



St. John the Evangelist Catholic Parish

Religious Education Pre K—11 Handbook 2021 — 2022



Please save your Religious Education information handbook, which includes updates to our safety precautions, a removable class calendar for the year, location of classes, and ways to get involved with our parish community.

St. John the Evangelist Parish
Religious Education Office

833 Main Street
Agawam, MA 01001
www.stjohnagawam.com

YouTube Page: *St John the Evangelist Church*
Parishioners share activities on the Facebook Page:
Friends of St. John the Evangelist Parish — Agawam, MA
Email: sje.religiouseducation@gmail.com

Tel: 413-786-8105, ext. 103

Fax: 413-455-3100

Mission Statement

St. John the Evangelist's Religious Education program helps to support parents in their responsibility as the primary educators of their children. By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, our goal is to provide direction and information to help parents in catechesis, and the religious, moral, and spiritual formation of their children through nurturing, engaging, and faith-filled environments and materials. Through the cooperative effort of parents, catechists, and students, our children will grow and deepen their Christian faith and identity, and build a strong and lasting relationship with Jesus Christ.

Participation Forms and Fees

All children are welcome! :)

Registrations are available in the office or on the website. Participation fees are \$55.00 per child, \$100.00 for two or more children.

Cash or check only, please.

The participation fee is waived for children of those who volunteer as catechists. If you are new to the parish, please call the Parish Office and we can assist you in registration.

St. John's 

What We Practice

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The 10 Commandments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me. 2. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain. 3. Remember to keep holy the LORD'S Day. 4. Honor your father and your mother. 5. You shall not kill. 6. You shall not commit adultery. 7. You shall not steal. 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. 10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Precepts of the Church</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation 2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year. 3. You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season. 4. You shall keep holy the holy days of obligation. 5. You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence. <p>The faithful also have the duty of providing for the material needs of the Church, each according to his abilities.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Holy Days of Obligation</u></p> <p>November 1, 2021 — All Saints</p> <p>December 8, 2021 — Immaculate Conception</p> <p>December 25, 2021 — Christmas</p> <p>January 1, 2022 — Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God</p> <p>May 26, 2022 — Ascension of Jesus</p> <p>April 17, 2022 — Easter</p> <p>August 15, 2022 — Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Seven Sacraments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baptism 2. Confirmation 3. First Eucharist 4. Holy Orders 5. Matrimony 6. Confession/Penance 7. Anointing of the Sick
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Spiritual Works of Mercy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Counseling the Doubtful 2. Instructing the Ignorant 3. Admonishing the Sinner 4. Comforting the Sorrowful 5. Forgiving Injuries 6. Bearing Wrongs Patiently 7. Praying for the Living and the Dead 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Corporal Works of Mercy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feed the Hungry 2. Give Drink to the Thirsty 3. Shelter the Homeless 4. Visit the Sick 5. Visit the Prisoners 6. Bury the Dead 7. Give Alms to the Poor

St. John's 

Welcome!

Welcome back! Myself and our Religious Education team are so excited to invite you to another year of Religious Education at St. John's! Despite all the difficulties of last year (something I know we all felt), it was so great to be with you all throughout the year for our monthly and bi-weekly classes, and now it is even better to plan to see each other more frequently!

The mission of St. John's Religious Education program is to assist you, the parents and primary catechists of your children, to help your child develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Studies show that only when parents are involved in their faith are children able to develop a greater appreciation of their faith as well. They need the example of faith in the everyday, and you are their first and primary example—do not take it lightly! Your children follow where you lead them, and live by your example.

To help you in this mission (because it is a HUGE one), our Religious Education is going to be undergoing some changes. We learned a lot last year, and I was surprised and pleased with the feedback. As we experienced learning as a familial unit, it became apparent where and how we were failing to meet the needs of the entire family in previous years. While classes will not be like they were last year during the pandemic, they also are not completely going back to the way they were before either. We are embarking on a new journey — one that I hope will enable families to experience together what it means to be Catholic.

Therefore, our program continues to not be a drop off program. Parents and child will attend together for grades PreK-8, with grade and parent separate learning on certain weeks. While the students work through their material, the parents will have their own discussion about the materials with time for Q&A. I am so excited to begin!

I am so eager to start, and know it will be a great year! You continue to be in my prayers.

God Bless,

Claire Riberdy

St. John's Religious Education Policies

Attendance

Many dedicated parishioners come forward as Catechists and volunteer their time and talents to teach your children to reflect and understand God's message. As we do our best to honor your limited time and schedule, I ask that you please offer the same to us. Please be sure to attend classes on Sundays, and complete the work at home.

Attendance is necessary for an effective process. We want your child to know and love Jesus, just like you do, and through attending and being truly present to Him we hope to help with that goal.

For our younger grades, this is not a drop off program. Parents are expected to come and be with their student during the learning process. Your support plays an important role in how open your children are to the Religious Education process.

If your child is absent, please email sje.religiouseducation@gmail.com and let us know.

Mass Attendance

Attending Mass with your child is vitally important to their religious education. Throughout the course of their classes, your children will be learning about the different parts of the Mass. As the subject will often be brought up, it is difficult for your child to understand the Mass if they are not regularly attending.

If you, the parent, are unable to attend Mass one week, we have volunteers who are willing to sit with a group of children at the 10:30am Family Mass so they can attend. This will ensure that your child will not miss out on the Sacrament.

If you do plan to have your child attend Mass with one of our volunteers, please inform the Director of Religious Education at least two days in advance.

Communication

In this program, we try our best to support parents in their role as primary educators of their children. To do this, we ask that parents are open and honest with us about their expectations, struggles with behavior, and allergies/special needs.

In return, our Religious Education Team will strive to be open and honest in what the expectations of the program are, the behaviors we observe in the classroom, and any other pertinent information.

We will also do our best to be prompt with information regarding: scheduling, class routines, at home assignments, or any other class materials.

Please feel free to reach out to the Director of Religious Education at any time with questions, concerns, or complaints.

5
sje.religiouseducation@gmail.com | 413.786.8105, ext. 103

The logo for St. John's features the text "St. John's" in a cursive script, with a quill pen positioned above the word "John's".

St. John's Religious Education Policies

Cancellation of Class

All Religious Education class cancellations will be noted on our Parish Website (www.stjohnagawam.com), and local WWLP (Ch. 20). This does not mean that Mass will be cancelled—only Religious Education. If it is a day for your child to serve/greet at Mass, please come at your discretion.

Information may also be available at the Facebook Page (Friends of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Parish — Agawam, MA), but this is a volunteer run page so please check the other sources as well.

Fire and Emergency Safety

From the church: the fire exits are each clearly marked by signs, as well as a fire exit plan posted in the main entrance of the church. Each family would exit through the closest fire exit, and walk in an orderly fashion across the parking lot to the Pastoral Center. A final sweep of the church will be done by the director.

From the lower church: each classroom has a fire evacuation route posted on the wall near the door. Each class will depart the building in an orderly fashion from the identified door, and calmly and in an organized fashion proceed across the parking lot to the Pastoral Center gym where each teacher will then review the names of the children. A final sweep of the building will be done by the director.

From the Pastoral Center: proceed out of the identified doorway and continue in an orderly fashion to the lawn area by the garage. Once there, roll call will be taken, assuring that all attendees are in place. A final sweep of the building will be done by the director.

A fire prevention plan will be discussed and/or practiced during the year.

Sacramental Preparation

Please note that for First Communion preparation and Confirmation preparation, your child must attend scheduled classes at St. John's, as well as regularly attend Mass. All children must first interview/have a discussion with the Director of Religious Education before entering First Communion and/or Confirmation Class. Another interview will take place before the Sacrament takes place.

First Communion & Confirmation students have extra studies/responsibilities to show they are suitably prepared. The Director will be in touch with you to communicate the expectations well before the Sacrament takes place.

Before a student may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, he/she must have a knowledge and understanding of the Faith. This can only be achieved through ongoing study which begins in grade one and continues through the completion of the Confirmation Program. If your child has missed a grade, please call the office to schedule make-up work.

Circle of Grace Program

Circle of Grace is a Christian safe environment curriculum that helps to form and educate children and youth about the value of positive relationships with God and others. This program is for grades 1-11 in our Religious Education program, and will take place in all the classrooms in November of 2021. Preschool and Kindergarten will not be participating in the training.

The *Circle of Grace* curriculum teaches children and youth how to identify and maintain appropriate physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual boundaries; recognize when boundary violations are about to occur; and demonstrate how to take action when boundaries are threatened or violated.

In this program, the children will:

1. understand they are created by God and live in God's love along with the love of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
2. describe the *Circle of Grace*, which God gives each of us.
3. identify and maintain appropriate physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual boundaries.
4. identify all types of boundary violations.
5. demonstrate how to take action if any boundary is threatened or violated.

The class will be facilitated by the regular Catechist, or you will be told prior to the class if there will be a substitute that day. Parents are more than welcome to review the material before the class (it will be made available via email or at the prior class), or fill out an “opt-out” form if you would rather have your child not attend.

Please feel free to contact the Director of Religious Education at 786-8105, ext. 103 with any questions or concerns about the program. We thank you for your cooperation as we work to make St. John's a safe environment for all children, families, and volunteers.

Meet our Catechists!

Grade PreK-K — Isabel & Thomas Dunn

Grade 1 — Amor Allen, Valerie Manning, Tasya Marinak

Grade 2 — Trisha Brown, Karen Mellen

Grade 3 — Anna Grady

Grade 4 — Leo Marinak & Lucy Morton

Grade 5 — Marie Brown

Grade 6 — Seth Desnoyers

Grade 7-8 — Ben Kronlund

Grade 9-10 — Deacon Dave Picard, James Manning

Grade 11 — Cara Waterman, Claire Riberdy

Grade Pre K — 8

Students will be using the "A Family of Faith" program from Sophia Institute Press. Parents & child attend together, with some activities together and some separate.

September	26- 10:30am Parish Anniversary Mass,	
	followed by Preschool Dedication and Parish Picnic!	
October	3- Parent Meeting from 9:00-10:00am	
	17- First Class! 9:00-10:15am	Theme: Faith & Creed, the nature of God, who is God the Father?
	24- Community Class in Gym 9:00-10:15am	
	31- Nature Walk with Speaker	
November	7- Class 9:00-10:15am	Theme: Imago Dei, Original Sin, Salvation History
	14- Class 9:00-10:15am	Theme: Circle of Grace
	21- Community Class in Gym 9:00-10:15am	
	26- NO CLASS — Happy Thanksgiving!	
December	5- Class 9:00-10:15am	Theme: The Annunciation, the Immaculate Conception, and the Incarnation
	12- Adoration in the church 9:00-10:15am (Praise & Worship Music, Rosary at 10:00am)	
	19- Community Class in Gym 9:00-10:15am	Jesse Tree Live!
	26- NO CLASS — MERRY CHRISTMAS	
January	2- NO CLASS — HAPPY NEW YEAR	
	9- Class 9:00-10:15am	Theme: Who is Jesus Christ?
	16- NO CLASS — Holiday Weekend	
	23- Community Class in Gym 9:00-10:15am	
	30- Guest Speaker in Gym 9:00-10:15am	
February	6- Class 9:00-10:15am	Theme: Jesus' Descent into hell, Judgement Day
	13- Community Class in Gym 9:00-10:15am	
	20- NO CLASS — Holiday Weekend	
	27- Guest Speaker in Gym 9:00-10:15am	
March	6- Class 9:00-10:15am	Theme: Marks of the Church, the Communion of Saints, review of forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting
	13- Adoration & Confessions in the church 9:00-10:15am	
	20- Community Class in Gym 9:00-10:15am	
	27- Adoration & Confessions in the church 9:00-10:15am	
April	3- Class 9:00-10:15am	Theme: The Holy Spirit, the Church
	10- The Living Stations in the Church 9:00-10:00am	
	17- NO CLASS — HAPPY EASTER	
	24- Last Class in Gym 9:00-10:15am	

St. John's 

Grade 9 — 10

Class — in person, Sundays 6:00-7:30pm

Father Joyce Room, Parish Center

October	17- Class in Father Joyce Room 24- No Class 31- Class in Father Joyce Room	
November	7- No Class 14- Class in Father Joyce Room 21- No Class 26- NO CLASS — Happy Thanksgiving!	Theme: Circle of Grace
December	5- Class in Father Joyce Room 12- No Class 19- Class in Father Joyce Room 26- NO CLASS — MERRY CHRISTMAS	
January	2- NO CLASS — HAPPY NEW YEAR 9- Class in Father Joyce Room 16- NO CLASS — Holiday Weekend 23- Class in Father Joyce Room 30- No Class	
February	6- Class in Father Joyce Room 13- No Class 20- NO CLASS — Holiday Weekend 27- Class in Father Joyce Room	
March	6- No Class 13- Class in Father Joyce Room 20- No Class 27- Class in Father Joyce Room	
April	3- No Class 10- Class in Father Joyce Room 17- NO CLASS — HAPPY EASTER 24- Last Class in Father Joyce Room	

Grade 11

Class — in person, Sundays 11:30-1:00pm
After the 10:30am Mass — students encouraged to attend!

Family Room, Lower Church

	17-- Class	Parent to attend with Confirmandi
October		Papers will be handed out, and questions answered
	24- Class	
	31- Class	
November	7- Class	
	14- Class	Theme: Circle of Grace
	21- Class	
	26- NO CLASS — Happy Thanksgiving!	
December	5- Class	
	12- Class	
	19- Class	
	26- NO CLASS — MERRY CHRISTMAS	
January	2- NO CLASS — HAPPY NEW YEAR	
	9- Class	
	16- NO CLASS — Holiday Weekend	
	23- Class	
	30- Class	
February	6- Class	
	13- Class	
	20- NO CLASS — Holiday Weekend	
	27- Class	

*There is not yet a date for Confirmation... information will be shared as soon as dates are set.
Thank you for your patience!*

CONFIRMANDI EXPECTATIONS:

- attend Mass weekly & on Holy Days of Obligation
 - attend weekly classes
- Complete 20 service hours, preferably in the parish
- complete the necessary forms & provide Sacramental records for Baptism & First Holy Communion (if not received in this parish)
- seek out an eligible sponsor who fulfills the requirements and can serve as a mentor for the future (typically, the sponsor is/can be the sponsor from Baptism)
- write one letter to the Pastor, explaining why they would like to be Confirmed and how they consider themselves to be prepared for it
- Watch/listen to a talk/study session on FORMED and write a response

St. John's

WE ARE OPEN!



ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST PARISH

IN THE BEGINNING

PRESCHOOL
BORN OF GOD



There are still a few spots available. Contact us today for an application and to schedule a tour of our preschool here at St. John's in Agawam. We look forward to meeting you and your family!

OUR PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

- 3 yr. olds & 4 yr. olds
- Hours: 7am - 5pm
- Full-time option - Mon.-Fri.
- Part-time options -
 - Mon., Wed., Fri.
 - Tues., Thurs.

CONTACT US TODAY!

413-786-8105

sje.religiouseducation@gmail.com

St. John the Evangelist Parish
833 Main St., Agawam

St. John the Evangelist

833 Main Street
Agawam, MA 01001

Pastoral Staff

Fr. Michael Pierz, *Pastor*
sje.priest@gmail.com

Fr. John Hurley, *Curate*
sje.curate@gmail.com

Deacon Dave Picard
sje.deacon@gmail.com

Parish Office

Tel: (413) 786-8105

Fax: (413) 455-3100

Monday–Thursday 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.
Friday — Closed

Andreana Perkins, *Operations Manager*
sje.operations@gmail.com

Debbie Whitehead, *Parish Secretary*
sje.parishsecretary@gmail.com

Mary Talarico, *Reception Volunteer*

Francesca Brandt,
Ministry to Sick and Homebound
sje.homebound@gmail.com

Beth Thomas, *Maintenance Supervisor*
sje.maintenance@gmail.com

Marybeth Swindell, *Child Advocate*
Private Line: (860) 386-6009

Youth Choir and Music

Isabella Manning, *Director of Music*
sje.musicdirector@gmail.com

Office of Faith Formation

Claire Riberdy,
Director of Religious Education

Tel: (413) 786-8105, ext. 103

Fax: (413) 455-3100

sje.religiouseducation@gmail.com

MASS SCHEDULE

LORD'S DAY MASS:

**Saturday 4:00 pm &
Sunday 8:00 am, 10:30 am**

WEEKDAY MASS:

Mon-Tues & Thurs.-Fri.
at 8:00 am,
Wed. at 6:00 pm
Every First Saturday at 8:00 am

PRAYERS & DEVOTIONS

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:

Wed. 12:00 pm - 5:45 pm

THE ROSARY:

Sat. at 3:30 pm, Sun. at 7:30 am, 10:00 am, and
1:00 pm

Confession Schedule

Saturdays 2:45-3:45pm
Wednesdays 4:30-5:30pm
Or by appointment

St. John the Evangelist Parish
833 Main Street
Agawam, MA 01001
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