



SAINT ROSE OF LIMA

Whole Parish Catechesis

# *Whole Parish Catechesis Household Handbook*

**Saint Rose of Lima Church  
PO Box 88  
Oxford, New Jersey 07863**

## **Sunday Mornings: Weekly**

Grades: K through Third and Adults

8:45—10:00 am

## **Monday Evenings: Bi-Weekly**

Grades: Third through Eighth and Adults

6:15—8:30 pm

Reverend Richard Rusk, Pastor  
Reverend Andrew Wieliczko, Parochial Vicar  
Mrs. Chris Haring, PCL  
908-453-2636  
[www.w-p-c.org/strose.htm](http://www.w-p-c.org/strose.htm)

### **Mission Statement**

Saint Rose of Lima Church is committed to teach the Gospel Message and the true doctrine, practices and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church in a manner that reflects the teachings of Jesus. We will convey the Gospel Message in the format of Whole Parish Catechesis.

### **Whole Parish Catechesis**

Whole Parish Catechesis is a vision of faith formation that is rooted in the documents of Vatican II, the *General Directory for Catechesis*, and other catechetical documents. It promotes faith formation as an ongoing and lifelong process that can be greatly supported by intergenerational learning and interaction.

Through developing opportunities for prayer, journaling, faith sharing, building households of faith, reflecting on God's Word and promoting active service and outreach, all members of the community of faith are supported in their own faith formation and are invited to reclaim their personal and collective role in the formation of all other members of the community.

The Whole Parish Catechesis vision recognizes and celebrates everyone at all ages as having an equal role and responsibility within the Christian community. Children are as important in the catechetical process as ever. At the same time, we will expand our efforts to support quality catechesis for all generations as well.

### **Saint Rose of Lima Church WPC Website**

Any and all important information pertaining to Whole Parish Catechesis can be found online at our WPC Website: [www.w-p-c.org/strose.htm](http://www.w-p-c.org/strose.htm)

### **Suggestions to Parents/Guardians**

A loving God-centered home is most essential for the development of faith and the living of faith. As primary and principle educators of your children, be faithful to the Church. Worship with your children at home and in Church. Let them see old and young alike in a common spirit of prayer and celebration. Attendance at Mass, whether on Sunday or Saturday night is required by the Roman Catholic Church. The precepts of the church specify the law of the Lord more precisely: *“On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass.”* Please keep in mind that children cannot bring themselves to church. You, who are most dear to them, and who will forever be their greatest influence, must show them the way to God, by your good example. Actions speak louder than words

### **Good Example**

Needless to say a major way parents participate in nurturing the faith of their children in the context of Whole Parish Catechesis is by demonstrating through their example and lifestyle that they both value and enjoy their own faith and relationship with Jesus and the Church. Parent and family participation in Whole Parish Catechesis is a major component in building a *Household of Faith*. Studies verify that parents continue to exercise the single most important influence on the formation of their children's values from infancy through high school. Parents are the primary and principle educators. The first school is the family in which children learn to live in society and in the Church. Whole Parish Catechesis provides support for your endeavors.

***“The family is, so to speak, the Domestic Church. It is in the family that parents are by their word and example, the first preachers of the faith to their children.” CCC: 1656***

On a practical level, the good example being asked of parents means our ***routine Christian behavior***. Whatever you do that ***flows from your Catholic faith life*** is good example. One form of this good example is attending catechetical assemblies together as a family. This says that as an adult you value your own faith.

Regular attendance at Mass, the study of Catholic teachings, faith sharing, personal prayer, concern for the less fortunate, involvement in your parish – these are all good example. None of them requires any special skills or large amounts of time or effort.

### **Registration Fee**

The registration fee, which helps to minimally cover our expenses, is \$55.00 for one child, \$70.00 for 2 children and \$85.00 for 3 or more children in the family. Children in grades 2 and 8 will be charged an additional \$25.00 to cover the extra costs of sacramental preparation. A timely payment of the required fees would be much appreciated. If due to extenuating circumstances you are unable to pay, please notify either the rectory or the Catechesis office. Your information will be kept strictly confidential.

### **Book Fee**

Due to the high cost of textbooks and that they are consumed each year, there is an added book fee. Total fees can be paid in full or in three installments due in September, November, and January. If due to extenuating circumstances you are unable to pay, please notify either the rectory or the Catechesis office. Your information will be kept strictly confidential.

Confirmation (Grade 7 & 8-to be used 2 years) - Youth Bible \$19.00, Teen

Catechism \$8.00 and Theology of the Body \$10.00

First Communion (Grade 2) - Reconciliation \$12.00 and Eucharist \$12.00

All Other Grade Textbooks (Sunday) Grades K, 1, 3, - \$12.00 each for the first textbook and \$10.00 for each one thereafter. (Monday) Grades 3, 4, 5, 6 - Bible Workbook \$8.00 each.

### **Attendance**

If a child is absent it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to work with the child on the missed class work. As 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades only meet two times a month it is vital that learners be present for every session unless illness or other serious reasons prevent attendance. As stated in the Diocesan Guidelines: **ONLY 3 ABSENCES ARE PERMITTED EACH YEAR AND SPORTS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ARE NOT AN ACCEPTABLE REASON FOR ABSENCE. *Excessive absence will result in repetition of the current year.***

### **Attendance in the Sacramental Years**

During the Confirmation ceremony, the Pastor and PCL must verify to the Bishop that the candidates are properly prepared to receive the sacrament. In order to honestly say so, we will keep track of attendance at each assembly. It is vital that learners be present for every session

unless illness or other serious reasons prevent attendance. As stated in the Diocesan guidelines; **SPORTS CANNOT BE AN ACCEPTABLE REASON FOR ABSENCE.** If a child is absent, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to work with the child on the missed class work and household of faith work. Each child will receive a lesson plan to use for the year.

***EXCESSIVE ABSENCE WILL RESULT IN REPETITION OF THE CURRENT YEAR.***

Your efforts in regular attendance will greatly improve your family's catechetical experience. Children preparing for the sacraments are required to attend 2 consecutive years in grades 1 & 2 and 7 & 8. For those learners that are transferring in, we will require documentation that the student has been attending religious education regularly in their previous parish.

### **Attendance Reports**

Should any young learner have excessive absences, parents will be notified in writing that they are in danger of repetition of the current year. Excessive absence means any attendance pattern that falls outside of the Diocesan guidelines.

### **MASS ATTENDANCE**

In preparation for receiving the **Sacrament of First Eucharist and Confirmation**, it is mandatory that 2<sup>nd</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders attend Mass every Sunday. This requirement is necessary for several reasons. It prepares the second grader for participation in the Mass for First Holy Communion and for the Confirmation Candidates; **it fills the Church Precepts that require Catholics to attend Mass every Sunday.** In order to track both Sacramental Mass attendances, envelopes will be provided to be placed in the collection basket each week. If attending Mass at another parish, the Sunday bulletin from that church must be handed in to the Catechist at the following WPC session.

### **Faith Work Assignments**

Assignments are given at all assemblies for the weeks when we do not gather for a WPC session. These assignments are a meaningful and necessary activity that supplements and extends the work done in the assemblies. Faith Work is given as a means of expanding catechesis when we do not meet. This simple but significant task has a dramatic impact on learning.

1. Faith Work doubles the amount of learning time
2. Faith Work increases the amount of learning by 50%
3. Faith Work significantly improves learner involvement
4. Faith Work gives the learners a sense of responsibility for their faith growth

Faith Work is not the same as homework and should not be treated as such. To help families understand the difference between Faith Work and homework, a WPC Faith Work Manual will be provided. Please follow the guidelines in the manual when completing your Faith Work

### **Behavior / Discipline**

Jesus has asked us to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. As we all strive to follow Jesus, we will be aware of showing respect and courtesy to each other. Your encouragement and cooperation in helping your children to live God's law of love is essential.

In connection with good discipline, no child should bring to an assembly any sharp or dangerous objects. A good rule of thumb is to follow the airline guidelines. If you can't take it on a plane then a learner cannot bring it to an assembly. Should any unsafe object be found in a child's possession and the parent is not present, it will be confiscated by the catechist. The object will be sent to the office where a parent will have to retrieve it. On a first offense there will be a warning. On a repeated offense the learner runs the risk of being removed from assemblies. This same policy will also apply to cell phones and/or electronic media. They will be confiscated not because they are dangerous but because they are a large disruption in a gathering.

### **Memorization**

Knowledge of certain elements of Catholic belief is best acquired by memorization. Pope John Paul II pointed out that *"the blossoms... of faith and piety do not grow in the desert places of a memory less catechesis. What is essential is that the texts that are memorized must at the same time be taken in and gradually understood in depth, in order to become a source of Christian life on the personal level and the community level."*

### **Special Needs / Learning Disabilities**

Parents/Guardians should alert the PCL and catechists if your child has learning disabilities. It is vital that we are aware of the specific disability so that we can tailor your child's instruction to suit their learning styles. Consideration will be given on how to instruct and evaluate any pupil with special needs.

### **Health Issues**

It is common for children to have serious and even life threatening allergies or other health conditions. It is imperative that the office and catechist be advised of any such conditions and/or needs your child may have. We will do everything in our power to keep your family healthy and safe. Allergy, medical and emergency forms are kept on file in the assembly and in the office for every child. This is to maximize our ability to protect your child's health and safety. When you receive these forms to be completed please do so and return them to the parish catechesis office as soon as possible.

### **Emergency Closing**

Emergency closings, due to inclement weather or emergency will be announced on the answering machine at the WPC Office at the following number: 908-453-2636 and also on the WPC Website.

### **Change of Address or Phone**

Please notify the WPC Office immediately if you should have a change of address or phone number, so that we may have accurate records should we need to contact you for any reason. If you are moving out of the parish then we would appreciate notification that you are withdrawing your family from the parish program.

### **The Calendar**

Please note the changes in the calendar each year. The year extends from September to May. Our Classes **DO NOT** follow the public school calendar. Secular holidays **DO NOT** always

affect our calendar. When in doubt be sure to check the calendar attached to the end of this handbook or on the WPC Website: [www.w-p-c.org/strose.htm](http://www.w-p-c.org/strose.htm)

### **Confessions**

It is our goal to provide Confession for assembly members. Confessions will occur a minimum of twice a year, once during/near Advent and once during/near Lent. Parents should, however, take their children to confession at other times during the year. Young learners who do not go to confession on a regular basis are often embarrassed and insecure when faced with receiving this sacrament because they forget the format and the prayers involved.

### **The Curriculum**

A copy of our Whole Parish Catechesis Curriculum will be provided for every participating family. Our curriculum is a living document in that it is ever evolving and changing. The curriculum for Whole Parish Catechesis is a spiral scope and sequence that approaches every topic at every age group. This is done in an age appropriate manner. We have expanded our curriculum to include all age groups from 5 to 95. The subject matter being offered goes beyond our assembly walls and into your homes. You will find that on every age level we include Households of Faith Work assignments and required community service hours. The vision of Whole Parish Catechesis is based on the belief that catechesis does not occur in only one format and that catechesis never ends. It recognizes, rather, that catechesis is a lifelong process that occurs in many different ways at different times and in different places. You may find a copy of our WPC Curriculum on the WPC Website.

### **Instructional Materials**

Textbooks are a major source for instructional material. In Whole Parish Catechesis, textbooks will be *A Call To Faith for Grades 1 through 6*, published by Harcourt Brace and *The Catholic Youth Bible and Textbook* published by St. Mary's Press for Grades 7 & 8. These texts will be sent home each week for the faith work assignment and it is your responsibility to bring them back for each assembly/class. The textbooks will provide only a portion of the material used for instruction. Aside from printed material, mixed media will be incorporated into the catechists plan for instruction. The assembly will also contain the use of Bibles, Hymnals, prayer books and journals. In addition to texts for young learners there will be instructional booklets from the *Growing Faith Project* for adult learners. Both the booklets and texts are aligned by topics and in keeping with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

### **Learner Safety Protocol**

In accordance with Diocesan mandates, we are adhering to a new Learner Safety Protocol. As an institution of catechesis, we have an ethical and legal responsibility to provide a safe atmosphere for learners of all ages, instructors, aides and support staff alike.

### **Crisis Management Plan:**

In light of the nation's heightened state of alert, we have put into place a Crisis Management Plan. This plan will work together with local law enforcement, fire and public safety agencies.

In the event of a local emergency we will be notified by the authorities. Immediately thereafter, we will go into “Lock-Down” mode. In Lock-Down all learners will be secured either in the church basement or in the Parish Center. We are prepared to keep them there safely until we receive and all-clear form the authorities.

In case of an evacuation, the authorities are aware of our assembly schedules and will contact and relocate us. We will assume Lock-Down mode until we are removed and relocated to a safer environment. When we have safely arrived we will then attempt to notify families of our location. We are unable to contact you before then because we will not be apprised of our new location until we are there. It is our intent to keep all members’ safe and secure at all times.

### **Sexual Harassment:**

Sexual harassment is any activity of a sexual nature that is unwanted or unwelcome, including but not limited to: unwanted touching, pinching, patting, verbal comments, of a sexual nature, sexual name – calling, pressure to engage in sexual activity, repeated propositions, and unwanted body contact. Learners, who engage in sexual harassment, while engaged in catechetical activities or on parish property, will be subject to appropriate discipline which may include removal from the program and/or legal action.

In the event of an incident, the occurrence will be documented; adults will meet with the pastor and PCL to pursue an investigation to determine if sexual harassment occurred and the appropriate response.

### **Evidence of Threats:**

Evidence of a threat is when a learner either in writing or verbally expresses a desire to cause harm to himself or others. Learners who present a threat either to themselves or others while engaged in catechetical activities or on parish property will be subject to an immediate and strict response to the threat. The learner will be removed from the program and not allowed to return unless a written statement from a doctor that the person is no danger to himself or others has been submitted to the Parish Catechetical Leader. This written recommendation should be the result of a full psychological evaluation. ***All threats, no matter how trivial they seem, must be taken seriously and dealt with immediately. NO EXCEPTIONS!***

### **Staff Abuse:**

Staff abuse is any activity of a threatening nature including verbal and/or physical abuse. Most cases of staff abuse occur when a learner engages in verbal attacks against a catechist. It is considered abuse whether or not they engage in foul language. It may be statements of disrespect or actual threats of future physical harm. On rare occasions an angry or out of control learner may strike someone in authority, shove another person or they may hurl books, chairs, objects, etc. Learners who engage in staff abuse while participating in catechetical activities or on parish property will be subject to appropriate discipline which may include removal from the program and/or legal action. When an incident occurs it will be documented. Adults will meet with the pastor and PCL to determine what happened and the appropriate course of action. Those actions may involve reprimand, removal from the program and/or a legal complaint.

### **Drugs:**

Drugs are never allowed on church premises. If a learner is found to be in possession, they will be detained until the police are notified. It will be determined by the Pastor and PCL whether the learner will be allowed to return for catechesis. If a staff member should realize that a driver is visibly impaired and in no condition to drive, we reserve the right to refuse to allow a learner to go home in that vehicle. The PCL also reserves the right to call an emergency number to have the young learner picked up.

**Fingerprinting:**

All catechists, aides and support staff are fingerprinted as a matter of course and precaution. This is to verify that there is no criminal record in any one's background. This will further ensure that all learners are in a safe environment when in attendance.

**Handbook Protocol**

**After reading this publication it is essential that you review all of the pertinent material with all members of your household. All policies and protocols will be most effective if you discuss them as a family and ensure that everyone understands what is expected of them. Your continued support is always valued and appreciated.**

**Whole Parish Catechesis Calendar for Sunday Mornings - Grades K-3 and Adults - 8:45-10:00am**

**September 2008– April 2009**

September – 14, 21, 28

October – 5, 12, 19, 26

November – 2, 9, 16, 23

December - 7, 14

January - 4, 11, 18, 25

February - 1, 8, 22 (Ash Wednesday, Feb 25)

March - 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

April - 5, 19, 26 (Easter April 12)

**Whole Parish Catechesis Calendar for Monday Nights - Grades 4-8 and Adults 6:30-8:30pm**

**September 2008– April 2009**

September – 15, 29

October – 6, 20

November – 3, 17

December - 1, 15

January - 5, 19

February - 2, 23 (Ash Wednesday, Feb 25)

March - 9, 23

April - 6, 20, 27 (Easter April 12)

Added First Communion and Confirmation dates will be announced late