

Religious Education

[Please click here for re-registration forms and information.](#)

The *General Directory for Catechesis (GDC)*, issued by the Holy See and published in English in January of 1998, states that: *“All the baptized, because they are called by God to maturity of faith, need and have therefore a right to adequate catechesis.”* GDC #167

St. Michael's Parish strives to welcome each and every person into our Religious Education Program. We offer classes for children (grades 1-5), early adolescents (grades 6-8), a unique non-graded high school program in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, and a program for children with special needs, as well as, adult education, the Rite of Christian Initiation, adult catechesis for the Sacrament of Confirmation and classes for parents of children preparing to receive the sacraments of First Penance, First Communion and Confirmation.

“Parents are the primary educators in the faith. Together with them, especially in certain cultures, all members of the family play an active part in the education of the younger members.” (GDC #255) St. Michael's parish seeks to collaborate with parents in providing formal teaching of doctrine and classroom experiences of prayer and liturgy. Together we strive for a common goal: faith development and religious education for all children within our care.

We welcome any questions, comments or suggestions. The program directors are available in person either before or after all scheduled classes in the Religious Education Office located at the Parish Center. Also, please feel free to call us at the office:

Religious Education Office: 978-562-7662 (direct line)
Parish Center: 978-562-2552 ext 309

Gerry McDonald, Director
gmcdonald@stmikes.org

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

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REGISTRATION FORMS

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SCHEDULE OF CLASSES - 2007/08

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REGISTRATION FEES AND PROCEDURES

TO REGISTER A NEW OR CURRENT STUDENT:

- print a copy of the appropriate registration form found on this site
- complete the information on the form *
- mail or drop off the form and check to the Religious Education Office at the parish center (address below)

**Note regarding Baptism information - If the student was baptized at St. Michael's in Hudson, simply write "SMP" on the church line. If the student was baptized at another church, we will need to see a copy of the baptism certificate.*

REGISTRATION FEES:

Family with one student: \$100

Family with two or more students: \$175

- please make check payable to " St. Michael Parish"
- a \$10 discount is offered if the registration form and fee are received at the parish by July 15th
- registration fees are automatically waived for the children of our catechists

Important note regarding fees: *No child will be turned away from our program. If you are experiencing a hardship and would like to arrange a schedule for payment over a period of time, we would be happy to help you. Also if your family cannot pay the fee at all, your child(ren) will still be welcomed into the program. All students are given textbooks and classroom materials regardless of fee payment.*

SUBMITTING THE REGISTRATION FORM(S) AND PAYMENTS:

Forms and checks can be mailed to us at:

Religious Education Office
St. Michael Parish
20 High Street
Hudson, MA 01748

Forms and checks can also be dropped off to the secretary at the parish center (same address) any weekday from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

REGARDING CLASS SCHEDULES

Every effort will be made to accommodate the needs of families in placing children in a requested session. Whenever possible children of the same family will be placed at the same session and in the same building. However, since space is limited, it is impossible to accommodate all 500 + students in grades one thru eight at one session. For this reason, we ask families to cooperate by signing children up based on the grade level of the youngest child in the family. For example, if you have three children; one in grade one, one in grade three and one in grade eight, we will be happy to place your children on Sunday morning sessions, as long as space is available at the time of registration. However, if all your children are in grades three thru five or six thru eight, we ask that you please sign them up for the appropriate session.

Parents are also reminded that participation in Mass on a weekly basis is crucial to the faith formation of their children. If your child/ren are enrolled in a weekday class it is expected that they will participate in weekend Mass with the parish community as well.

GRADES 1 AND 2:

Following the 9:00 am Mass, students in grades one and two will meet on Sunday mornings from 10:15 - 11:15 am. We also offer classes for students in grades three thru eight for families with children in the lower grades as well.

Providing there are catechists available for grades one and two, we will offer classes on Tuesdays from 4:00 - 5:00 pm and on Wednesdays from 6:00 - 7:00 pm, for families who cannot participate in Sunday mornings. Availability is limited to early registration for grades one and two.

GRADES 3 THRU 5:

Students in grades three, four and five will meet, either, on Tuesdays from 4:00 - 5:00 pm or Wednesdays from 6:00 - 7:00 pm.

GRADES 6 THRU 8:

Following the 5:00 pm Mass, students in grades six thru eight will meet on Sunday evenings from 6:15 pm - 7:15 pm. This session is reserved for students in grades six thru eight only.

GRADES 9 THRU 12:

Our ungraded high school program is very unique in that it allows students to take from one to four years to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Please see the Confirmation program schedule for more details about this program.

PROGRAM POLICIES

NEW STUDENTS

All students are welcome to participate in the Religious Education Program of St. Michael's parish. Every effort will be made to provide for the catechetical needs of each individual. Registration forms are available in the rear of the church and at the parish Religious Education Office, located in the parish center. Forms can also be found on the parish web site

Children who will be six years of age before September 1st, should be enrolled in grade one classes. Exceptions can be made upon further discussion with the program director. Older students who are new or returning to the program will be placed in classes appropriate to their age or school grade.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

Sunday classes: In the event of a severe snow or ice storm classes will be canceled to insure the safety of the children and their families. Announcements of cancellation will be listed on television channels: 4, 5 & 7, as well as on radio stations WRKO (680 AM) and WBZ (1030 AM) Weekday classes, including the high school Confirmation program are automatically canceled when there is no school that day due to bad weather. If a storm occurs later in the day, while students are at school, cancellations will be listed on television channels: 4, 5 & 7, as well as on radio stations WRKO (680 AM) and WBZ (1030 AM).

Note: Please do not call the parish center regarding cancellation of classes. This ties up the phone line and prevents parishioners from contacting the priest in case of emergency.

POLICIES REGARDING CLASS SIZE AND LACK OF CATECHISTS

- § Each class will consist of no more than 12 students (according to archdiocesan policy.)
- § If we are not able to find enough catechists for each class, students who are registered before classes begin will be assigned to classes with catechists. Families registering on the first day of classes or later might have to instruct their children at home until a catechist can be found for that grade level.

Note: Please understand that we are not referring to registration as “paying money.” Registration means reviewing the form, making any changes or additions and returning it to the program director. We appreciate when fees can be paid at that time, but also understand that some families might need to wait. No student is ever turned away for lack of fees and all students are given textbooks.

DISCIPLINE

Disrespectful or continuously disruptive behavior should not have to be tolerated. Catechists deserve respect from students and other students deserve the chance to learn without constant interruption.

When discipline problems arise, the student will be given three warnings:

- § The catechist will remind the student that they will be sent to the office if they continue to misbehave.
- § The student will be sent to the office to speak with the program director.
- § The parents will be notified and asked to meet with the director and catechist before the student will be permitted to return to class.

Every effort will be made to work with the parents and students to find solutions to allow the student to remain in the program. However, in extreme cases, parents will be asked to instruct their child at home under the guidance of a parish staff member or to participate in classes along with the child for the remainder of the school year.

ATTENDANCE:

Recognizing the many demands placed on parents today, St. Michael's Parish does not adhere to a policy of “permitted absences” or “required number of classes.” Instead, we ask that parent's make every effort to take seriously their responsibility to provide sound formal religious education for their children through participation in as many classes as possible.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

EUCHARIST - FIRST COMMUNION:

First Communion is celebrated in the spring of each year. Two years of preparation is necessary to properly prepare children for this sacrament. Therefore, children should be enrolled in the program at the beginning of grade one to receive First Communion at the end of grade two.

A special program is available for children who have not participated in a religious education program for grade one. Children are enrolled in this class with the understanding that parents will cooperate fully in attempting to prepare the children for First Communion in one year. Enrollment into this program will be permitted only at the discretion of the program director in collaboration with the pastor.

Older children (grade three and up) who are in need of First Communion will be placed in their appropriate grade level and will be prepared in special classes during the school year. Every effort will be made to help older children feel comfortable and welcome in preparing for and receiving this most important sacrament.

Parents of all children in any of the above programs are required to attend one meeting prior to First Communion.

RECONCILIATION - FIRST PENANCE:

First Penance is celebrated in November or December of each year for grade two students. Students of any grade level can make First Penance at any time throughout the school year after being properly prepared by a catechist or parent.

Parents of children preparing for Reconciliation for the first time are required one meeting prior to First Penance.

CONFIRMATION:

Confirmation is celebrated in the spring of each year. Since our high school program is non-graded, preparation for Confirmation can take over a period of one to four years, depending on the student's willingness and ability to make a serious commitment to the program and to the parish. Candidates work with their Confirmation catechists, sponsors and parents in determining their readiness for this sacrament.

SACRAMENTAL PREP - CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

FIRST PENANCE AND FIRST COMMUNION:

Since their school curriculum includes preparation for both sacraments, Catholic school students are not required to attend parish Religious Education classes in preparation for First Penance or Eucharist. However, they are always most welcome to join our Religious Education classes at any time.

For Catholic school families, our parish program offers parent meetings for each sacrament, a special one-day retreat for all First Communicants in the parish, as well as, liturgy planning for both sacraments and rehearsals for First Communion day.

Catholic school students should be enrolled in the parish program in the fall of grade two. Special registration forms are available in the principal's office or parish Religious Education Office for children who would like to celebrate First Penance and Eucharist at St. Michael's.

CONFIRMATION:

According to the guidelines of the Boston Archdiocese, students who attend Catholic high school are expected to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation within their parish community*. Therefore, the religious studies curriculum in our Catholic high schools does not include preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Instead, preparation for Confirmation falls under the responsibilities of the pastor and parish religious education program and, most importantly, within the parish community.

Recognizing their religious studies at school, students from St. Michael Parish who attend Catholic high schools need only to complete the second level of our Confirmation program. Teens from other parishes who attend Hudson Catholic High School will be welcomed into our Confirmation program with the permission of their our pastor*.

Catholic high school students should be registered in the program at the beginning of their 10th grade to be confirmed the following spring. Students in grades 11 and 12 who have not been confirmed are also most welcome in our non-graded program.

Students who attend eight years of catholic school and are continuing their high school education in a public school should enroll in the high school program in the beginning of grade 9 to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

*For the purpose of defining one's "parish community" we are referring to the parish where the family is registered and where they worship.

EXTENDED PROGRAMS

CLASSES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

Whenever possible, children with special needs will be included in our regular schedule of classes. If your child has a classroom aid at school, please let us know in advance, as we will need to be sure that someone is available to help them in Religious Education classes as well.

We offer a special program for families with special needs children who cannot participate in our regular schedule of classes. Please contact the Religious Education Office to enroll your child in this class.

HOME-BASED CATECHESIS:

“Parents who would like to provide catechesis at home should make themselves known to the local pastor and consult with him or his delegate to ensure that the catechesis provided in the home is essential to the complete and authentic catechesis of children in their homes.”

National Directory for Catechesis

St. Michael's Parish adheres to a policy that children who are preparing for the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and/or Confirmation should be included in the parish program for grades 1 and 2 and high school. However, parents of children in grades 3 - 8 who would like to catechize their children at home should contact the parish Religious Education office to arrange for an appointment with the director and/or pastor to discuss plans for home-based catechesis.

Parents who are home schooling their children in religious education will need to participate in three meetings, with the parish program director, throughout the school year. The purpose of these meetings is to give support and assistance to parents, as well as, to fulfill archdiocesan requirements in verifying the progress of children in home-based catechesis.

CHILDREN'S CATECHUMENATE:

Children who have reached the age of reason (usually age 8) before baptism are welcomed into the children's catechumenate to prepare for the Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. The catechumenate process consists of weekly Sunday Mass, followed by one - two hours of catechesis and lasts for one to two years before reception all three sacraments at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night. At least one parent should accompany the child/ren through the catechumenate process.

To enroll a child in the catechumenate, please contact the Religious Education office or Sheila Mahoney at 978-562-3146.

R.C.I.A.

St. Michael's Parish offers "The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults" (R.C.I.A.) This process welcomes teens and adults who wish to receive the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation. It involves discussions on the Liturgy of the Word at weekend Masses along with a series of catechetical classes to prepare for reception of the sacraments at the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday. Catechumens receive all three Sacraments of Initiation, administered by the pastor at the Easter Vigil Mass.

ADULT CONFIRMATION:

Classes for adults begin in the fall of each year for anyone over the age of 18. Adults who have received the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist are confirmed in the spring of each year by the bishop. To enroll in this class please contact Sheila Mahoney at 978-562-3146 or the Religious Education Office.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION:

We will be offering a number of opportunities each year for adults to further their understanding of the Catholic faith through adult education courses. Dates and topics will be announced in the parish bulletin in advance.

First Penance and First Communion 2007/2008 Schedule

PARENTS MEETINGS

First Penance and First Communion parents are required to attend two (2) parents meeting during the year as follows:

First Penance Parent Meeting: (choose one only):

Sunday	November 4	10:15 - 11:15 a.m.	(high school gym)
Monday	November 5	6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	(parish center meeting room)
Tuesday	November 6	6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	(parish center meeting room)

First Communion Parent Meeting (choose one only):

Sunday	March 2	10:15 - 11:15 a.m.	(high school gym)
Monday	March 3	6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	(parish center meeting room)
Tuesday	March 4	6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	(parish center meeting room)

FIRST PENANCE - Saturday, December 9 at 11:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. (upper church)

Each second grade class will be assigned a time for First Penance, either the 11:00 a.m. or the 1:00 p.m. service, however, parents may switch times to convenience busy family schedules

LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE

Sunday morning classes: Saturday, February 10 at 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday afternoon classes: Tuesday, February 26 at 4:00 pm (during class time)

Wednesday evening classes: Wednesday, February 27 at 6:00 p.m. (during class time)

Children who made their First Penance in December are encouraged to go to confession again during Lent. Penance can be celebrated at any time and it is important to teach the children that frequent reception of this sacrament is necessary for their spiritual health.

Children who attend Sunday morning classes and who attend the Feb 10th Penance Service will be excused from class on Sunday, February 11th. Parents should bring the children directly to the upper church on Saturday, Feb 10th. Weekday classes should go to their classrooms on Feb 26th and 27th, to be brought to the church by the catechists.

FIRST COMMUNION RETREAT: (high school gym)

Saturday, March 15 from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m. (ends at the 4:00 p.m. Mass)

or Sunday, March 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (begins at the 9:00 a.m. Mass)

All First Communion children are required to attend one day of retreat. This special day is filled with activities, games, banner making, lessons on how to receive the host and more. Lunch, including pizza, soda and a snack is provided.

FIRST COMMUNION DATES:

Since Holy Trinity Sunday falls on May 18th in 2008 and our Portuguese community celebrates this feast with a procession following the 10:30 a.m. Mass, we will need to consider making a change in our customary First Communion schedule - usually the last Sunday of April and the first three Sundays of May at a special 12 noon liturgy. However, since this is a decision to be made by the new pastor, we will need to delay the announcement of the exact dates and time for First Communion celebrations at this time.

Two possible schedules will be proposed:

- 1) Sundays, April 20, 27 and May 4 and 11 - at 12 noon
- 2) Sundays, April 27 and May 4, 11 and 18 - at 1:00 p.m.

Once the dates and time are finalized each class will be assigned a date for First Communion. Assigned dates will be announced at the First Penance parent meetings in November. Families may change the date if needed to accommodate family schedules.

FIRST COMMUNION REHEARSALS:

Rehearsals will take place on the Thursday evening before the scheduled First Communion Sunday from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. in the upper church. A schedule will distributed as soon as possible.