



St. Laurence Parish – Upper Darby
Parish Religious Education Program - PREP
Family Handbook



THIS HANDBOOK CONTAINS CERTAIN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ST. LAURENCE CHURCH, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM (PREP). THE PROGRAM MAY CHANGE ANY OF ITS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS NEEDED AND APPLY THEM AS CIRCUMSTANCES DICTATE.

IN THE EVENT OF SUCH A CHANGE, PARENTS WILL BE GIVEN PROMPT NOTIFICATION AND PROVIDED WITH AN ADDENDUM IF NECESSARY.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT A PARTICULAR POLICY OR PROCEDURE, PLEASE CONTACT THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR.

STUDENTS AND PARENTS MUST ACCEPT AND ABIDE BY THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CONTAINED IN THIS HANDBOOK FOR THE STUDENT TO ATTEND THE PROGRAM.

(Revised 06.12.2025)



PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Canon Law, the law of the Church, states that “parents above others are obliged to form their children in the faith and practice of Christian life by word and example (Can. 774 §2). The General Directory for Catechesis, the National Directory for Catechesis, and many other Church documents resound with this sentiment. At your child's baptism, you accepted "the responsibility of training your child in the practice of the faith" and acknowledged "your duty to bring your child up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor" (Rite of Baptism). St. Laurence Parish recognizes and affirms parents in their role as the primary catechists of their children. It's a religious parish education program that exists to assist parents in fulfilling their obligation by providing them with a formal, structured, and planned program of catechesis and formation.

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Laurence PREP exists solely to accompany and assist parents in catechizing their children. To that end, we strive to evangelize families in the gospel of Jesus Christ, deepen their awareness and understanding of God's loving presence in their lives, provide opportunities to live and give witness to their Catholic faith, and form them in a life of intentional discipleship.

CORE PRINCIPLES

To achieve our mission, the core principles listed below form the foundation and strength of our Religious Education Program. Through the application of these core principles, we hope that we assist parents in cultivating their hearts, minds, and souls, and those of their children, to become the person God has called and created them to be.

- To nurture and develop the dignity of the human person as a unique child of God who is created in His image and likeness and a reflection of His goodness.
- To instill in everyone a faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and foster a committed response to His love as intentional disciples.
- To present the doctrine of the Catholic faith as both knowledge to be learned and as life to be lived.
- To live in awareness that sacramental life is central to expressing our love for God and that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist are the source and summit of our faith.



- To seek the Lord's infinite mercy, love, and the very gift of Himself in the sacraments of Penance (Reconciliation) and Eucharist (Communion).
- To cultivate a reverence for God's Word and an understanding of how God uses His Word to speak to us.
- To seek the example of Mary and the Saints, as they model for us how we can become the saint God has called and created each of us to be.
- To develop the individual's moral life through sound catechesis that properly forms the conscience through the practical application of the Gospel message, Commandments, Beatitudes, and the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.
- To embrace the virtues as the key to living our daily life as Catholic Christians.
- To foster communion with God through Prayer and growth in the individual's spiritual life through the Mass, Rosary, personal prayer, and devotions that are experienced through participation in our programs.
- To realize the profound truth that God has created all things for His glory and honor, and that the dignity of creation and especially the human person needs to be respected accordingly.
- Assisting parents in their God given role as educators in the faith life of their children by: Providing religious education classes for children.
- Providing opportunities for prayer, adoration, service, liturgy, and stewardship within the program for students, parents, and families.
- Providing opportunities for families to participate in liturgies, seasonal activities, and works of mercy.
- Providing regular opportunities for families to become involved in assignments and projects.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

APPOINTMENTS

Our PREP is scheduled for every Sunday and Tuesday, September through May, except major holidays and major parish events. While the Program recognizes the difficulty in



scheduling various appointments, the scheduling of doctor and other appointments should not be made during program hours, except for cases of emergency, in which case the parent agrees to complete any missed work and lessons at home. Late arrivals or early dismissals due to Medical appointments are strongly discouraged, and early dismissals due to extracurricular or sports-related activities are not permitted. If an appointment or activity will result in your child arriving more than 15 minutes late, or being dismissed more than 15 minutes early, the student is NOT to attend class, but rather to complete the work assigned that week at home. See Student Absences for details.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES SUNDAY

On Sunday, all students are expected to attend the Holy Mass at 8:30 a.m. at the parish. Once the Mass concludes around 9:30 a.m., students should promptly exit the church accompanied by catechist, helpers, and religious education staff and proceed to St. Laurence School. They will guide them to their assigned classrooms. All students must begin their Sunday formation by participating in the Holy Mass, followed by their regular religious education classes at the school. Students arriving late (after 9:30 am) will sign in at the front desk and then report to class. For the Safety of our students and staff, and to comply with the Safe Environment Policy of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, parents are not permitted to enter the school building during arrival time unless on official business with the program, in which case a visitor's pass must be obtained from the Religious Education Office (REO).

STUDENT DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES – SUNDAY

If you are dropping off your child, please note that only you can do it from the parking lot at the back of the church. You can obtain a parking pass from the REO if you want to park and wait till the classes are dismissed. All children should be picked up by their parents or guardians in the school cafeteria. All families are asked to be respectful of this policy. Parents are permitted to meet their child at the school cafeteria and escort them to the parking lot. However, only parents who are leaving the building by foot are permitted to walk through the school building during dismissal. Parents are asked to make sure that their children know who is picking them up. Remind them not



to go home with anyone else and not to start walking home if you are running late. If you are running late, your child will be brought back into the Rectory building and remain under the supervision of staff until you arrive. Please report directly to the Rectory or the school building when arriving late to pick up your children.

CUSTODY POLICY

The Program will not become involved in adjudicating the rights of parents in relation to the custody of their children. Therefore, if a parent is separated, divorced, or unmarried, it is the responsibility of both biological parents to provide the program director with the latest, most up-to-date Custodial Order or Custody Agreement. The Program will request these documents at the time of registration. If either Custodial Order or Custody Agreement changes during the year, it remains the responsibility of both biological parents to provide the revised document to the program director immediately. This is also true in the event that such an agreement is issued after the time of enrollment. In the absence of such documentation, the program will and must assume that parents share legal custody. 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 the 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. In situations with shared legal custody, the parish program expects the cooperation of both parents, especially regarding sacramental preparation and celebrations.

The parish, program director, and staff will not adjudicate in matters of legal custody. Catechists and staff will be on hand to help supervise the students as they dismiss. Parents and those responsible for picking up your children are expected to follow the directions of the volunteers in the parking lot. **They are there to help ensure the safety of your children and should be respected by both adults and students alike.** For those students walking home unaccompanied by an adult, these



students must have a waiver and release form signed by a parent and submitted at the time of registration to be permitted to walk home on a regular or intermittent basis.

STUDENT DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES – TUESDAY

Students are to report to St. Laurence School, located at 8245 West Chester Pike, Upper Darby, PA, no earlier than 6:15 PM and no later than 6:30 PM every Tuesday. Students are to enter the school via the main front entrance on West Chester Pike, which is to the right of the Church. Students are to report directly to their assigned classrooms. Supervision of students will be available beginning at 6:15 PM. Students arriving after 4:30 PM are considered late. Students arriving late will sign in at the front desk and then report to class.

DRESS CODE

St. Laurence PREP has no formal dress code in that uniforms are not required. However, we expect students to dress in a manner that reflects the virtue of modesty. General guidelines to which all students are expected to adhere are listed below:

- Students should dress comfortably according to the weather, but modesty in dress must always be maintained.
- Short shorts, bare midriffs, and t-shirts with inappropriate images or sayings are not permitted.
- Heelys skate shoes are not permitted.
- The DRE reserves the right to exclude students from class until dress code violations have been addressed.
- The DRE will make the final determination as to what is and is not appropriate attire.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Program realizes that devices such as **cell phones and smartphones** have become a necessary and convenient tool in maintaining communication between parents and children. To prevent such devices from becoming a distraction while in class, we have established the following policy:

Students who bring cell phones or smartphones to school **must keep these devices turned off and out of sight in their book bags**. At no time during the session are students permitted to use such



devices. The program director reserves the right to revoke this privilege for any student who uses the device during the program. Any misuse of an electronic device during program hours will result in the student leaving the device in the RE Office until dismissal time or the loss of permission to bring the device to the program. Other electronic devices, such as video games, iPods, iPads, mp3 players, etc., may not be brought to the program and are considered contraband. These items will be confiscated and returned to parents only. The Program is not responsible for damage to or loss of any electronic device that a student brings to the program.

ENROLLMENT

St. Laurence PREP is structured around incremental learning. That is, each year builds upon and expands the learning of the previous year. Therefore, it is essential that participants remain enrolled in the program consistently from year to year. Any student who does not re-enroll in the program for a period of one year or more and who does not enroll in another CCD, PREP, or Catholic School during that period will be placed in the grade level they were scheduled to attend before they left the program (e.g., after completing 3rd grade a student does not re-enroll in any program until 6th grade. The student has missed two years of formation or has not attended Religious Education for the past two consecutive years, or who received First Communion at St. Laurence but did not return for 4th and 5th grade, will be required to take a placement test before being accepted into 6th grade. This test will follow the Archdiocese of Philadelphia sequence for these specific grades. The test must be taken the week after they come to register. If the student passes, they may be placed in 6th grade. If the student fails, they will be placed in the 5th grade. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia **REQUIRES** a minimum of two consecutive years of formation prior to a child receiving a sacrament. Students who leave the program following First Holy Communion in grade 2 and re-enroll in grade 7 to receive Confirmation **DO NOT** meet this requirement. Therefore, their reception of Confirmation will be deferred until they satisfy this requirement.



Special Cases: If a student completed Religious Education elsewhere (another parish or country), they must present official proof, such as a certificate or signed letter from their former parish.

Educational Approach: This is not just about tests or grades. *It's about understanding that religious formation is a continuous journey, not something we do only for sacraments.*

Any student who does not complete the program year due to voluntarily withdrawing from the program, being dismissed from the program because of a disciplinary incident, or failing to meet the program requirements will be required to repeat the grade level upon re-enrollment.

FAMILY VACATIONS

We understand that work schedules and family finances may preclude families from taking vacations during the summer months when school is not in session. While family vacations during the school year may prove to be relaxing and rewarding for students and their families, they do present difficulties for some students and catechists. Should a family elect to take a family vacation during the school year, The Program will be under no obligation to provide materials and lessons, including assignments, homework, and projects, in advance of such an absence. However, parents are responsible for making up any missed class work with their children before their return to the program. Parents are to consult with their child's Class Calendar for information on assignments. See Student Absences for details on parental expectations with regard to missed class work and assignments.

LATENESS

Classes begin promptly at 8:30 AM (Holy Mass Sunday). On Tuesday at 6:30 pm. On Tuesday , we allow students to report to their classrooms as early as 6:15 PM. Any participant arriving after 6:30 PM will be considered late. Students arriving late are to report to the main entrance of the school building. They will sign in, be marked late, and then report to class. Excessive or chronic lateness will be addressed with parents by the program director.



PROGRAM FEES

Program fees are necessary to ensure that the Program can provide students and their families with the most current and best catechetical resources for their formation needs. The fee is due in full at the time of registration. However, being sensitive to the needs of our families, a deferred payment plan is available upon request. Anyone who cannot pay the fee in full at the time of registration or who has difficulty making payment due to hardship should contact the program director to discuss other possible arrangements. Also, it is possible to pay 30% of the tuition in advance so that books and materials can be covered. In the event that a student voluntarily leaves the Program during the program year, or is dismissed for any reason including, but not limited to poor attendance, a disciplinary incident, or the possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, or a weapon on parish property, no refund of tuition or material fees will be made to the family. In addition, there may be certain material fees associated with sacramental preparation that are separate from and not included in PREP Program fee. These material fees cover incidentals associated with sacramental preparation, including, but not limited to, sacramental enrichment packets, retreat experiences, guest speakers, certificates, etc. These fees have separate due dates, which will be provided to families of sacramental candidates under separate cover.

STUDENT ABSENCE

Regular and consistent attendance at PREP is essential in helping students master knowledge of their faith. Attendance is one of several key factors considered when determining student eligibility for promotion. Poor attendance can negatively impact a student's ability to attain proficient mastery of the learning presented in the program. The following policies have been adopted to ensure that students succeed in mastering knowledge of their faith and the core content for their grade.

- Students absent from 3 or more classes during the program year may be required to complete additional study and/or take special assessments if it is determined that their absences are affecting their performance in the program.
- Students who attain 6 absences may be dismissed from the program and required to reenroll in the following year's program and repeat their current grade.



EXTENDED ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS

An extended absence due to illness is defined as an absence that spans three or more consecutive weeks. Parents should be in regular contact with the program director during an extended absence so that we may work in partnership to ensure that missed assignments and class work are completed during the extended absence, and to keep the student's formation and instruction up to date. Parents are responsible for completing missed assignments and class work with their children as outlined under the "STUDENT ABSENCE" policy. A student's mastery may be assessed through appropriate reviews to ensure proficient mastery has been achieved for prolonged absences due to illness. In addition, a doctor's note will be required upon the student's return to class.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

St. Laurence's religious education program participates in and adheres to the Safe Environment Program (SEP) mandated by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. This policy has been in effect in all Archdiocesan parishes, schools, and children's programs since 2002, and has undergone several revisions as the SEP and State Law have evolved. All program employees, staff, and volunteers who have direct contact with children are subject to State Police Background and Child Abuse History Clearance Checks prior to their serving in ministry. They are also required to participate in several training programs, including training on PA State Law concerning the mandated reporting of child abuse. These training courses are designed to help adults provide for a safe environment in which young people can learn, and to inform volunteers of their obligations and rights as a mandated reporter of child abuse. Clearances must be completed prior to working in an environment with children. Training sessions must be completed within 90 days of beginning service with children. In addition to the above requirements for employees and volunteers who have direct contact with children in a parish setting, all students in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia take part in grade appropriate lessons on the topic of personal safety. These lessons have been completely revised in 2019 and are now known as **"KidTalk."** Catechists in the Program are responsible for administering these lessons, the curriculum for which is provided by the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education in conjunction with the Office for Children and Youth Protection. These 14 lessons are presented to all students during the last week of February and are noted on the yearly calendar that is provided to the parents of program participants. The lessons are available for review in the RE



office upon parental request. They are also available for viewing on the Office for Catechetical Formation's website: <https://phillyocf.org/safe-environment-2/>. Parents who wish to preclude their children from participating in these lessons must submit a written request to the program director, which will become part of the student's permanent record. A copy of the parental request will also be submitted to the Archdiocesan Office for Children and Youth Protection per their policy. Such written requests must be renewed yearly.

SNOW EMERGENCIES & PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS

In the event of inclement weather, tune your radio to KYW News Radio 1060 AM. Internet users can log on to www.kyw1060.com for a complete list of school closings. School District websites can also be consulted for the latest updates on closures. Philadelphia School District: <https://www.philasd.org/> Lower Moreland School District: <https://www.lmtsd.org/>

Those families that provide phone numbers at the time of registration will receive a notification (Flocknote) of any program cancellation. This will be the only form of notification provided about program cancellations.

IF THE PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL DISTRICT IS CLOSED OR DISMISSED EARLY DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER, THEN PREP CLASSES ARE CANCELLED THAT DAY AS WELL. ALL LEARNING WILL TAKE PLACE ASYNCHRONOUSLY UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF PARENTS IN THE EVENT OF ANY PROGRAM CANCELLATION.

COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS DURING PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS

In the event of a program cancellation, parents are responsible for implementing that week's lesson at home with their children.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING

In order to provide for and maintain a safe environment for our students, no one is permitted to enter the school building without permission from the program director or his designee. THIS INCLUDES ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES. Parents/Guardians or relatives who need to drop off materials or make contact with program staff must report to the front desk and sign in. If a parent/guardian will be staying in the building for a longer period of time, a visitor's pass will be



required. • NO ONE IS PERMITTED TO ENTER ANY OTHER AREA OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING WITHOUT THE EXPRESSED PERMISSION OF THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR OR HIS DESIGNEE AND A VISITOR'S PASS. No visitor is permitted to allow another person to enter the school building unless directed to do so by the program director or another member of the program staff.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are welcomed and encouraged to share their gifts of time and talent in service to the program. We are always seeking additional volunteers to assist with the arrival and dismissal of students, to serve as hall monitors or classroom aides, and to serve as catechists. All parents/guardians are required to abide by the Safe Environment Program of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, which includes the following:

REQUIRED TRAININGS

- Safe Environment Training session. This training is mandated by and provided through the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The training session is about two and a half hours long and must be completed by new employees and volunteers within 90 days of beginning service with Saint Albert the Great CCD. This training needs to be completed one time only.
- Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries (SMBB). All volunteers and employees must agree in writing to abide by and uphold the SMBB, which will be presented at the Safe Environment Training Session.
- Mandated Reporter Training: This training is required by PA State Law and is provided by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. It consists of three training modules, which can be completed online. This training will be updated from time to time as PA State Law requires. Volunteers will be notified when this training requires updating. The entire training must be completed within 14 days of beginning service with St. Laurence PREP.

REQUIRED BACKGROUND CHECKS

- PA State Police Criminal Record Check. To be completed prior to beginning service with St. Laurence PREP (free for volunteers). Must be renewed every five years. 16



- PA Child Abuse History Clearance. To be completed prior to beginning service with the St. Laurence PREP (free for volunteers). Must be renewed every five years.
- Federal Background Check (Fingerprinting): Required only volunteers who reside outside of Pennsylvania or who have resided outside Pennsylvania any time within the last 10 years (fee paid for by the volunteer and reimbursed by the parish once the processed clearance and receipt for payment have been submitted). To be completed prior to beginning service in St. Laurence PREP. Must be renewed every five years until 10 years of PA residency is attained. Thereafter, the volunteer must submit a Disclosure Statement Application every five years (see next bullet point).
- Disclosure Statement Application. To be completed every five years by volunteers who have resided in PA for at least 10 years.

FORMATION & ACADEMIC LIFE ASSESSMENTS

Students need to exhibit proficient mastery of the required material for their grade level to be considered for promotion at the end of the year. Assessing student progress provides feedback to students, parents, and catechists alike, and allows corrective measures to be taken when indicated to help ensure that proficient mastery is attained. Among the Program goals is to help students not only come to know their faith and the teachings of Christ Jesus and his Church, but to also enable them to live their faith as a disciple of Christ Jesus. To help achieve these particular goals, catechists will administer various formative assessments to students over the course of each semester. Formative assessments are used to monitor student learning in order to provide ongoing feedback to catechists and students in order to improve learning. Specifically, formative assessments help students identify their strengths and weaknesses so that they and catechists can target areas that need work. Formative assessments also enable catechists to take immediate steps to address areas of student struggle once identified. The assessment process allows the Program to provide objective feedback on and evaluation of the students' mastery of the material presented. Assessments will be administered at the discretion of the catechists, and may be formal (such as a quiz or a chapter/unit review) or informal (such as a classroom debate, review games, class/group discussion, etc.) In the event of a formal assessment, catechists will provide a minimum of one week's advanced notice to students. All catechists are expected to administer a minimum of three assessments for each marking period. Modified assessments may be provided to those students with documented learning challenges. As



a tool, the assessment will provide feedback to students, parents, and catechists on topics and concepts that require further review and study. Help will be provided to students when indicated and parental involvement may be required to ensure successful outcomes.

CALENDARS

PREP Program Calendar: Families will receive a yearly program calendar containing all the pertinent dates and happenings for the PREP program, sacramental preparation, and parish events. The most up-to-date calendar will always be available on the PREP page of our parish website: <https://www.saintlaurencedelco.org>. The PREP Program Calendar is subject to change. Any important changes will be conveyed to parents by the Program Director.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to come to class ready to participate in the planned activities. No lesson or activity will prove worthwhile if students do not participate in them. Participation also means that students come to class with all assigned work, projects, and homework complete so that they may fully engage in class discussion and learning. Students will be provided with a textbook, communication folder, and basic classroom supplies (pencil, crayons, etc.). Additional supplies may be required and will be conveyed by catechists.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum for the Program follows the religion guidelines established by Archdiocese of Philadelphia. These Guidelines may be viewed and downloaded by parents at: <http://phillyocf.org/prep-resources/>. In addition to the religion guidelines, the Program will follow the Archdiocesan scope and sequence. The scope and sequence will direct learning objectives and the sequence that core concepts are presented to students. The scope and sequences of the archdiocese may also be obtained using the link above.

DISCIPLINE

The Program is designed to assist parents with the faith formation of their children, as well as foster values and behavior that are in accord with Catholic Church teaching and a life of discipleship. The



program has NO TOLERANCE for behaviors that are contrary to Catholic faith and morals, or the Gospel, including but not limited to ongoing acts of obstinacy, improper language, fighting, physical, emotional or psychological intimidation, bullying, vandalism, demeaning behavior such as name-calling, obscene language or gestures, and harassment (including but not limited to social media posts, texting, emails, etc.). Such behaviors violate the central teaching of our faith and will not be tolerated in any form from students or their family members. These categories do not cover every possible situation.

The program director makes the final determination of what is considered appropriate or inappropriate behavior, both in and out of class, in the Program generally, and outside the Program, where such improper behavior affects the Program community. The program director will make the final determination as to what behaviors warrant disciplinary action. Conduct by students 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 participant, 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 (including but not limited to social media posts, texting, emails, etc.), by a student against any member of the program community, the student, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to the program. 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 student will be removed from the classroom, and the student's parents/guardians will be immediately notified by the program director. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, the program director will:

- Schedule a conference with the parents/guardians, students, and catechists to address the incident.
- Suspend the student from the program. If a student is suspended from the program due to a disciplinary incident, the parents/guardians will be required to complete missed classroom assignments with their child at home by our attendance policies. These assignments must be completed by the time the student returns from suspension. Failure to complete missed



assignments during the suspension may result in dismissal from the program.

- Dismiss the student from the program. If a student is dismissed from the program due to a disciplinary incident, the parents/guardians will be provided with the option of having their child repeat his or her current grade level the following school year, opting to enroll in another PREP Program at a neighboring parish, or completing the program year by home schooling their child in accord with the homeschooling policies of the Program and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. No refund of tuition or material fees will be made regardless of which option is selected by parents. The program director reserves the right to supersede the foregoing course of action depending on the circumstances of any given situation. In addition:
 - Chewing gum is NOT permitted in the building
 - Students must respect school and classroom property as well as individual desks.
 - Any school suspension (public/private) or any other disciplinary measure MUST be communicated to the DRE within 24 hours of the incident.

BULLYING

A safe, secure, and respectful environment is necessary for participants to learn, achieve, and build appropriate relationships with others. The Program refuses to accept any behaviors that hinder or undermine such an environment. Therefore, acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying (including cyberbullying and the like) are unacceptable behaviors and are prohibited in our programs. Program personnel cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under their direct supervision. However, to the extent such conduct affects the environment of the Program, and the rights and welfare of the students, and is within the control of the Program in its normal operations, the Program intends to prevent bullying and thus, will take action to investigate, respond, discipline and remediate any acts of bullying. Administration and the catechetical staff are to demonstrate appropriate behavior by treating others with civility and respect, and being aware of and not tolerating harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying, etc. If incidents do occur, students should be able to report and know that the inappropriate behavior will be dealt with promptly and effectively. There will be no retaliation against a victim, reporter, or witness. Bullying involves



actions or words against another to inflict physical or emotional harm or discomfort, or damage to a person's reputation that is intimidating or threatening and affects the learning and program environments. The following describes types of bullying but is not an exhaustive list.

Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling, or throwing something o Getting another person to hit or harm a student o Teasing, name-calling, making critical remarks or threatening in person or by other means o Demeaning and making another the victim of jokes o Making rude and/or threatening gestures o Excluding or rejecting the student o Intimidating (bullying), extorting or exploiting o Spreading harmful rumors or gossip.

If the bully is threatening harm, a student should tell a catechist, adult volunteer and/or the program director immediately so that action can be taken to remediate the situation. Parents/guardians and the pastor will be notified of the situation, and Law Enforcement Officials may be contacted if warranted (e.g., someone threatened with a weapon, terroristic threats, etc.).

CONTRABAND BRINGING CONTRABAND TO PROGRAM SESSIONS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED AND WILL BE CONFISCATED AND RETURNED TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS ONLY!

Depending on the contraband confiscated, the proper legal authorities could be notified.

- Items considered contraband include, but are not limited to gum, toys, electronic games, iPods, iPads, mp3 players, weapons, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products.
- It is unlawful for minors to be in possession of alcohol or tobacco products. Students found to be in possession of such products may be immediately suspended from the program. Depending on the contraband confiscated, the proper legal authorities could be notified.
- Students may be immediately dismissed from the program and all proper and necessary authorities could be notified if they or their family members bring weapons, drugs or drug paraphernalia of any kind onto parish property.



SEARCH AND SEIZURE

It is the policy of the Program to respect the privacy of its students. However, if 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 program director will be notified immediately. The program director will 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 to cooperate will result in the student's immediate dismissal from the program.

VANDALISM

The Program shares space with St. Laurence School community. As such it is imperative that a healthy relationship be maintained between the two programs. All students are expected to respect parish property, which includes the school facilities and all items in the classroom. At no time are PREP students permitted to use, touch, or borrow any material or items from the desks of St. Laurence School students. Catechists are provided with classroom supplies and other essentials and will make them available to students when needed. Incidents of vandalism to parish property, including school facilities, and the property of St. Laurence School students will be taken most seriously. The parents of any student who is found to be responsible for an incident of vandalism will be required to make restitution for the damage inflicted. The school and parish will prosecute violators to the fullest extent of the law and take appropriate disciplinary action which may include suspension or dismissal from the program for serious acts of vandalism.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a vital part of the formational and instructional component of the program as it helps students reinforce and broaden classroom learning. As such, all catechists are required to assign homework each week. Homework assignments will be used to reinforce the day's lessons and should be reviewed by parents for quality and completeness. Homework may consist of take-home assessments, worksheets, completing assignments in the textbook, study and memorization, projects, web activities, or any other means deemed appropriate by the catechist to reinforce and review the material presented during class.



MID-YEAR AND END OF THE YEAR TESTING

Tests may be administered to students in our program at mid-year and at the end of the program year on dates to be determined. Tests are supplied by catechists and based on the Religion Guidelines of the Archdiocese.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Preparation for the sacraments of Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation is incorporated into the program curriculum and is in addition to said curriculum. To be eligible to begin sacramental preparation, a student must meet the following criteria: • Student must be enrolled in CCD and/or Catholic School for two consecutive years. • Student must be in Level 2 or above for Penance and/or Eucharist • Student must be in Level 7 or above for Confirmation.

NON-PARISHIONER FAMILIES

Archdiocesan sacramental policy stipulates that sacramental candidates receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation in the parish where their family is registered. Non-parishioner families who desire to have their child receive these sacraments at St. Laurence must obtain a letter of permission from the pastor of the parish where they are registered for their child to receive the sacrament at St. Laurence.

TEXTBOOKS

The textbooks used in the Program are approved by the Office for Catholic Education. Every student will be assigned a textbook. This textbook is a necessary tool in helping the catechist achieve the required learning objectives. Therefore, **students must bring their textbooks to class every week.** Parents should exercise caution in making sure that the textbook is secured in a set place within the home, so it is not lost during the academic year. Lost textbooks will need to be replaced. Parents assume full responsibility for all costs associated with the replacement textbook, including any taxes,



shipping, and handling fees. If a student reports to class without his or her textbook, parents will be notified via phone by the program director and provided with an opportunity to bring the textbook to school for the student.

COMMUNICATION CALENDAR AND COMMUNIQUÉS

The latest and most up-to-date program calendar will always be available on the parish website. This calendar will contain all pertinent dates related to PREP and sacramental preparation. The online calendar supersedes any yearly calendar distributed at the beginning of the program year. Important reminders, updates, and program-related news, including calendar changes, will be conveyed to parents via Flocknotes provided at the time of student registration. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the program director of changes to phone numbers or email addresses to ensure effective and uninterrupted communication of program-related matters.

PARENT MEETINGS

At least one parent/guardian must attend all Parent Meetings and Sacramental Preparation Meetings. Sufficient notice will be given concerning all meetings, and they will also be announced through FLOCKNOTE and published in the Parish Bulletin.

COMMUNICATION FOLDERS

Every student will be issued a clear, zipped folder at the beginning of the program year. This folder will serve as the Communication Folder for weekly assignments and other important papers. Parents should check this folder after each weekly session to view any fliers, bulletins, assignments, etc., that may be sent home. Parents are also to use this folder to send any communiqués to their child's catechist or program staff.

UPDATING CONTACT INFORMATION

The contact information you provide at the time of registration will be used as the primary means of



contacting you. Updating changes to this information, especially changes to email addresses and phone numbers, is your sole responsibility. To receive the necessary information about your child's participation in our program, you must notify the program director of any changes in address, phone numbers, or email.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents should feel free to contact the program director regarding any concerns or problems that may develop during the year. The program director may be contacted using any of the means listed below. However, the quickest response will be obtained via email.

Program Director's Office: 610-449-0600 ext. 215 E-mail: religioused@saintlaurencedelco.org

Administrative Assistant: 610-449-0600 ext. 216 E-mail: maria@saintlaurencedelco.org

Website: www.saintlaurencedelco.org