

# **St. Isaac Jogues Parish Religious Education Program**



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## **Catechist Handbook 2016-2017**

ST. ISAAC JOGUES OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

†  
A.M.D.G.

August 07, 2016

Dear Catechists,

*On behalf of the entire parish of St. Isaac Jogues, and especially the Office of Religious Education, I would like to thank you for volunteering as catechists and aides. Our patron, St. Isaac Jogues, participated in a vigorous education in the Society of Jesus in order to travel to the New World to spread the Catholic religion to peoples who were ignorant of the saving message of Jesus Christ. St. Isaac Jogues and his Jesuit companions endured many trials and tribulations and even martyrdom to accomplish this mission. Our challenge as catechists is no less important than that of our patron.*

*Pope John Paul II continually called for a new evangelization in the second Millennium of Christianity. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, encourages us to go forward with that mandate. The primary way of effecting this is through sound catechesis. Today many parents and their children, although baptized Catholics, live their lives without knowing what it means to be a Catholic follower of Jesus Christ. In the spirit of St. Isaac Jogues and his Jesuit companions, we too must undergo a vigorous training in our faith in order to pass this on to the younger generations, that they may know what it means to be Catholic and grow in their vocations to Jesus Christ.*

*Know the seriousness of what you are doing and pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and reward your efforts. Always remain faithful to the teaching of the Catholic Church. In the words of Fulton J. Sheen, "Keep the Faith, and if you can't keep it, then spread it around!"*

*Let us pray for each other throughout this year and let us work always "For the Greater Glory of God".*

*Yours in Christ,  
Louis M. Valentí, M. Div.  
Director of Religious Education*

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## THE ST. ISAAC JOGUES RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM



### GOAL

Our goal as catechists and teachers is consistent with the mission of St. Isaac Jogues. That is, to work for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls. Specifically the souls of the students in our classrooms. We will effect this by trying to reach the minds and hearts of our students that they may grow in their knowledge of God and His Catholic Church.

### METHOD

As catechists, we are called to teach students entrusted to our care, the Catholic Faith as presented by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Parents send their children to us to learn the faith, doctrine and teachings of the Church. Catechists must be sure that they are teaching in line with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. We will be directed in this by the guidelines published for catechesis by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

- These Archdiocesan guidelines are incorporated into the lesson plans, and the books used during each year in order to meet the specific needs of our parish and program.
- We have updated the children's catechism in order to assist us in relating the Catechism of the Catholic Church to the level of our students ability and understanding.
- To ensure that Catechists in our program are fully qualified to relay our Catholic Faith, to our students, they are required to complete the Archdiocesan Catechist Program and, in addition, our own parish catechism classes (four parts). Catechists do not have to do this all at once but, must make an effort to complete these requirements in a methodic way during their time in our program.
- All catechists must complete the class in September of our St. Isaac Jogues Management Training Program and the Archdiocesan Catechist Convocation Program at Archbishop Carroll High School in March 2015. Religious Education will pay the tuition,
- New catechists are also required to attend the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Program "Protecting God's Children", an awareness program for adults. The classes are conducted throughout the Archdiocese in different parishes and on different dates and times to offer the maximum choice for the catechist. One session, approximately 2 1/2 hours in length is mandatory. Registration is required.

- In addition, catechists are asked to take part in the sacraments, sacramental preparation programs, days of recollection and all things related to their individual classes and CCD Masses.
- Catechists are encouraged to attend and complete the Archdiocesan Certification classes.

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS & PROCEDURES**

### **1. TIME**

Catechists are asked to be in the Religious Education Center **at least 10 minutes** before the start of class. This will allow you time to set up your classroom and greet the students.. Please understand that **students must be supervised by an adult at all times while they are on the church property for class.** Your cooperation in arriving on time, and remaining until all your students have left, makes it possible for us meet this requirement.

### **2. CLASS PREPARATION**

Please devote at least one hour each week to preparation for your class. An effective lesson requires proper planning. Your teacher’s manual and/or lesson plan will help you structure your class time effectively.

### **3. APPEARANCE**

When you are here to teach, please dress in a manner befitting to your position as a catechist.

### **4. MAIL BOXES**

A mail box will be set up in the Religious Education Office for each catechist. Please check the box prior to going to your classroom. It is important to distribute handouts on the day requested or respond to requests.

### **5. ATTENDANCE**

You will receive an attendance register each week for your class. Please take attendance at the beginning of class, record “absent” next to name on your register if applicable (“A” for “absent,” Present and/or late are not required. Please deliver your attendance register to the office at the close of class. The office will contact absentee students as necessary. If you receive a note of excuse from a student returning after an absence (or prior to one), please submit it to the office. If a student is habitually tardy or absent, notify the office.

#### **POLICY FOLLOWS ( As stated in Parents Handbook)**

**If your child will be absent from class, it is required that you contact the Office of Religious Education before the start of the class so that we may record the absence or late arrival and inform the teacher. Please note that the Administrative Assistant is not always available to take your call during the time just prior to class. Please report an absence or tardy arrival by leaving a message on our voice mail, (610) 687-2481 or E-Mail address at: [SIJDRE@gmail.com](mailto:SIJDRE@gmail.com)**

**Absences will be noted on each students Report Card. Excessive absence can result in failure of the course and the need to repeat the grade. The Director will initiate follow-up with parents of children who have accumulated three (3) unreported absences.**

**When the student returns to class, a note explaining the absence should be presented to the teacher. If your child must leave class early, a note from a parent is also required.**

**Our weekly time for religious instruction is very limited. We ask that parents not compromise this time by allowing excessive absences, by regularly bringing children to class late, or by repeatedly picking children up prior to the scheduled dismissal time. Unnecessary interruptions and absences by a few students lower the quality of education for all. Please make your children’s weekly religious education time a priority, arranging extra-curricular and social activities so that they do not conflict with Religious Education.**

#### **CCD FAMILY MASSES ARE MANDATORY AND ARE COUNTED TOWARDS ATTENDANCE.**

### **6. REPORT CARDS**

The grading system used was established by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. It is required that it be used as stated, no changes, additions, or deletions may be added.

**Use only the grading system required by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia: A, B, C, U. should be used. A plus (+), or minus (-) may not be added to the grade. If unable to grade due to attendance, the grade is U for unsatisfactory.**

Report Cards will be completed and distributed on a trimester schedule in November, March and May .The children should be graded on homework, quizzes, tests and class participation. You will be asked to submit the Report Cards a week before they are dispensed to the students. (A reminder will be in your mailbox.). Please forward completed report cards to the office.

**REPORT CARDS ARE NOT TO BE RETURNED BY PARENT COPIES ARE KEPT IN FILE !**

### **7. TESTING** Please give weekly quizzes so that you have an accurate perception of your students’ retention of the material you are teaching. If you are teaching one of the lower primary grades, use a very easy format, such as circling “yes” or

“no,” holding up cards that say “yes” or “no,” or matching pictures and words. Always read your questions aloud to these children. Older children can be given a 5-question written quiz at the start of each lesson to review material covered the previous week. Please administer at least 3 longer tests – one or more per trimester.

**8. HOMEWORK**

When assigning homework, please check it and return it to your students. It’s helpful if you are able to create a monthly handout listing your students’ assignments for that month. It will assist the parents awareness concerning the assignments and information for which the students are responsible.

**9. DISCIPLINE**

Each catechist must maintain an orderly teaching atmosphere in his/her class. Chewing gum, wearing hats in class, walking around the room and unfit language, among other things, should not be tolerated. If a student is unable to behave appropriately, and you feel it is necessary for him/her to leave your class, please send the student to the office, accompanied by an aide. If you do not have an aide, send a reliable student to the office with a written request that the Administrative Assistant or the DRE come to your classroom immediately. The Administrative Assistant or the DRE will escort the child to the office. If you are having discipline problems with a student, please consult with the DRE prior to addressing the child’s parents.

**10. DRESS CODE**

Religious Education classes for children and young adults are a part of each student’s formal education. Each student’s dress should reflect this and be a source of pride in whom and what they are, young Catholic gentlemen and ladies. All students are to dress appropriately. Please help your children refrain from wearing shorts, tank tops, cleats, mesh shirts, t-shirts with advertisements, baseball caps, and sports uniforms. Boys are not permitted to wear jewelry other than a cross or medal, nor should girls wear excessive jewelry. Boys and girls should be properly groomed and neat at all times. Boys should have their hair above their collar. Skirts for girls should not be above the knee.

N.B. (regarding older students). Tattoos are implicitly forbidden by the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment and are not to be displayed during class. Any student to whom this applies is required to keep their tattoo covered at all times during class. Fake tattoos must be washed off.

**11. EARLY RELEASE**

Under no circumstance may a child leave the class early without written permission from his/her parents.

**GRADES K-4 PARENTS MUST DROP-OFF and PICK-UP CHILD IN THE CLASSROOM.**

Students leaving with parental permission must sign out at the office before leaving the building.

**12. CLASSROOM LIABILITY**

Under no circumstances may students be left in the classroom unattended. If you must leave, ask another teacher to cover your class or send two (2) students to the office and the Administrative Assistant or the DRE will cover the class.

**NO LIGHTED CANDLES ARE ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOMS.**

**13. DISMISSAL**

Catechists of grades K-4 will be given a list of the adults that their students’ parents have designated for picking up their children. It is the responsibility of teachers of these grades to supervise pick up of their students. Parents (or designated adults) must come to the door of your class to deliver and to pick-up their children. Do not dismiss the children as a group from the room. If you have any doubts about the adult picking a student up, please check your Parent Pick-up List or contact the office. Catechists of grades 5-12 may dismiss their children as a group at the end of class, but must remain in the room until all have left.

**14. PARENT COMMUNICATION**

It is important to develop a positive relationship with each parent. Optimism is key in any discussion.

Parents will always be there to help if they feel we really care about their children.

**15. CLEAN UP**

Each catechist is responsible for clean-up of his/her own classroom. If you use the parish hall, you are responsible for leaving that area clean as well. Wait until all students have gone before you begin to clean up. Wipe the chalkboards (you may have an aid or student do this), straighten the tables and chairs, put supplies away, and pick up debris from the floor. Since we share classrooms, it is imperative that the rooms be left as we found them, or better. The church maintenance staff will sweep or vacuum the floors, but we do ask that you leave the room in tidy condition since the church facilities are constantly in use by a variety of organizations.

**If you open windows during class time, please close them before you leave the classroom.**

**16. CLASSROOM DECORATIONS**

You may work together with your grade partner if you want to decorate the bulletin board. Keep in mind

that this is a Religious Education Center, and decorations should demonstrate that fact. Decorations must be removed at the end of class.

#### 17. **ALLERGIES and TREATS**

Our classes are relatively short at an hour and fifteen minutes, therefore time does not permit “treats”.

**EXCEPTION:** On special occasions you will be informed that twenty minutes or so, should be set aside for a small party, the treats will be provided by the Religious Ed office and brought to each class room. Each class is responsible for cleaning up after the celebration.

#### **NO FOOD OR DRINK MAY BE LEFT IN ANY CLASSROOM**

We are not always aware of all the students who have allergies, therefore, not allowing snacks of any kind helps keep the students safe.

#### 18. **SUPPLIES**

Scissors, glue sticks, and crayons will be available in each classroom in a plastic bin. Students should bring a pencil or pen with them to class, but there will be extra in the classroom. Additional supplies are in closet in the religious education office that are for your use. Please return unused material. If you need any additional supplies or paper for your next class period, please let us know promptly and we will try to honor your request. Students will be given a text book, an activity book, a folder and pencil depending on grade. Sacramental grade children will also receive a catechism book relating to their particular sacrament.

#### 19. **PHOTOCOPYING**

If copies of instructional material are needed for your class, please bring the originals to the office the week before Sunday’s class. Materials may be left in mail box outside CCD entrance (to the right of the double doors) with Catechist name, grade and number of copies required, they will be ready, and in your mailbox, prior to your class on Sunday. Requests made on Sunday morning for copied material will be honored **only if time allows and copy machine is working.** Please bring your requests in early in the week, or drop off after class for the following week.

#### 19. **AUTHORIZATION OF MATERIALS**

If you plan to use materials in class other than those issued to you by the Office of Religious Education, you must first present those materials to the DRE for his review. **N.B. Catechists should NEVER communicate with minors via electronic communication and should never use the internet during class time.**

#### 20. **AIDES**

Aides can be a great help in teaching your class. If you do not have an aide, but would like one, please let us know.

#### 21. **SUBSTITUTES**

If you are not able to teach a particular class, please try to get a substitute and let them, and us, know as soon as possible. The Office of Religious Education will distribute a list of substitutes to all catechists (in the Catechist folder). Please notify the office that you will be absent and give us the name and telephone number of the person who has agreed to substitute for you. Be sure to provide that person with a lesson plan, your attendance sheet, and your teacher's guide, and, request that all material be turned in at the office after class (you may then pick it up during the week prior to the next class). If necessary, you can drop these materials off at the office for the substitute teacher to pick up, preferably several days prior to the class date. If unable to acquire a substitute, inform the office as soon as possible.

#### 22. **FACULTY MEETINGS**

The first meeting of the year is conducted near the end of summer vacation, usually the week prior to the opening of classes, to review all necessary material, distribute the calendar, catechist folders and bring you up-to-date on changes, new information, etc. An email message will provide the details (what, when, where) and be sent to all catechists and aides in August. All catechists and aides are requested to attend. Other staff meetings will be conducted as the need arises. If, at any time, you need to meet with the DRE, a meeting will be scheduled for you.

## **MEDICAL ISSUES**

The Religious Education Office will compile a list for each catechist indicating any special student health problems. These lists are confidential, and should be treated as such.

Please do not distribute treats in your class; many students have different types of allergies, some of which can affect them just by a particular food being present in the room.

If one of your students is feeling ill, send him/her to the Religious Education Office. If appropriate, the child's parents will be called.

There is an OSHA health supply kit in the religious education cabinet of each classroom. Please be aware of its location.

If a student suffers a cut, nosebleed, or any other injury or ailment in which body fluids are exposed, send the child to the Religious Education Office. Bandages will be dispensed to children in the Religious Education Office. If necessary, supply the child with tissues from the classroom tissue box or gauze from the OSHA supply kit before sending him/her to the office, but avoid contact with the child's bodily fluids. If such contact is necessary and unavoidable, use the rubber gloves that are included with the OSHA supply kit. Any materials that come in contact with the child's bodily fluids should be placed in the white plastic bucket from the OSHA supply kit, and the lid should be put back on the bucket. Notify the Religious Education Office, and the bucket will be disposed of later by the maintenance personnel.

If a child vomits or urinates in class, notify the Religious Education Office immediately and keep other children away from the area where the incident occurred. The child will be brought to the Religious Education Office, the problem controlled and the parents notified. Do not allow the other students to come in contact with the region even after it has been cleaned.

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

There are three fire extinguishers in the long hall, one at each end and one in the center. There is another extinguisher located around the corner near the bathrooms.

In the event of fire, students in Classrooms 1, 2, 3, and 4, should exit through the doors at the end of the hall closest to the church. Students in Classrooms 5, 6, 7, 8 and the AV room should exit through the doors leading away from the Religious Education Office. If either exit appears unsafe, use the other exit. Catechists should lead their class out in as orderly a fashion as possible, across the parking lot, to the grass area between the parking lot and Chesterbrook Blvd. Take your attendance sheet and your Pick-Up list with you. When your class is assembled on the grass, check to make sure all your students are present. There will be fire-drills, which you will be notified of throughout the year.

**LIGHTED CANDLES ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOMS**



## **PRAYERS AND FORMULAS OF OUR FAITH**

People need a sense of belonging to a community when they pray together, receive the sacraments, or converse about the faith. Common prayers and formulas, committed to memory (a God-given gift to all), make it possible for a uniform way of speaking to be used among the believing community. Memorization of these prayers and formulas, provides the believer with a sense of security. Memorization helps to facilitate the spiritual growth and ultimate union of the learner with the Lord.

Therefore, all Religious Education programs of the Archdiocese are to include memorization of prayers and formulas as part of their catechetical methodology. These prayers and formulas of our faith will be presented when those being catechized have a good understanding of the subject.

The Religion Guidelines of the Archdiocese enumerate the prayers and other formulas to be committed to memory:

### **KINDERGARTEN**

Sign of the Cross, Glory Be..., Name and identify Jesus and Mary.

#### **GRADE 1**

Sign of the Cross  
Our Father  
Glory Be  
Grace Before/After Meals  
Hail Mary  
“Simple” Morning Offering

#### **GRADE 2**

Act of Contrition  
Act of Faith  
Apostles’ Creed  
Definition of Transubstantiation  
Formula for Confession  
Name/define 2 Kinds of Sin  
Name/define 2 Kinds of Actual Sin  
Parts of the Mass (and Mass Responses)  
Parts of the Missalette  
Review prayers from grade 1

#### **GRADE 3**

All of the above Prayers (review)  
Apostles Creed (review)  
Guardian Angel Prayer  
Define Incarnation / Redemption  
4 Marks of the Church  
Name/define 2 Kinds of Sin (review)  
Name/define 2 Kinds of Actual Sin (review)  
Rosary (15 Mysteries) / Hail Holy Queen

#### **GRADE 4**

Act of Faith, Act of Hope, Act of Love  
All Prayers (review)  
Rosary (review 15 Mysteries)  
6 Precepts of the Church  
10 Commandments  
7 Sacraments

#### **GRADE 5**

3 Attributes of the Church  
Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy  
4 Marks of the Church (review)  
6 Precepts of the Church (review)  
6 Proofs of the Catholic Religion  
Seven Sacraments (review)  
Ten Commandments (review)  
All Prayers (review)

#### **GRADE 6**

All prayers (review) plus Nicene Creed  
Define Sacred Scripture/Sacred Tradition (“Sola Scriptura”)  
Fruits and Gifts of the Holy Spirit plus Prayer to the Holy Spirit  
Gospels (Distinguish between Old and New Testament)  
How to: A) Go to Confession B) Receive Holy Communion  
2 Pillars of Divine Revelation  
7 Sacraments (including matter, form and minister for each)  
Corporal/Spiritual Works of Mercy plus Cardinal Virtues  
Beatitudes  
Liturgical Year  
Review all Confirmation prep material

#### **GRADE 7/8 Fall Semester**

Angelus  
Act of Contrition  
Beatitudes  
Cardinal Virtues  
Corporal/Spiritual Works of Mercy  
Liturgical Year  
Nicene Creed  
Precepts of the Church  
Ten Commandments

#### **Spring Semester**

1. If God is all-Good then why does evil exist in the world?
2. What has God revealed?
3. Why the Catholic Church is the one, true, Church of Christ.

#### **GRADES 9-12**

- A) Foundation of Catholic Theology.
- B) Introduction to Sacred Scripture.
- C) Introduction to Catholic Morality.
- D) Overview of Church History.

## **PRAYERS**

### **SIGN OF THE CROSS**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **OUR FATHER**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

### **HAIL MARY**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are You among women, and blessed is the fruit of Your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

### **GLORY BE ...**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

### **GRACE BEFORE MEALS**

Bless us, O Lord, and these Your gifts, which we are about to receive, from your goodness, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **GRACE AFTER MEALS**

We give you thanks, God, for these and all your gifts, which we have received, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **MORNING PRAYER (GRADES 1 TO 4)**

Dear Jesus, Help me to live today as your friend and follower. Be with me as I play and work. Amen.

### **MORNING PRAYER (GRADES 5 TO 8)**

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, words, joys and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world.

I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our Bishops, and all the Apostles of Prayer, and particularly for those recommended by our Holy Father this month.

### **EVENING PRAYER**

God, thank you for today. Keep me safe through the night. Protect my family and friends. Help us know You are with us always. Amen.

### **ACT OF CONTRITION (GRADES 2 TO 8)**

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins, because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, My God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

### **THE APOSTLES CREED**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

### **PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Come Holy Spirit. Fill the hearts of Your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.

### **HAIL HOLY QUEEN**

Hail Holy Queen, Mother of mercy; our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

### **ACT OF FAITH**

O my God! I firmly believe that you are one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I believe that your Divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because You have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

### **ACT OF HOPE**

O my God! Relying on Your infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen

### **ACT OF LOVE**

O my God! I love you above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because you are all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of You.

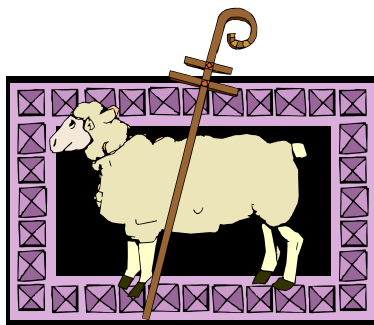
I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

### **MEMORARE**

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To you I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary

Pray for us O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Amen



### TO TEACH LIKE JESUS\*

Jesus is the Master Teacher. The Gospels give us glimpses of Jesus' ways of teaching.

1. **Jesus taught mainly by example.** People learned Jesus' message most convincingly by watching Him and getting to know Him. They noticed how He lived, how He treated people, how He prayed and how He observed God's law. Our students learn more about God more by how we act than by what we say.
2. **Jesus spoke with authority.** Jesus not only quoted God's Word, He is God's Word. Our catechetical ministry is to echo God's Word.
3. **Jesus taught by speaking to people's experiences.** Jesus walked with people along life's journey -- sharing their experiences, sensing their joys and sorrows, responding to their needs and desires. We need to do the same by getting to know our students as best we can. We need to tailor our teaching to their experiences, abilities, needs, desires and learning styles.
4. **Jesus taught by asking questions.** Jesus' questions opened up the underlying mysteries of life and the human heart. We can learn to ask questions like Jesus --questions that probe below the surface of daily experiences and open the mind to critical reflection, the heart to pondering, and the hands to sharing.
5. **Jesus taught by telling stories.** Jesus taught the most profound truths through stories called parables. We can work on storytelling and find good, relevant stories in newspapers and magazines, children's literature, films, videos and TV.
6. **Jesus taught by using images.** Jesus spoke to the heart and mind through the imagination and senses, with word-pictures. We catechists can learn from Him to use concrete, poetic language, colorful images, photos, art, music, video, and TV to stir the religious imaginations of our students.
7. **Jesus taught with loving honesty.** Jesus pierced right to the heart, to the truth of a matter, whether it was comforting or disconcerting, reassuring or challenging. But He always did so with compassion, understanding and love. We need to teach honestly and strongly, yet always with care.
8. **Jesus' teaching always invited a response.** Jesus always expected a practical, life-changing response. His teaching was always a call, an invitation, a challenge -- not only to hear God's Word, but to live it. We catechists need to teach basic truths, Church teachings, and moral principles, but we do so, not just to inform the mind, but to move the will and change the heart..

\*These thoughts are taken from the book Questions Catechists Ask and Answers that Really Work by Carl J. Pfeifer and Janaan Manternach

## QUALITIES OF A GOOD CATECHIST\*

A good catechist is:

1. **Caring/Loving** Above all, a catechist must be caring. The catechist must see each student as unique, valuable, lovable and worthy of unconditional love. Catechists reveal Christ's love most meaningfully through their own love.
2. **Reverent/Respectful** Good catechists approach each individual with reverence. They respect the dignity and rights, the gift, and the fragility of each student. The good catechist desires to draw out the best that often lies hidden.
3. **Committed/Faithful** Good catechists sincerely work at growing in their commitment to Jesus Christ as they grapple with life's mysteries and challenges. They are prayerful.
4. **Understanding/Approachable** Good catechists work at being understanding and approachable, accepting and tolerant, while witnessing honestly to the Church's teachings and their own convictions and values.
5. **Open/Questioning** Effective catechists tend to wonder at the mysteries of life. They are open to change and to new possibilities and ways of doing things, while respecting the Church's tradition and their own past experience.
6. **Creative** Good catechists continually use poetry, story, music, art and beauty of all kinds, as well as activities that stimulate their own and their students' imaginations.
7. **Enthusiastic** Good catechists convey a sense of excitement and enthusiasm about the "Good News" of Jesus Christ, which they value and wish to share with others.
8. **Persevering** Good catechists tend to be willing to evaluate and try anew. They are able to cope with difficulties and frustration. They believe in the commitment they have made, and they don't give up in hard times.
9. **Happy/Smiling** A catechist's smile says without words that he or she finds joy in Christ and Christ's way, even when experiencing life's inevitable hurts.
10. **Sense of humor** So many unexpected and incongruous things happen in life that a sense of humor is often necessary to cope with the situation at hand.

## BENEFITS OF BEING A CATECHIST\*

The benefits of teaching a catechism class are many:

1. Catechists receive prayers from the parish for strength and courage to carry out the work of Jesus Christ.
2. Teaching strengthens the catechist's own faith in Christ and His Church. The lessons you present on a child's level reinforce your own understanding of the faith and help you to appreciate it more.
3. Catechists are abundantly blessed by God, who is never outdone in generosity.
4. A catechist becomes a part of a wonderful community of other teachers who are growing in their faith and learning to share it with others.

\*These thoughts are taken from the book Questions Catechists Ask and Answers that Really Work by Carl J. Pfeifer and Janaan Manternach

## ST. ISAAC JOGUES OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



### STAFF:

Director of Religious Education: Louis M. Valenti, M.Div.

### OFFICE LOCATION:

The Office of Religious Education is located at the far end of the church complex, at the end of the parking lot. The entrance is on the side of the building.

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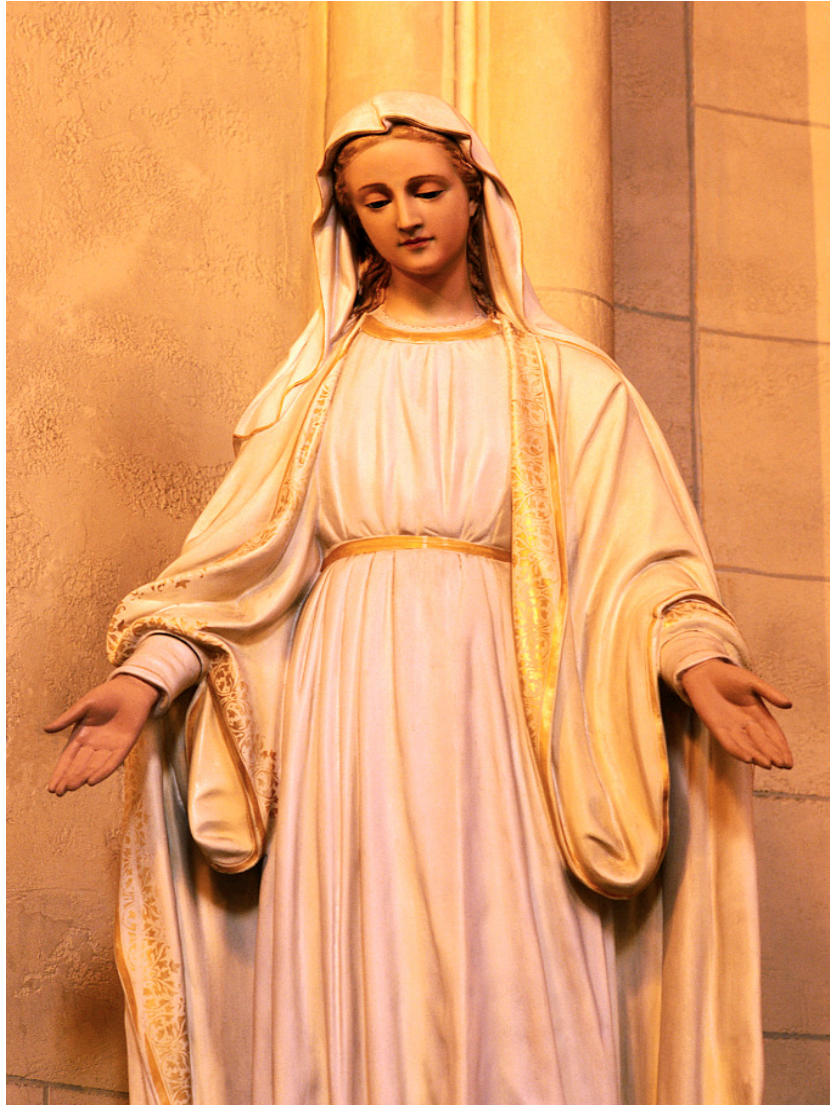
### OFFICE HOURS:

Louis M. Valenti By appointment

### Office Closed Saturday's and Holy Days

During weekdays it is suggested a call first to determine if office is open. If not, please leave a voice mail or email at the appropriate number above.

MARY, OUR BLESSED MOTHER



HAIL MARY, FULL OF GRACE,  
THE LORD IS WITH YOU.  
BLESSED ART YOU AMONG WOMEN  
AND BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF YOUR WOMB, JESUS.  
HOLY MARY, MOTHER OF GOD,  
PRAY FOR US SINNERS  
NOW AND AT THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH. AMEN