

# **Epiphany of Our Lord Religious Education Program Parent and Student Handbook 2011-2012**



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***Epiphany of Our Lord  
Religious Education Program  
3040 Walton Road  
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462  
610-825-6790  
Email: [religious.education@eols.org](mailto:religious.education@eols.org)***

## **Epiphany of Our Lord Religious Education**

### **Mission Statement**

The Religious Education Program (REP) is devoted and committed to Jesus Christ Our Lord, and dedicated to the proclamation of His Word through the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, in union with our Archbishop and Pastor. The Program is committed to educating our youth in the Catholic heritage, to form them according to the gospel values and develop in them a full sense of participation in our Catholic community. REP supports parents, who are the primary educators, by fostering the faith of their children and assisting them to live it daily. Together, REP and the home foster within the child a personal recognition of God's love for them while they embrace the Gospel values of Jesus Christ.

### **Role of the Parents**

Epiphany of Our Lord parish community affirms the teaching of the church which states that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. By word and example, they lead their children to live a Christian life. It is the parent's role to create an atmosphere with love and reverence for God and humanity so that a well-rounded personal and social development will be fostered in the child. The vital influence of parents on the religious development of children must be recognized. REP can only support and strengthen the values that are already being fostered in the home. With your help in the following areas, together we can make your child's REP experience positive and productive:

- Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days
- Participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Teach your child to pray in their own words as well as the required prayers for their level
- Make sure your child completes assignments and reviews all materials
- Join your child in participating in age appropriate parish activities
- Assist in your child's classroom as needed

## REP ADMINISTRATION

### **Pastor:**

- Father Joseph Quindlen
- Phone: 610-828-8634

### **Coordinator of Religious Education:**

- Stephanie Quigley
- Phone: 610-825-6790
- Email: religious.education@eols.org

### **Religious Education Office Hours:**

- Monday 3:00pm – 8:30pm (September thru May)
- All other days please call 610-825-6790 to be sure office is open

### **REP Website:**

- [www.epiphanyrep.webs.com](http://www.epiphanyrep.webs.com)

### **Class Time:**

- REP Grades 1-6            Monday 6:45pm – 8:00pm

### **Weather Related Closing Information:**

- Closing information will be posted on the REP web site at [www.epiphanyrep.webs.com](http://www.epiphanyrep.webs.com)
- When REP classes are cancelled, students are expected to complete written and study assignments for that week as indicated on the course outline.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**ATTENDANCE** – Faith formation received in this program is ongoing in that each session builds upon the previous session. Therefore, it is important that children attend their classes regularly. If your child is unable to attend a session for any reason, a parent **MUST** complete the following procedures:

- Call the Religious Education Office (610) 825-6790 or email [religious.education@eols.org](mailto:religious.education@eols.org) to report the absence. Please be sure to leave your child's name and grade.
- Late students must arrive through the Religious Education Office door to check in before proceeding to their classroom.
- The **maximum number** of absences from class during the year is **three**. If a child exceeds this number, make-up work may be assigned by the Coordinator of Religious Education.
- Extended absences due to illness require a doctor's note upon return to the program.

**LATENESS** - Sessions begin promptly at 6:45pm with a prayer in Grady Hall. Students arriving after 6:45 will be considered late. Lateness will be noted on Progress Reports. Chronic lateness may require a conference with a parent and may interfere with your child's promotion and reception of sacraments.

**ARRIVAL** - Students should arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the program. Please be mindful of school area speed limits, parking designations, common driver courtesy, traffic regulations and **especially our children**.

- **GRADES 1 – 3 STUDENTS MUST BE ESCORTED BY A PARENT** on the opposite side of the school thru the gym entrance.
- **STUDENT DROP OFF** - use the main Grady Hall entrance. Please pull up to the drop off area and then let your student get out of the car. *Do not drive behind the convent.*

**DISMISSAL** – All students will be dismissed from their classroom. Please sign out your student with his or her teacher/aide. For the safety of our children, please do not remain in the hallways after dismissal. If you are late picking-up your child, please come to the REP office.

**EARLY DISMISSAL** – Since we only meet once a week, early dismissal is discouraged. If a child must leave REP early, the parent must go to the office and sign the child out. The office will call the child's classroom and have them sent to the office. No parent is to go directly to the classroom and no child will be sent to the office prior to the parent's arrival.

**ENROLLMENT** - The faith formation provided in our program involves incremental learning so each year builds upon the previous year. It is essential that students remain enrolled in the program consistently from year-to-year. If a parent or guardian chooses to wait and enroll their student when they are in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, the student may be placed into the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of REP. Any student who voluntarily leaves the program for a period of one year may be required to make-up the missed year upon re-enrollment into the program.

**NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS** - It is the responsibility of the legal guardians to provide the Religious Education Program with the most up to date Custodial Order or Custody Agreement. These documents should be submitted with your completed registration form. If either the Custody Order or Custody Agreement changes during the course of the year, it remains the responsibility of the legal guardians to provide that document to the REP office immediately.

Our program abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, our program will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the records and other program related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the program director with an official and latest copy of the court order.

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.

## **COMMUNICATION**

- **Calendar** - Parents are provided with a yearly calendar. ***This calendar is subject to change during the course of the year.*** Parents will be notified of changes by email.
- **Student Folders** - Each student receives a **two pocket folder** to hold their important papers. Parents should **check** this folder after each class to collect whatever flyers, bulletins, etc. are being sent home. Often these papers contain current information about events, assignments, collections, and other communications from the parish, the catechist or the Coordinator.
- **Parent/Guardian Meeting** - Each year the Religious Education Program will conduct a meeting for parents/guardians in September. A parent/guardian is required to attend.
- **Consultation with your child's Catechist** - Direct communication with the student's catechist is a necessary component of the catechetical process. Parents are encouraged to meet with their child's catechist and discuss any concerns.

**CELL PHONES** - We realize that cell phones have become a necessary tool in keeping communications open with children. However, it is the policy of this program that cell phones may not be used during the REP class time. If a student uses a cell phone during class, the device will be sent to the office and must be picked-up by a parent/guardian.

**HOMEWORK** – Catechist may assign take-home assignments on a weekly basis in the form of written work, activities, or study. Our REP students as well as our parish catholic school children have religion homework on a regular basis to help reinforce their classroom experiences. Faith cannot be taught in one hour a week. It must be practiced and lived out in everyday life. Study Guides and Pacing Charts are distributed at each grade level.

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS** – Every student receives a Pacing Chart and a study guide which is based on the Philadelphia Archdiocese guidelines. The Pacing Chart lists by date the material that is expected to be covered in class and at home for that week. Occasionally, catechist may add project or assignments to be done at home.

**STUDY ASSIGNMENTS** – These are also included on the Pacing Chart and the assignments should be learned by the next REP class.

**PARENTS INITIALS** – A column is provided for parents to initial when all work is completed for the week.

**ABSENTEE ASSIGNMENTS** – Any student who misses a REP class is expected to complete all work assigned on the Pacing Chart before returning to the next class.

**TESTING** – Students will be assessed on a weekly basis. These assessments will reflect the material introduced in the preceding session. If a child is absent, he/she will complete the assessment during the next REP class. No tests will be sent home to be completed. Since assessments are given on a weekly basis, they are not noted on the Pacing Chart. If a student does not know the material, a notation will be made on their Pacing Chart. Please review the unknown material with your child so he/she can be retested. **When preparing for the weekly assessments, review the information in the study guide.**

**PROGRESS REPORTS** - The mark on a student's report card is a composite of tests, effort, and homework. If homework is given, please take some time to check it for accuracy. Checking homework provides an opportunity, in most cases, for motivating your children. Progress reports are issued in January and May and will be distributed to the children in class.

## **Marking Code**

(A) Excellent	(90 - 100)
(B) Above Average	(80 -89)
(C) Average	(70 - 79)
(U) Unsatisfactory	(69 & below)

**SERVICE PROJECTS** - Service projects will be conducted throughout the school year. All students are encouraged to participate. All 6<sup>th</sup> graders preparing for Confirmation are requested to have 12 hours of service.

**DISCIPLINE** - The Parish Religious Education Program offered by Epiphany of Our Lord Parish is designed to assist parents with the faith formation of their children, as well as foster values and behavior that are in accord with the Catholic Church teaching. The program has **NO TOLERANCE** for behaviors that are contrary to Catholic faith and morals, including but not limited to ongoing acts of obstinacy, improper language, fighting, physical, emotional or psychological intimidation, vandalism, demeaning behavior such as name-calling, obscene language or gestures, and harassment. Such behaviors violate the central teaching of our faith and will not be tolerated in any form.

These categories do not cover every possible situation. The parish determines what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior, both in and out of the classroom, where such improper behavior affects the REP community.

Conduct by children or parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the Parish is grounds for disciplinary action, including but not limited to, immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate.

In addition, in the case of threats of violence or harassment, in any form, including oral, written or electronic, by a child against any member of the REP community, the child, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to REP,

In the event a student engages in any of the above listed behaviors or any other inappropriate conduct, and has failed to respond to a catechist's attempt to stop or correct the behavior, the following action may be taken and at the discretion of the Pastor or Coordinator of Religious Education:

1. **First Incident:** The student will be removed from the session and the parent or guardian will be immediately notified by phone by the program director. The program director will schedule a conference with the parents or guardians. student and catechist to discuss the matter.

2. **Second Incident:** The student will be removed from the session and be suspended from the program for a period of one session. The parents or guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child. Prior to returning to the program the program director will schedule a conference with the parents or guardians, student, and catechist to further discuss the matter.
3. **Third Incident:** The student will be removed from the session and dismissed from the program. The parents or guardians will be immediately notified by the program director and required to pick up their child. Following a conference with the program director, parents or guardians, student, and catechist, the parents or guardians will be provided with the option of having their child repeat his or her current grade level the following school year or opting to complete the current year's material by home-schooling their child. In either case, no refund of tuition will be made.

However, Epiphany of Our Lord Religious Education Program reserves the right to supersede the forgoing course of action depending on the particular circumstances of any given situation.

**CONTRABAND - BRINGING CONTRABAND TO REP SESSIONS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED AND WILL BE CONFISCATED AND RETURNED TO PARENTS ONLY!** Depending on the contraband confiscated, the proper legal authorities could be notified.

1. Items considered contraband include, but are not limited to, gum, food, beverages, toys, electronic games, I-Pods, weapons, drugs, alcohol and tobacco products.
2. It is unlawful for minors to be in the possession of alcohol or tobacco products. Students found to be in possession of such products may be immediately suspended from the program.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE** - It is the policy of the Parish Religious Education Program of Epiphany of Our Lord to respect the privacy of its students. However, in the event that a student is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession or is believed to be a threat to himself/herself or others, the director will be notified immediately. The director will conduct a search with an adult staff member as a witness. Refusal on the part of the student to cooperate will result in the parents/guardians being contacted and asked to assist with the search. Parental refusal will result in the student's immediate dismissal of the program.

The program coordinator reserves the right to amend this handbook. In the event of any such amendment, parents will be given prompt notification of the changes made.