



ST. JULIA PARISH

Weston and Lincoln, Massachusetts

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM
PARENT HANDBOOK
2011 – 2012

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Class Times

Weston

Grade 1 - 6	Sunday	10:10 am to 11:10 am
Grade 1 - 5	Monday	2:45 pm to 4:00 pm
Grade 1 - 5	Tuesday	2:45 pm to 4:00 pm
Grade 6	Sunday	6:00 pm to 7:15 pm
Grade 7 and 8	Sunday	6:00 pm to 7:15 pm
Confirmation	Sunday	6:00 pm to 7:15 pm

See Confirmation handbook for additional event days and times.

Lincoln

Grade 1 - 6	Monday	4:00 pm to 5:00 pm
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First Day of Class

Weston

Grade 1 - 6	Sunday, October 2	10:10 am to 11:10 am
Grade 1 - 5	Monday, October 3	2:45 pm to 4:00 pm
Grade 1 - 5	Tuesday, October 4	2:45 pm to 4:00 pm
Grade 6, 7 and 8	Sunday, October 2	6:00 pm to 7:15 pm

Lincoln

Grade 1 - 6	Monday, October 3	4:00 pm to 5:00 pm
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Confirmation Preparation

New Confirmation Students (Grade 9)

Meet at Campion Retreat Center with Parents

Sunday, September 25 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm

All Confirmation Students Begin

Sunday, October 2 6:00 pm to 7:15 pm

W e l c o m e

Warmest welcome to the 2011-2012 Saint Julia Parish Religious Education Program! Our year is packed with classes, activities, retreats, sacrament celebrations and weekly Family Mass. Please read through this handbook for valuable information about the program, and please pull-out the calendar and post it on your refrigerator for handy reference. We welcome you as active members of Saint Julia Parish community and we are ready to walk with you on your faith journey.

Do you sometimes feel like a new school year is the start of a race, a marathon, for you and your family? Will you have the strength and perseverance to finish the year with both faithfulness and finesse? We acknowledge the feverish pace of your lives and understand how challenging it is to reserve time in your hectic schedule for Mass, prayer, parish events, and religious education! Work, school, sports, music and other activities, as well as everyday chores can consume every waking minute. When you feel overwhelmed, consider Jesus' invitation: "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls (Matthew 11: 28-30)."

Making parish religious education a priority for you and your family is one way to come and learn from Jesus. As Professor Thomas Groome, Boston College theologian and educator, suggests, our purpose "is to inform, form, and transform Christian persons and communities as apprentices to Jesus for God's reign in the world." Our goal is to share "the whole Christian story- its scriptures and traditions, creeds, code of ethics, and ways of worship." We want our children "to understand their faith, to make it their own, and to choose to live it." We are guided by God's love for us, challenged by Jesus' call to discipleship, and empowered by the grace of the Spirit to serve others and to grow in faith, hope and love. This is an awesome task, but together we can make our faith come alive for our children!

We invite you to join us for worship, learning, and community that you, too, might "find rest for your souls."

Church Life

Reverent, thoughtful and active reception of the sacraments is important to the core mission of the Religious Education program. Weekly Mass attendance and participation in the sacraments is essential for faith formation. **Because the celebration of the Mass is the source and summit of our Catholic faith, our children and their families are expected to attend Mass weekly.** Becoming an educated and faith-filled Catholic requires the lessons learned in the classroom, but even more, the communal worship experience of the Mass.

In addition to the celebration of the Eucharist, we place a special emphasis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation as well. During the season of Lent, we invite children in most grades to celebrate this sacrament during their Religious Education class time. We draw adults' attention to the Archdiocesan initiative, *The Light Is On For You*. During Advent and Lent priests will be available to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation in most churches in the Archdiocese on Wednesday evenings. Also, everyone may take the opportunity for individual reception of this sacrament every Saturday afternoon from 3:15 pm to 3:45 pm in Saint Julia Church (Parish Center conference room during the renovation).

Family Mass and Café Julia!

The 9:00 am Mass in Weston is our "Family Mass." Children and families will participate together in the ministries of greeter, gift bearer, lector and musician. The children's choir practices before Mass. All are invited to mingle with fellow parishioners at "Café Julia" which is coffee and doughnuts in the parish hall following this Mass. The Family Mass begins on October 2 and will be celebrated weekly through May on the same schedule as Religious Education classes. Children, by grade, will take a special and active role in this Mass on:

Oct. 30 – Gr. 3	Nov. 20 – Gr. 4	Jan. 29 – Gr. 5
Feb. 12 – Gr. 6	Mar. 25 – Gr. 1	May 20 – Gr. 2*

* May 20 Gr. 2 Mass will take place at 11:15.

Just for Adults

Throughout the year, we offer programs for adults in a variety of areas. Bible Study meets on Tuesday mornings beginning October 4 to explore the Psalms. There is a \$25 fee for books and all are welcome. The MOMS group, a prayerful network for young mothers, will meet for eight weeks

beginning October 12. Watch the bulletin for details. Beginning September 7 “Yoga Prayer” takes place on Wednesday mornings (10:00-11:15) and evenings (5:30-6:45) in six week blocks for a fee of \$60. “Coffee and Contemporary Catholicism” presents speakers on topics of interest to Catholics on some Sunday mornings from 10:00 to 11:00 and the Social Justice Commission sponsors occasional book discussions. We invite parishioners to participate in Eucharistic adoration every Friday at St. Julia Church from noon to 3:00 pm and every First Friday at St. Joseph Church from 9:30 am to 10:30 am. Please check the bulletin or parish website www.stjulia.org throughout the year for more information on these enriching spiritual opportunities.

What Gifts Can You Share?

“There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit;

there are all sorts of service to be done,

but always to the same Lord;

working in all sorts of different ways in different people,

it is the same God who is working in all of them.”

- St. Paul, I Corinthians 12: 4-11

In a faith community like Saint Julia Parish we cannot function for the good of the Reign of God without the freely given gifts of the members. We invite you to consider prayerfully your unique gifts. Can you help with the Family Mass, set-up coffee and doughnuts, assist in your child’s class, supervise our office during our Sunday sessions or be a table leader for the seventh and eighth graders? If you can offer your time and talent once a year, once a month, once a week, please contact the Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, Anne Marie Mahoney at ammahoney@stjulia.org or Susan Bayard, Pastoral Associate for Community Outreach at sbayard@stjulia.org.

Child Safety Program

The Archdiocesan of Boston mandates that every parish provide a proscribed child safety program for the elementary grades every year. This child-abuse-prevention lesson will discuss ways to stay safe at home, in school, with friends, and especially when encountering adults in unfamiliar settings. Our presenter this year will be Ann Marie Huff, parishioner and former Coordinator of Religious Education in Billerica. Parents are expected to participate with their children. In January you will receive more information about this program. Dates:

Grade 1-4	Sunday, February 5	Weston
Grade 1-4	Monday, February 6	Weston and Lincoln
Grade 1-4	Tuesday, February 7	Weston
Grade 5, 6	Sunday, January 29	Weston
Grade 5, 6	Monday, January 30	Weston and Lincoln
Grade 5	Tuesday, January 31	Weston
Grade 7	Sunday, March 25	12:15 pm to 4:45 pm

Attendance

Regular class attendance is essential to your child's successful participation in the Religious Education program. Our lessons build on one another and a missed class is missed information which is difficult to recapture. While we understand a missed class due to illness or injury, or an important family commitment, we expect students to attend every session. Students and families must make religious education a priority, along with sports, school activities, homework and vacations. We encourage parents to make up missed work with their child. A child who misses too many classes may find it difficult to move forward into the next grade. Students and parents in the sacrament grades who miss too many classes or workshops will not be adequately prepared to receive the sacrament. Parents should contact the Director to make arrangements for any child who has a long term illness or disability.

Please choose your child's class session carefully. **Do not try to overlap another activity, practice or lesson with religious education class.** Frequent late arrival or early dismissal is disruptive to the class, disrespectful of the volunteer catechist, and unfair to your child. If a student must leave class early on a particular occasion, a parent should write a note to the teacher and come

to the Director's office in Weston or to Cathy Capizzi in Lincoln, to pick up the student. A child may leave the building only with a parent or other pre-designated adult. Students will not be allowed to meet a parent in the parking lot. This rule is solely for the protection of the child.

C a n c e l l a t i o n

In case of inclement weather, we will follow the directions given for the Weston and Lincoln Public Schools for the Monday and Tuesday classes. **If the Weston or Lincoln Public Schools are closed or dismissed early due to weather, Religious Education classes in that town are cancelled. If Weston or Lincoln cancels after-school activities, Religious Education classes in that town will be cancelled as well. We will run an announcement on television Channels 4 and 7 and WBZ AM 1030 radio.**

On Sundays our office staff and catechists will attempt to contact families if classes will be cancelled. A voice-mail announcement will also be placed on the Religious Education telephone: 781-899-4734. Ultimately, parents should judge whether to bring their children to class.

A r r i v a l a n d D i s m i s s a l

Sunday, Monday and Tuesday

Students who are not bussed should arrive promptly for the beginning of each class. Children should be picked up promptly, as well. Please be considerate of the volunteer teacher who may be going to the 11:15 am Mass or rushing home to make dinner.

In Weston – Beware the Construction!

Please park your car and meet your child in the lower lobby of the Parish Center. Traffic patterns around Saint Julia property will be altered during the renovation of the church. Construction workers and vehicles will be present so please use extra caution especially on Monday and Tuesday. We ask for your patience and care while some areas of the lot and driveway are blocked off or through traffic is limited. Be extra alert, especially during bad weather and the dark evening hours, for small children who become invisible in a lot full of huge SUVs.

In Lincoln

Please park in the public lot across the street from the church. **Please do not park, idle, or drive through the Ryan Estates property.** This is not church property and creates a hazard for everyone. The spaces beside the church are reserved for our catechists, who may be carrying heavy books and materials. Please pick up your child in his/her class area at the end of the session.

Sunday Evening

Many students come to the Sunday evening session directly from the 5:00 pm Mass, which we encourage. However, if you are dropping your children off for class, *please* make sure they arrive at 6:00 pm. Students who are wandering into the 7th and 8th Grade session or the high school Confirmation Program as late as 6:45 pm are extremely disruptive. They are often not marked as present and/or do not end up at their table or in their chosen class. The Sunday evening session meets only 16 times a year for 75 minutes. Something good is happening every one of those minutes. Don't miss it!

B u s s e s t o W e s t o n C l a s s e s

It is the practice in the Weston Public Schools to allow students to ride the school bus to St. Julia Parish Center for Religious Education classes on Monday and Tuesday afternoons. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange for their child to take the bus to St. Julia Parish Center on their class day.

When a child will be absent from Religious Education class on a Monday or a Tuesday at the Weston site, it is very important that a parent call our office (781-899-4734) and report that absence. After all the children have arrived for class, we check the attendance and call the parents of any child who is not present and whose absence has not already been reported to us. We want to make sure that every child who should be present in class has arrived safely.

R e s p e c t f u l B e h a v i o r

We expect students to come to class ready to learn and ready to participate in a thoughtful, respectful, and prayerful manner. Learning about our faith should be a positive and enjoyable experience for all. Our catechists are volunteers; most are not professional teachers. If a student is

disruptive he/she will be removed from the class and required to finish the lesson on his/her own in the office. If the disrespectful behavior continues we will require the parent to accompany the child to class.

A student may not bring any items to class that are not of immediate relevance to the lesson. This includes toys, games, portable music players, books, magazines, cosmetics, food and, especially, cell phones in all their many forms. **Cell phones will be confiscated, since texting during class has become a distracting problem.** We make office telephones readily available to students who must call a parent. No one needs to have a cell phone in class. We can hear the voice of the Spirit only when we welcome silence into our lives.

Textbooks

Grades 1-6

Our Religious Education program uses the Sadlier “We Believe” series for Grades 1 through 6. Each grade level covers core Catholic beliefs, sacraments, prayer and the liturgical seasons of the year, using a grade appropriate theme. The series begins with *God Loves Us* in Grade 1 and continues through *Jesus Shares God’s Love*, *We Are the Church*, *God’s Law Guides Us*, *We Meet Jesus in the Sacraments*, to *We Are God’s People* in Grade 6. Each text is colorful and well written, and it includes ample space for a student’s individual written responses. The pages of the book tear out so your child will be bringing home their lesson or an activity to share with their family. Occasionally children will have a chapter to complete at home because there are not enough weeks to present all the chapters in class.

Children should bring home an at-home page from the chapter each week. These include activities and discussion points for use at home. Ask your child about the sheet and take time to complete it or discuss it with him/her.

Grades 7 and 8

These grades meet together and will focus on the theme, *Being Catholic* this year. These classes will include guest speakers, activities, video, and faith sharing based on this theme. The students will use the new Loyola Press text in their “Finding God” series, *Celebrating Church*.

Confirmation Program

This high school program is built around an array of offerings from which the students choose. There are single sessions with a speaker or a special presentation as well as mini-courses, service

opportunities and the Youth Group. The program is described in detail in a Confirmation Handbook which every student in the program will receive. These students will use a variety of material as resources, published primarily by Sadlier, Loyola Press and Saint Mary's Press.

S n a c k s

Weston

Children who come to Sunday morning classes will not have snacks in class because they are coming from home or Mass and Cafe Julia. Class begins at 10:10 am to allow those children who have attended the Family Mass to share juice and doughnuts with their parents. **Please do not drop your child at 10:00 am expecting that he/she will be given doughnuts and juice. Join us for Mass and mingling at Café Julia with your child.**

Since children in the Monday and Tuesday sessions are coming directly from school, catechists will form a plan with the parents of their children for providing healthy snacks. **Please avoid bringing snacks with nuts or nut products since many children are allergic to nuts.** All food and drink must be removed from the classroom at the end of the class to avoid rodent infestation. This year, no "extra snacks" will be kept in the office for this reason.

Lincoln

Children have had an opportunity to go home and have a snack before coming to class at 4:00 pm. Therefore, students will not have snacks in the Lincoln setting.

H e a l t h a n d S a f e t y

Students who have life-threatening allergies, who are on medication, or who have other health issues, should be identified on their registration form. Teachers will be given this information in order to protect the well-being of the child. Parents may wish to discuss use of an epi-pen or inhaler with a teacher. Parents of children who are on medication for ADHD should choose class times that coincide with the medication cycle or plan to assist in the child's class. Volunteer teachers cannot be expected to handle students during off-medication periods.

In the event that we experience a virulent flu season this year, we may have to cancel some classes due to lack of catechists or a large number of ill students. Parents will be notified by e-mail.

Sacrament Preparation

Preparing for any sacrament should be a family experience. While the focus is on the child who may be receiving Baptism, Confirmation or Eucharist and Reconciliation for the first time, the instruction includes parents as well. We structure our preparation for Eucharist and Reconciliation in a family-friendly environment and Confirmation is a teen-friendly format. While we attempt to make preparation enjoyable, receiving a sacrament is still a serious commitment for all involved. We remind students and parents that adequate preparation requires their presence and seriousness of purpose.

Baptism

We expect that all children who register for class are baptized Roman Catholics. If a child has not been baptized in St. Julia Church or St. Joseph Church we require a copy of the baptismal certificate, which we keep on file in anticipation of the reception of other sacraments.

Children who wish to become Roman Catholic may enter the program. They will require additional instruction and preparation for their Baptism or for a profession of faith. Children older than second grade, who were baptized Catholic but have not received the Sacraments of Eucharist or Reconciliation, will require instruction in addition to regular grade level classes. We can arrange catching-up instruction for these children either individually or in small, age appropriate groups.

Parents who wish to inquire about becoming Catholic are invited to participate in our Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program. Please contact the Permanent Deacon, Guy St. Sauveur, at deaconguy@verizon.net for more information.

Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be celebrated for our second graders who are prepared on Saturday, February 11 at 10:30 am and 1:00 pm. This is a family celebration. (Snow date is Saturday, March 3 at 10:30 am and 1:00 pm.)

Preparation for Reconciliation is incorporated into the second grade class work. In addition, parents must attend one parent meeting and parents with their children must attend the workshop in preparation for the sacrament. A special Reconciliation book will be given to the children to complete at home.

The Parent Meeting is offered twice:

Sunday, November 6 from 10:00 am to 11:10 am.
Monday, November 7 from 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm.

The Parent and Child Workshop is offered twice:

Saturday, January 21 from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm.
Saturday, January 28 from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm.

Eucharist

First Eucharist for second graders will be celebrated at one of four regular parish Masses in May:

Sunday, Apr. 29 at 10:30 Mass at St. Joseph Church
Sunday, May 6 at 9:00 Mass at St. Julia Church
Saturday, May 12 at 4:00 Mass at St. Julia Church
Sunday, May 13 at 11:15 Mass at St. Julia Church

We make every effort to give families who sign up on time their first choice of Mass day and time. Sign-up will take place at the Eucharist Parent Meeting. Preparation for receiving the Eucharist for the first time is part of the regular second grade curriculum. Students will also complete a special Eucharist book at home. As with the other sacraments, parents and families are an integral part of the preparation process. Parents will attend one of the parent meetings and parents, with their children, will attend one of the workshops.

The Parent Meeting is offered twice:

Sunday, March 4 from 10:00 am to 11:10 am
Monday, March 5 from 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm

The Parent and Child Workshop is offered twice:

Saturday, March 17 from 11:00 to 2:30 pm
Saturday, March 31 from 11:00 to 2:30 pm

The workshops for both sacraments are identical and will include interactive instruction, video, games, music and crafts. The Eucharist workshop is built around banner making and a pot-luck

lunch. These are wonderful family gatherings where siblings are welcome. We have made every effort in our scheduling to accommodate Martin Luther King weekend as well as the February public school and March private school vacation breaks.

Confirmation

The celebration of Confirmation at Saint Julia Parish has now changed to the spring. Those students who are moving into their second, third, or fourth year of the program and who will complete the requirements by April, 2012 will be confirmed on Saturday, May 5 at the 4:00 pm Mass. Please see the Confirmation brochure for further details.

St. Julia Parish Confirmation preparation is a program of classes, service, Youth Group, a retreat and other activities. It is planned in accordance with the Archdiocese of Boston guidelines. It is designed to give individual high school students flexibility in completing the stated parish requirements within their busy school and sport schedules. Students may progress at their own pace, choosing from single and multiple session courses, speakers, movie discussions and off-site opportunities. **Every high school student will receive the Confirmation 2011-2012 Handbook which details the requirements and offerings.**

It is important that students enter Confirmation preparation having already participated in the Religious Education program in the prior grades. (Accommodations are made for students who attend a Catholic high school. Please consult the Confirmation Handbook.) Parents and students of ninth graders will be invited to a very important Confirmation orientation on September 25 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the Campion Retreat Center. All relevant information and forms will be presented and discussed at that time.

Please note, Confirmation is both an individual and a community-based sacramental celebration. Students who prepare for Confirmation in St. Julia Parish are expected to receive the sacrament here. Please note, Catholic school retreats are not a substitute for the parish Confirmation Retreat.

Grade Six Mini-Retreat: Revisiting Reconciliation

Sunday, February 12, from 9:00 Mass to 12:00.

This brief “retreat” is an integral piece of the Grade 6 program. It is prepared in cooperation with Youth Ministry. It is an opportunity for these pre-adolescents to gather together to participate actively in the Eucharist and to expand and deepen their understanding and practice of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Through games and group activities the students prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the conclusion of the retreat.

Grade Seven Mini-Retreat: Relationships and Safety

Sunday, March 25, from 12:15 pm to 4:45 pm

This retreat combines the Archdiocesan Chastity and Child Safety programs in a fun and interactive format that will appeal to young teens. The program focuses on healthy boy-girl relationships and how to safely deal with adults. Our guest facilitator, Susan Murphy, Our Lady of Fatima DRE, has developed a insightful program for parents and students that will provoke thoughtful conversation and discussion. Parents are expected to attend this afternoon event with their child.

Schedule of Liturgies

Weekend Masses

Saint Julia Church

Saturday Vigil Mass	4:00 pm
Sunday Masses	9:00 am, 11:15 am, 5:00 pm
Family Mass	Sunday at 9:00 am

Saint Joseph Church

Sunday Masses	7:30 am and 10:30 am
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Daily Mass

Saint Julia Church

Mon., Wed., Thu., and Fri.	7:00 am
Saturday	8:00 am
Civic Holidays	8:00 am

Saint Joseph Church

Tuesday and Friday	9:00 am
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Holy Day Masses as announced for both churches.

O u r F a t h e r

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.

H a i l M a r y

Hail, Mary, full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

A c t o f C o n t r i t i o n

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In His name, my God, have mercy. Amen.