



Parish Religious Education Program Handbook 2022-23

Class Schedule and Location

Confirmation classes (Level 7) and classes for Levels K-6 of St. Basil the Great Parish's PREP run from September – May. Those classes which are in-person are held in the Parish Life Center from 9:30-10:45 AM on Sunday mornings. Please see the PREP and Confirmation calendars for additional scheduling information.

Admission & Class Placement

All registered parishioners of St. Basil the Great Parish may enroll their children in PREP subject to the following:

- We are trying to hold in-person PREP classes this year. Our ability to do so depends on getting enough volunteers who meet Archdiocesan Safe Environment requirements. Should we not have enough volunteers, some/all of our PREP classes may need to utilize a homeschool format for some/part of the 2022-23 year. We will make that determination on a class-by-class basis and communicate it to PREP participants.
- Because of our volunteer shortfall, we are not accepting PREP registrations from families who are not registered parishioners of St. Basil the Great at this time. Such families may contact Jim King and ask to be placed on a waitlist. Should we have space in our PREP program for additional families for the 2022-23 year, the DRE, in consultation with the Pastor, may allow non-parishioners to register for our PREP program (as in-person or home-based catechesis students) in their discretion. Students attending from a parish other than St. Basil the Great must provide a letter of permission from their pastor or DRE/CRE and may be asked to pay an out-of-parish tuition rate.
- Additionally, late registrations/payments (after August 31, 2022) may result in your child/ren being placed in the home-based catechesis PREP program should there not be enough room in an in-person class for them as determined by the DRE and Pastor in their discretion

Please complete and return registration forms and appropriate tuition to the Director of Religious Education of St. Basil the Great Parish ("DRE") by August 31, 2022.

Registration & Tuition

Registration of new students is held through the mail or at other times with the DRE by appointment. Family tuition rates for the 2022-23 school year are: 1 child/\$160, 2 children/\$275 and 3 or more children/\$375. Tuition covers all materials, supplies, and resources used in the program. **Our preferred method of payment is through Online Giving, which is available through the parish website.** You may also pay by check. Checks should be made payable to St. Basil the Great Parish. *Financial aid may be available for those families that can demonstrate a true need. The DRE, in consultation with the Pastor, makes all decisions regarding financial aid.*

COVID-19 & Public Health Measures

During the past several years, the course of COVID-19 has proven to be very hard to predict. Additionally, we have seen the rapid rise of other communicable diseases (e.g., monkeypox). In the spirit of Christian love and fellowship and to protect the health and safety of our PREP and parish community, we ask everyone to take appropriate measures to reduce the spread of illness (e.g., sick children and adults should stay home). This includes being aware of and following

public health guidance issued by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, the CDC, and other applicable public health and governmental authorities. The Pastor reserves the right to take any actions, make any program changes (including, whether classes remain in-person), and/or implement any policies or procedures he deems necessary or advisable because of COVID-19 or any other public health situation that may arise during the 2022-23 school year. Any such actions or requirements will be communicated to PREP participants. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation on this.

Attendance Policy

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia requires 30 hours of religious instruction each year. Frequent absence from class may necessitate the child repeating the level the following year or completing the class curriculum in a home study program supervised by the DRE and child's parents/guardians during the summer. Our attendance policy therefore is:

- When a child misses a class, the parents/guardians should supervise completion of the missed lesson, which should be returned to the child's catechist at the beginning of the next class. The parents/guardians are responsible to contact the catechist for make-up work.
- If a long-term absence occurs due to illness or an unexpected situation, parents/guardians must contact the DRE to arrange a suitable way for their child to complete the necessary religious education requirements in order to be promoted to the next level.
- Children must meet attendance requirements and complete all of their assigned work and examinations before they will be promoted to the next level.
- Since the curriculum is graded and presented in developmental sequence, children may not arbitrarily skip levels. If children register with delayed or no previous religious instruction, they may or may not be placed in the same grade level as they are in school. **This matter must be discussed with the DRE prior to the start of classes.**
- When a student misses 4 sessions, the DRE will contact the student's parents/guardians to discuss the absences. Make-up work will be required in order for the student to remain on track in their current class. Details on make-up work or make-up classes will be provided by the DRE after consultation with the catechist. **Any special circumstances that may necessitate 4 or more absences during the PREP year must be discussed with the DRE prior to the start of classes.**

Parents/guardians must submit written notices for all student absences. If your child will be absent due to illness, kindly notify your child's catechist and the DRE by 9:15 AM on Sunday.

Arrival and Dismissal Policies

Arrival

- All students are to report to their assigned classrooms at the time of arrival. **All students in Levels K-7 must be signed in by a parent/guardian or other authorized adult.** In each instance, please provide your child's teacher with a written note if your child will be picked up by an adult other than the parent or legal guardian.
- The only doors of the Parish Life Center that will be open are: (i) the door at the gym end; (ii) the door at the softball field end; and (iii) the main entrance door in the courtyard. **Parents/guardians must park in a parking space (not along parish driveways and roadways) and walk to the Parish Life Center to drop off their children.** For safety reasons please turn off your car while picking up your children.
- Students should arrive on time (9:30 AM) since sessions begin promptly. **Please do not enter the Parish Life Center or drop children off prior to 9:25 AM, as there will not be adequate adult supervision.** Lateness interferes with the lessons and is disruptive. At 9:40 AM all doors will be closed and locked.
- All late students (after 9:40 AM) must check in at the Religious Education Office before proceeding to class.
- For reasons of security, all doors will be kept closed and locked each morning. Any one arriving after 9:40 AM must use the **main entrance** in the courtyard for admittance. Please ring the bell for admittance. Anyone not directly affiliated with PREP should make prior arrangements with the DRE to enter the Parish Life Center while PREP is in session.

Dismissal

- Students must be picked up by a parent/guardian or other authorized adult from their classrooms at 10:45 AM unless otherwise pre-arranged with the catechist or DRE in advance. **All students in Levels K-7 must be signed out by a parent or other authorized adult.** In each instance, please provide your child's teacher with a written note if your child will be picked up by an adult other than the parent/guardian.
- **Parents/guardians must park in a parking space (not along parish driveways and roadways) and walk to the Parish Life Center to pick up their children.** For safety reasons please turn off your car while picking up your children.
- Students may not wait for late parents/guardians outside the Parish Life Center. If you are delayed, please notify the DRE. Children will wait in the Religious Education Office.
- Early dismissals must be accompanied by a written note from a parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are to use the main entrance in the courtyard and ring the bell for admittance to the Parish Life Center. Students needing to leave early must meet their parents/guardians at the Religious Education Office or in the classroom if pre-arranged with the catechist.

All families walking between the church and the Parish Life Center for PREP and Confirmation classes should exercise caution while walking through the parking lot and on the grounds. Your cooperation is essential to ensure the safety of our children! Thank you!

Emergency Closings

Parents/Guardians will be notified of Emergency Closings due to inclement weather or other reasons by email from the DRE. Additionally, you can call the Religious Education Office at 610-935-1261 for a recorded message stating that classes have been cancelled.

Safety

Supervision of and Access to the Parish Life Center during PREP

The Parish Life Center is locked and supervised by the DRE during PREP hours, from before arrival time until shortly after dismissal time, when PREP is in session (the "PREP window"). These times are Sunday mornings from 8:00-11:15 AM.

To ensure the safety of all involved in the PREP program, especially the children attending PREP classes, access to the Parish Life Center is restricted during the PREP window. PREP parents/guardians should not enter the Parish Life Center nor drop children off before class start time as there will not be adequate adult supervision for children prior to 9:25 AM. All doors will be closed and locked at 9:40 AM. PREP parents/guardians dropping off and picking up their children at arrival and dismissal are welcome to enter the building using the door at the bottom of the staircase from the main church parking lot, the door near the softball field, and the main entrance in the courtyard.

PREP parents/guardians wanting to enter the building at any other time during the PREP window should contact the DRE to make appropriate arrangements ahead of time and enter via the main entrance in the courtyard. PREP parents/guardians coming to bring forgotten articles or to relay messages should come to the Religious Education Office; classes may not be disturbed for these reasons. PREP parents/guardians may not confer with a teacher or visit a classroom during PREP unless the DRE gives permission for such a visit.

Visitors other than PREP parents/guardians including, without limitation, parish staff (other than the Pastor), families and volunteers ("Non-PREP Visitors"), who wish to enter the Parish Life Center during the PREP window must ring the bell at the main entrance located in the courtyard and identify themselves upon arrival. If at all possible, Non-PREP Visitors should make arrangements with the DRE to enter the building during the PREP window reasonably in advance of their proposed arrival time. Parish staff should not use their passes or keys to gain independent access to the Parish Life Center during the PREP window, with the exception of the Pastor.

Program Transfers

If a student will be leaving the parish, please notify the DRE. Student records will be forwarded to the new parish upon request. Students attending from a parish other than St. Basil the Great must provide a letter of permission from their pastor or DRE and may be asked to pay an out-of-parish tuition rate.

Discipline

Students are expected to show consideration and respect for their fellow students and teachers at all times. Families are expected to honor and support these policies. Catechists and the DRE reserve the right to remove disruptive students from the classroom. Parents/guardians will be called if disruptive behavior continues. Excessive disruptive behavior may result in the expulsion of the student from the program.

The following discipline policies are in place during PREP at all times:

- No weapons, alcohol, drugs, vaping, or tobacco products are permitted on Parish Life Center property.
- No iPods, handheld video games, or other similar electronic devices are to be brought into the Parish Life Center. During class, students may use cell phones for emergency purposes only. Failure to observe this rule may result in the cell phone being confiscated by the catechist for the remainder of the class and/or revocation of a student's permission to bring his/her cell phone to PREP/Confirmation classes going forward.
- No chewing gum, candy, food, or drinks are allowed in the classrooms without DRE and catechist consent.
- Students must maintain acceptable classroom behavior as established by each catechist. Students are expected to respect and obey the DRE, catechists, and other staff at all times.
- Violent, threatening, vulgar, or harassing behavior will not be tolerated.

Grading System

Students will be tested on all material covered in class. Weekly assignments will be given at each catechist's discretion and must be completed on time. Archdiocesan curriculum requirements will be followed, and Archdiocesan mid-term and year-end performance assessments may also be utilized.

Sacramental Preparation

Students receive the Sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion in Level 2 and Confirmation in Level 7. Separate parent/guardian meetings will be held to review all sacramental requirements and expectations.

Catholic Prayers and Teachings

The religion guidelines of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia outline the traditional Catholic prayers that each level should learn. Please consult these guidelines to ensure that your child learns the prayers appropriate for his/her Level. Here is a link to some traditional prayers recommended by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia - [https://phillyocf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Traditional Prayers for PREP1.pdf](https://phillyocf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Traditional_Prayers_for_PREP1.pdf)

Homeschooling

Please refer to the Home-Based Catechesis Agreement, which is available on our parish website and from the DRE upon request, for more details about the requirements and obligations for those participating in this program.

Religious Observance & Additional Expectations

Since your child/ren are being initiated into the Catholic Church, parents/guardians have an obligation to involve their children in the life and mission of the Church. They should participate in:

- The spiritual life of the parish, particularly in the Sunday Eucharist.
- The charitable works of the parish.

- The catechetical and faith formation opportunities offered by the parish and Archdiocese.

Please reinforce the catechists' efforts by:

- Arriving on time for class.
- Assisting your child with homework and class assignments.
- Volunteering your time with the Parish Religious Education Program.

Please consider contributing regularly to the parish Sunday Offering.

Parent Volunteers

Quite simply, the success of our PREP program depends on the involvement of parent volunteers, so we ask you to please consider volunteering to help our parish children. Please contact Jim King, DRE, for more information on volunteering and visit our website at <https://www.stbasils.org/safe-environment> for more information regarding the Archdiocesan Safe Environment requirements volunteers must complete/comply with prior to volunteering.

Agreement and Amendments

This Handbook may be amended from time to time by the DRE and the Pastor. Parents/guardians will be given prompt notification of changes made. This Handbook acts as an agreement between St. Basil the Great Parish and the parents/guardians and children who participate in the Parish Religious Education and Sacramental Preparation Programs. By enrolling your child/ren into this program, you agree to support and abide by the provisions outlined in this Handbook. Parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss these provisions with their children to ensure that all parties understand the requirements and obligations of their participation in the program.

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