

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the

Saint John Neumann

Religious Education Handbook and Holidays/Breaks calendar.

Names of Children attending Religious Education classes:

Parent or Guardian: _____

Date: _____

St. John Neumann Religious Education
Parent Handbook 2021-2022

St. John Neumann Catholic Church
12125 SW 107th Avenue
Miami, Fl 33176
305-255-6642

Pastor: Father Jose Alfaro
Parrochial Vicars: Fr. Ireneusz Ekiert
Fr. Manuel Galvan Vargas

Religious Education Staff

John Fernandez, Director of Religious Education
john@sjn-miami.org ext. 309

Susana Gannon, Administrative Assistant
ccd@sjn-miami.org ext 310

Dear Parents and Guardians:

When you brought your children to be baptized, you accepted the responsibility of training them in the practice of faith. It is, then, your duty to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Their godparents agreed to help you in your duties as Christian parents. While we are honored to assist you in the solemn vow that you took, we also wish to make sure that we do not give mixed messages, so that what is being taught here will resonate through the home. We are here to proclaim Jesus Christ as our Savior to all the children who attend St. John Neumann from kindergarten through high school. We are all created in the image of God and so with that in mind, we shall celebrate as one. So as the great teacher Jesus said... "Let the children come to me".

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

For grades Kindergarten through 6th, please walk your child to their classroom and wait until their teacher opens their door. We do not permit children to be dropped off at our gate. Please arrive 5-10 minutes prior to class beginning so your child may use the restroom or drink water before the enter. Our time with them is precious and constant bathroom breaks can be a distraction.

Dismissal will be at the classroom door. Parents or guardians must pick up their children; siblings who are minors are not authorized. You have been issued a laminated pick up card which needs to be presented to the teacher every time. **No child will be released to an adult without this card.** If you are late picking up your child, you must come to the Religious Education Office, present the card, and sign them out. Excessive late pick-ups will be subject to a late fee, consult your pick-up card for details.

TUESDAY NIGHT ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

You may drop your child off in front of the religious education office either in person or by car. They will then walk to their classrooms or congregate in the hallways until class begins. Once dropped off, they are not permitted to leave the hallways for any reason. **Dismissal begins at 8:45pm and the students must be picked up in their classrooms.**

TARDIES AND ABSENCES

Each student is allowed no more than 5 absences per year in order to be promoted to the next level. Please contact the office should your child miss more than 5 classes. Tardies are disruptive to the class as well as providing a hindrance to your child's formation progress. Three tardies will count as once absence.

Communication

All religious education communications will be channeled through **Flocknote**, the official parish communication service. Flocknote will be presented and discussed in detail during our parent orientation meetings in September. It will be the parent's responsibility to monitor messages regularly and keep up to date with our scheduled events. Hard copy reminders will not be provided.

DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

We endeavor to teach and to give all students a loving experience of God in our religious education program. All teachers are entitled to respect and proper behavior from all students at all times. Please encourage your student to behave in a proper and courteous manner each week. In the rare occasion that a child has become disruptive, we will contact the parent to discuss strategies and ensure everyone has a positive and enriching experience

No electronic devices, headphones or personal entertainment devices will be permitted. If your child brings a cell phone, it must be turned off during class and kept in their pocket or purse.

Cell phones in use during class will also be confiscated and returned to their parents after a meeting. Students may use the office phone if necessary for emergency purposes, and parents may contact the office as well.

MASS ATTENDANCE

One of the most important parts of our religious education program is Mass attendance. All students and families enrolled in our program are expected to attend Mass weekly. The fundamentals of our Catholic faith are presented each week at Mass. It becomes quite troubling to see parents who care so much for their children that they enroll them in a religious education program, yet do not follow through by partaking in the celebration of the Mass each week with their children. Catechism classes are not a substitute for attending weekly Mass. What they learn in their religious education classes will only make sense if you bring them to Mass regularly.

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

In keeping with the Archdiocese of Miami's commitment to protect every child from abuse, children enrolled in grades Kindergarten through first year Confirmation Preparation will be taught two classes on touching safety. Dates of these classes will be announced in advance. Information regarding the content of these classes is available in the Religious Ed. office. Additionally, our staff and volunteers all have been background checked and fingerprinted to ensure the safety of your children. They participated in the Virtus: Protecting God's Children program and receive periodic updates to their training. Your child's safety is our utmost concern. Adults are not permitted to use children's restroom. There is an adult bathroom in the religious education office that teachers, aides and parents may use. Alternately, adults may also use the bathroom in the church or those adjacent to the parish office.

FIRST COMMUNION PREPARATION

Preparation for First Communion is a two year process and begins when the child begins first grade. Children in older grades will receive religious formation classes at their grade level and will receive the sacrament after two years. Family mass attendance is required to participate in the program. Children who will receive First Communion must be registered by October 2021. A Baptismal certificate must be submitted with the registration form.

First Communion Preparation Family Requirements

Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion is a family affair at St. John Neumann. Parents are their children's first teachers and examples of faith. With that in mind, we require regular weekly attendance at Mass, and attendance at various gatherings which are an integral part of our Sacramental preparation program. **Attendance to these meetings is mandatory, and we will not offer make-up sessions.**

Parent Orientation (MANDATORY FOR ALL)

September 20th or September 21st @ 7:29PM in Resurrection Hall

Dynamic Catholic: (SECOND YEAR COMMUNION FAMILIES ONLY)

Saturday, October 2nd from 9am to 1pm in Resurrection Hall

or

Saturday, February 26th from 9am to 1pm in Resurrection Hall

Interactive Church Tour: (FIRST YEAR FAMILIES ONLY)

Saturday, December 4th @1PM in Main Sanctuary

or

Saturday, December 11th @1PM in Main Sanctuary

Benediction and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: (SECOND YEAR FAMILIES ONLY)

Wednesday, March 30th @ 7pm SHARP in Main Sanctuary

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is a two-year process and is normally received in the 9th grade. However, if your child did not attend religious education classes in the eighth grade or did not attend a Catholic school for the 8th grade, he or she will be required to attend the first year of preparation and will be prepared for Confirmation during their second year.

During the course of the first year of preparation all students are required to complete 20 community service hours. A detailed contract will be provided to the students on the second week of class. All hours must be dated after the first day of classes, and must adhere to the guideline provided. Additionally, there will be a Confirmation exam which will be administered at the end of the year. A passing grade must be achieved in order to continue onto the second year of preparation.

ONGOING FAITH FORMATION

The primary purpose of our religious education program is faith formation. Faith formation is an ongoing development of the whole person into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, Discipleship. To use the image of St. Paul “we put on Christ” so that Christ is the center of our lives. All Catholics are on the journey of faith formation. Our program does not stop with the reception of First Communion. We begin this life-long journey in the waters of Baptism. The end of this journey is eternal life with Jesus in heaven. Please consider registering your children for ongoing faith formation.

VOLUNTEERS

We are always in need of caring volunteers. Anyone interested in volunteering may contact our office at 305-253-3081 or by email at ccd@sjn-miami.org. As mandated by the Archdiocese of Miami all adult volunteers (18 and over) MUST submit to a background check, sign and uphold the Volunteer Pledge to Promote a Safe Environment, and complete and maintain Virtus training. There is no cost associated with completing these requirements. Our volunteers receive free tuition for their children’s religious education classes.