parent and/or Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent and/or Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____