

Our Lady of Mount Carmel

103 S. Center St.  
Orange, NJ 07050

Religious Education Handbook

2017-2018

## Personnel

Fr. Bernard Mary, Pastor  
Fr. Jesús, Parochial Vicar  
Br. Daniel Kolbe, Dir. Religious Education and RCIA  
Ms. Karen Fajardo, Assistant Coordinator  
Br. John Timothy, Youth Minister

## Contact Information

Religious Education Phone: 862-250-5333  
Email: [olmc.dre@gmail.com](mailto:olmc.dre@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.olmcorange.com](http://www.olmcorange.com)

## Program Philosophy

The Catechetical Programs of Our Lady of Mount Carmel are based on the belief that religious education and formation is a lifelong process which begins with the loving touch of the parents and continues to grow and is nurtured by the many relationships in an individual's life. Therefore, we strive to support and assist parents in their role as primary Catechists, that is, as the first and most important teachers of their children in the ways of our faith.

As our children live and worship in the faith community of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, they are being catechized by praying, believing and serving members of our parish community. Our catechists share their faith experience in our Roman Catholic tradition and plan and lead activities so that our children may understand the Christian message; experience personal prayer and public worship; and participate in the Church community.

We believe that together, Catechists, community members and family, journey with the children as they begin their lifelong process of building a relationship with God and the Church. We believe that learning about God and sharing His love should be a wonderful experience and we treat that faith as the sacred gift it is.

## GRADES K-6 DATES

Classes begin September 17<sup>th</sup> 2017  
Classes end June 24<sup>th</sup> 2018.

Classes are from 10:30am to 11:40am on Sunday.  
There are classes every Sunday except for the dates listed below.

No classes on:

- November 26<sup>th</sup>
- December 24<sup>th</sup>
- December 31<sup>st</sup>
- March 25<sup>th</sup>
- April 1<sup>st</sup>
- May 27<sup>th</sup>

## GRADES 7-12 DATES

Classes begin September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017  
Classes end June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

Classes are from 6:30pm to 8:00pm on Thursday.  
There are classes every Thursday except for the dates listed below.

No classes on:

- November 23<sup>rd</sup>
- December 28<sup>th</sup>
- January 4<sup>th</sup>
- April 5<sup>th</sup>

## Mandatory Requirements:

1. NET Retreat on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (10am-10pm)
2. 10 service hours with Youth Group
3. 3 Youth Adoration events with Youth Group

### Adult Catechesis

Parents are required to attend adult catechism classes as well. Every Sunday at the same time the children go to class, parents will meet in the School basement. As your children grow in faith, you as a parent will have the same opportunity.

### Confirmation Dates

Confirmation Retreat is April 7<sup>th</sup> 2018 (NET Ret.), 10am-10pm.  
The Confirmation Mass is May 27<sup>th</sup> 2018 at 9am at,  
Holy Spirit and Our Lady Help of Christians Church  
17 N Clinton St, East Orange, NJ 07017

### First Communion Dates

First Reconciliation May 5<sup>th</sup> 2018 (10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm)  
First Reconciliation May 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 (10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm)  
First Communion Retreat is Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018  
First Communion is Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018 at 10am Mass.

### Family Spiritual Life

In order to blend learning about faith at home as well as in the classroom, we encourage our religious education families to follow these guidelines:

1. Please feed your children before sending them to class. Many children on Sunday arrive to class at 10:30am without a good breakfast!
2. Ask your child what he or she learned in class, review their work, and emphasize the importance of learning about our faith.
3. Make sure your child has done their homework and readings for the next class.
4. Attend Mass together every Sunday and on Holy Days.
5. Read the text notes sent by the parish, parish bulletin and web site to keep updated.
6. Pray together daily; before meals, bedtime prayers, etc.
7. Establish family Advent, Christmas, Lenten and Easter traditions.
8. Attend special parish events together.
9. Reinforce the Corporal Works of Mercy by donating to food drives, special collections, and parish fundraisers.
10. Once your child has received the Sacrament of Reconciliation, take your child to confession on a regular basis.
11. Consider volunteering in a parish ministry.
12. Parents must attend adult catechism classes so that they can grow in faith along with their children.

### Code of Behavior

Jesus taught us the Great Commandment which is to love God and our neighbors as ourselves. The children are expected to follow Jesus' teaching and show respect to the adults who volunteer in this program, as well as all the other students and their property. In addition, children need to have respect for Our Lady of Mount Carmel property.

- ✓ If a child misbehaves in the classroom, a Behavior Warning Form will be sent home by the Catechist, substitute teacher or classroom aid. It is the child's responsibility to make sure the parents receive the form.
- ✓ The Behavior Warning Form needs to be signed by the parents before the child is allowed to return to class. If the child returns to

class and the form isn't signed the child will be taken to the office to be picked up. The child will be marked as absent.

- ✓ If the child receives three Behavior Warning Forms, the child will not be allowed to continue class for the remainder of the year.
- ✓ For any other behavior and learning issues or problems the parish Pastor, parish R.E. Coordinator, Catechist, and parents would jointly come to a resolution.

### General Behavior Guidelines

- No student is to enter a classroom without a teacher or parent present. If the teacher has not arrived the parent should wait until the teacher arrives.
- Hats and bandannas may not be worn in the building.
- Students must turn in cell phones and other electronic devices to the Catechist before class. Other distractions (fidget spinners, etc.) may also be collected.
- Inappropriate or revealing clothing may not be worn.
- Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.
- No food or drink is allowed in the classrooms or hallways.
- All illegal substances will be permanently confiscated and parents will be notified; weapons, drugs, alcohol, etc.

### Attendance/Absenteeism

For safety reasons, if your child is unable to attend a religious education class the parish must be notified in one of the following three ways. You must always include your child's name and grade level.

- Call the Religious Education Office at 862-250-5333 and leave a message on voicemail
- Respond to text message class reminder sent by the parish.
- Send an email to [olmc.dre@gmail.com](mailto:olmc.dre@gmail.com).

For all levels only 3 absences will be allowed. Every absence after the 3<sup>rd</sup> the teacher will assign extra homework to be done during the week. If the child will be receiving a sacrament (1<sup>st</sup> communion, confirmation), 3 or more absences can be a reason for the child not to receive the sacrament this year.

Please note that if your child arrives more than 15 minutes late, they will not be able to attend class and will be marked as absent. They will be sent to the office to be picked up.

### Arrival and Dismissal

For Sunday and Thursday classes parents will drop off their children at the classrooms. Parents will pick up their children at the classroom at the end of class. If someone other than parents will be picking up the child a release form will need to be filled out by the parents ahead of time.

- If you need to pick up your child early, a parent must come to the Parish Office and your child will be brought to the Parish Office to sign out before leaving.
- Nobody is allowed in the building while classes are in session except the teachers and students. If you need to contact your child during classes please go to the Parish Office and request to see your child.

### Emergency Closings

Sunday and Thursday classes can be canceled at the discretion of the parish Coordinator of Religious Education and the parish Pastor.

All emergency closings will be posted on [www.olmcorange.com](http://www.olmcorange.com). You will receive a text message from the parish as well.

## Homework

Students in all grades will be expected to learn and memorize prayers and doctrine based on grade level. The material will be sent home for parents to work on with their children. There will be testing in class to be sure children are learning the material. If your child is having trouble learning/memorizing the prayers and doctrine, please contact the Coordinator to discuss an alternate plan.

## Sacraments

All children should be baptized to participate in Religious Education classes. If your child is not baptized please contact the Parish Office to request that your child be baptized as soon as possible.

Preparation for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Eucharist are offered starting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade. If we decide that your child isn't ready this year they will be asked to wait another year.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is offered in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. If we decide that your child isn't ready this year they will be asked to wait another year. Our Confirmation preparation program begins in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. In order for children to be prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation, it is necessary to complete religious education classes for all grades 7-9. All students making Confirmation will also be required to attend a Confirmation retreat, Confirmation rehearsal, complete ten hours of community service and attend three Youth Adoration events with the Youth Group.



## Mass Attendance

Students and parents are required to attend Sunday Mass. Get a Mass attendance coupon from the Parish Office before Mass and then put it into the collection basket.

It is the parents' responsibility to make sure the child stays and participates in Mass. Please be vigilant that your child does not take 20 minutes to go to the bathroom or spends the entire Mass playing on their phone. We strongly recommend that the parents collect cell phones before Mass!

## Rights

This handbook is primarily a means of communications. It is meant to provide you the parent/guardian, with helpful information on how we intend to go about our work.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catechetical Program reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary. Parents will be notified in writing if changes are made to any procedures or information contained in this handbook.

Booklet last updated  
9/9/2017 4:14 PM

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## U.S. Supreme Court Case Zorach vs. Clauson 1956 Ruling

It is a child's constitutional right to attend a church event or religious instruction at a parochial school even if this should disrupt a public school schedule. Public school schedule has been interpreted by the law to include sporting events, band competitions, school plays, and the practices aforementioned and any other event sponsored by public school systems or those municipal programs open to public school students. Any type of punishment by aforementioned events for leaving early, arriving late or missing an event is not permitted and is in violation of the law.

Examples:

- A child cannot be threatened or intimidated in any way such as being removed from a team because of absence due to religious affiliation/responsibility.
- A child cannot be mocked or ridiculed for religious conviction.
- The reason a child is not present, arriving late, or leaving early cannot be pointed out or discussed with students or staff.
- Other penalties such as benching, extra laps, or any kind of punishment because of absence, late arrival or early dismissal due to the student's religious practices or responsibilities are also violations of the law.

# Notes