

Our Mission

Baptism ceremonies end with a prayer of blessing for parents which contains these words:

“...they will be the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith. May they always be the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what they say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Immaculate Conception Parish supports parents as the primary educators of their children and takes seriously the obligation to assist them in the faith formation of their young children and teens. Our overarching goal in religious education is summed up very simply: To teach as Jesus taught. Jesus is at the heart of all religious education.

The basic objectives undergrid the curriculum of each grade:

To bring every student closer to Jesus,

To guide our students in the formation of values and a moral code in harmony with our Catholic Christian heritage,

To pass along the rich tradition of the Catholic faith.

We are preparing students for discipleship and citizenship. It is our founded hope that parents and parish share a common goal: our young people will become people who give witness to their Catholic Christian faith. Participation at weekly Mass and prayer in the home are integral to the spiritual growth of children and teenagers. The information and formation they receive from our program supplements what they see and do within the family. Both dimensions of religious education – family life and parish program of instruction – will be with them forever. Faith will be the context in which they live their lives. It will be their consolation in bad times, their strength in difficult times, their source of praise and thanksgiving in joyful times. Their lives will model the virtues of faith, hope and love and their lives will be healthier and happier because of this.

Our Philosophy of Religious Education

The context for our teaching is one of appreciation for different learning styles and needs of the students. Our volunteer teachers are ready and willing to work with parents to provide a learning environment that will be comfortable for students who may need attention in a particular area. We view our ministry as a mandate to model Christian virtues of faith, hope, love, and respect in dealing with all members of the religious education community: faculty, support staff, and families.

This is our Mission and our Philosophy. May God be with us and help us, parents and parish, as we make this a reality.

The following guidelines are presented so that parents, students, teachers and staff will have an understanding of the policies which help the religious education program run smoothly.

Attendance: Weekly attendance, with students arriving **on time** is essential to the students' religious education and spiritual growth. An entire year of religious education instruction amount to only approximately 24 hours of class time. They are with us just one day or less out of 365! Every class is important. If your child has to miss class for a serious reason, please call the Religious Education Office at 508-481-7535 and leave the message on voicemail. Please assist your teen in structuring her/his after school activities and part time job schedule so that there is no conflict with our weekly religious education commitment.

Participation: Because our time together is so brief, we depend on the cooperation of each student and the cooperation of each family to assist in making the most of each class hour. Again, students are expected to come on time. It is disruptive to class flow and disrespectful of the teacher and other students if a student is habitually late. We all recognize the fact that circumstances beyond a student's/parent's control occasionally may affect a student's promptness. We hope that this is a rare occurrence. Students

coming directly to class from a school activity may have a problem arriving on time for a number of weeks. In this case, they must speak to the Director and teacher to inform them of the situation ahead of time.

Sacramental Years: Please note that both our First Eucharist and Confirmation preparation programs consist of a two year time span. Therefore, students wishing to receive First Eucharist in Grade Two must first complete the Grade One year of religious education. Likewise, students wishing to receive Confirmation in Grade Ten must first complete the Grade Nine year of religious education.

Pick Up and Drop Off: The policy printed below will be effective beginning with the first day of classes in the new school year. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in helping to keep your children safe:

There are no words strong enough to express our ongoing concern for the safety of all children and teens in our religious education program. The grounds of the Immaculate Conception property are very busy places, and the physical layout of the parish grounds make a smooth flow at drop-off and pick-up times quite imperative. We ask the cooperation of all parents and guardians in working with us to create the best environment for the well-being and safety of all our religious education children and teens by adhering to the following policy:

Lower School Drop-off (Mondays and Tuesdays – Grades 1-7)

When dropping off your child(ren) at IC Lower School, one of two methods may be used:

1. You may drop your child(ren) off in our **drop-off zone**, which will be located directly in front of the main school door on Washington Street and will be marked off each week with **drop-off zone** signs. Please note, selecting this option will require cars to form a line on Washington Street from the direction of Prospect Street and pull-up to the drop-off zone one by one, where an adult will escort the child(ren) into IC Lower School. When choosing this option, the parent/guardian must remain in the car and pull-out upon seeing the child(ren) enter the school building.
2. You may **park your car in one of the two IC Upper School Lots or on the side of Washington Street opposite to IC Lower School in legal parking spaces** and walk your child(ren) directly into the school building. Please note, if selecting this option, **cars may only be parked in one of the two IC Upper School Lots or on the side of Washington Street opposite to IC Lower School in legal parking spaces**. We cannot emphasize strongly enough that parking is **not allowed** in front of driveways or in any manner which would block surrounding streets, as this is both unlawful and inconsiderate to our neighbors on Washington Street, Washington Court, and Grant Court. Please note that the Marlboro Police Department will take notice and will be ticketing any illegally parked or standing cars throughout the year.

Upper School Drop-off (Sundays – Grades 8 & 9)

When dropping your teen off at IC Upper School, parents and guardians are asked to park in one of the two IC Upper School Lots to avoid students walking on Washington Street on their way into the school building.

Lower School Pick-Up Policy (Mondays and Tuesdays – Grades 1-7)

At the conclusion of the class hour, all students will be walked to the first floor hallway by their teachers. Parents/Guardians are asked to come into the building to pick up their children in this location. *Please note, if someone other than a Parent/Guardian will be picking up a child, a note must be given to the child's teacher at the beginning of class on that day/evening.*

We hope that this revision to our pick-up policy will make it more convenient for parents in that we are eliminating the need for parents to walk to the classrooms of their children.

When picking up your child(ren) from IC Lower School, **you may park your car in one of the two IC Upper School Lots, on the side of Washington Street opposite to IC Lower School in legal parking spaces or you may park in the legal spaces on the school side of Washington Street.** Again, we remind you that parking is allowed only in the IC Upper School Lots and in legal parking spaces on Washington Street. The Marlboro Police Department will take notice and ticket all illegally parked or standing cars.

Upper School Pick-Up Policy (Sundays – Grades 8 & 9)

At the close of class on Sunday afternoons, the 8th & 9th Graders will be walked out into the enclosed area in front of the IC Upper School main door, and they will remain there with their teachers until they are picked-up by a Parent/Guardian. *Please note, if someone other than a Parent/Guardian will be picking up a teen, a note must be given to the teen's teacher at the beginning of class on that evening.*

We understand that our policy may lengthen the drop-off/pick-up procedure, however, we are confident of your understanding as this will benefit the safety of all IC Religious Ed children and teens. We thank you for being partners with us in our efforts to enforce this policy.

Behavior Code: Mindful of our Mission to prepare students for discipleship and citizenship, we strive to foster behavior that will promote a more civilized society. Everything that goes on at religious education class, before, during, and after the class hour must be rooted in the basic principle of respect. An atmosphere of mutual respect between teacher and students, and among students in a class, is the linchpin upon which learning revolves. All students must be respectful of Parish property, most notably the School buildings which we share with the children and teachers in the Parish School. We are committed to providing every student who wants instruction with a place in our program. However, we must also weigh the needs and demands of one student in a class against the needs of the class as a whole. If a student, in any grade, is unwilling or unable to act respectfully toward others or is disrespectful of parish property, we will notify the parents. If the unacceptable behavior continues, the student will be admitted to class only if accompanied by a parent for the class hour, or the parent will be invited to instruct the child at home. The Religious Education Office will provide teaching materials and support the parent in this task.

Our students come to class after a long and busy day. So too, our teachers come to class after a long and busy day of work inside and outside of their homes. All of our teachers are extremely dedicated and most generously volunteer their time. Teachers deserve to be treated with respect and appreciated for their effort.

Cancellation of Classes: The religious education program follows the public school system's decision in canceling due to stormy weather. **If school is closed, there is no religious education class for that day only.**

- For Grades 1-7 (Mondays and Tuesdays), decisions will be made as follows:
 - A decision will be made by 1 p.m. on the Monday or Tuesday impacted as to whether religious education classes will be held that day.

- For Sunday classes, decisions will be made as follows:
 - Grades 8 & 9: A decision will be made by 9:00 a.m. on the Sunday impacted as to whether religious education classes will be held that day.
 - Grade 10: A decision will be made by 1 p.m. on the Sunday impacted as to whether religious education classes will be held that evening.

- All decisions will be:
 - placed on the religious ed voicemail (508-481-7535)
 - posted on the parish website (www.icmarlboro.org)
 - listed on Channel 5 (WCVB) and Channel 7 (WHDH)

- Please note, **a cancellation is effective only for the day it is announced.** If an additional cancellation is required for the following day of classes because of further inclement weather, a separate announcement will be made on that next day, ie: if classes are cancelled on Monday they will resume on Tuesday unless it is otherwise announced.

- Every effort will be made to notify families of stormy weather cancellations via email (for those families who have submitted an email address on their religious education registration forms). However, there may be instances when we do not have access to our email lists or when our computer systems are down. Due to these possibilities, **we ask families not to rely solely on email notification for inclement weather but also to check either the religious education voicemail, the parish website, and/or Channel 5/Channel 7 for information on cancellations.**