



# Our Lady of Mount Carmel

*A Roman Catholic Community in Boonton, New Jersey*

## **OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK**

*“The Lord is the goal of human history, the center of the human race, the joy of every heart and the answer to all its yearning.”  
(Gaudium et Spes #45)*

The Religious Education Program at Our Lady of Mount Carmel hopes to draw participants closer to Jesus, the joy of every heart. We do this in partnership with each family, calling to mind the responsibility each family accepted at the baptism of their child: to train him (her) in the practice of faith. “It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor” (from the Rite of Baptism). We call upon the parents to be the primary religious educators of their children. As a family centered community, we will do our best to provide a safe environment and establish a Christian atmosphere where we will try to treat each other the way Jesus would want.

**The 1<sup>st</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Grade Religious Education** program consists of Sunday classes beginning in late September/early October and concluding by the end of April. In addition, Family Faith sessions have recently been incorporated as part of the curriculum. Family Faith is simply an invitation to parents to accompany their child(ren) as they share a meal with other members of our community and engage in an all ages faith-learning experience. This new format in learning is designed to promote the family structure as being the most important influence in a child’s faith life.

**Our Confirmation Program (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> Grades)** additionally involves retreats and also promotes opportunities of charity through both service and prayer.

Our beautiful Catholic Faith is made precious and unique because of the Sacraments given to us by Jesus Christ. He is our Salvation. It is expected, therefore, that the children are participating in the celebration of Sunday Mass. Our program schedule is planned with Mass attendance in mind, so that families may attend any of the scheduled liturgies either before or after religious education. To miss doing so is a great loss to our families.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

The Religious Education Program is open to all registered members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Children preparing for the reception of a sacrament must be enrolled in a religious education program for at least one year prior to the preparation for that sacrament at Mount Carmel. All new registrations to the program must be accompanied by a copy of the baptismal certificate.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Good attendance is expected on all levels of the Religious Education Program. It is recommended that no more than four classes be missed during the school year. If a class is missed, parents (of students in 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) may obtain the lesson plan on the OLMC website at [www.olmcboonton.org](http://www.olmcboonton.org) and open the "Faith Formation" link in the left hand column. Any assigned pages can be handed in the following week to the student's Catechist.

## **SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES**

Baptismal certificates must be on file in our office prior to the reception of any sacrament and should be included in any new registrations. A parent meeting prior to the beginning of the preparation for any sacrament is required to show commitment and to answer any questions concerning the theology or celebration of the sacrament. It is assumed that the students will also be attending Mass on a weekly basis especially during this time of sacramental preparation.

### **First Reconciliation and First Eucharist:**

1. Classes take place in a classroom setting
2. Reception of the sacrament normally takes place in late January for First Reconciliation and in May for First Eucharist during the child's second grade.
3. Materials include classroom and at-home family activities.
4. Children preparing to receive First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in the second grade must have completed first grade in either a religious education program or attended Catholic School, as this is a two year preparation course.

### **Confirmation:**

1. Attendance: Classes are held on Sunday mornings and when designated on the OLMC Confirmation Program Yearly Schedule. Classes will take place over a two-year cycle with attendance monitored carefully.
2. Retreats: Diocesan guidelines require a Confirmation retreat. Additionally, we ask that you notify us again of food allergies before retreats, or any event where we are serving food.
3. Sacrament Preparation: The Sacrament of Confirmation is received in grade 10 after completing a two-year preparation program. (Grades 9-10) Attendance in Catholic High School does not fulfill the preparation requirement. Any exceptions to this must be discussed with the Pastor and Director of Confirmation.

## **BEHAVIOR**

It is hoped that the atmosphere at Mount Carmel is a Christian one. Respect for each other and for one's self is paramount in a religious setting. Conduct unbecoming a Christian student and/or inappropriate behavior cannot be tolerated in such a setting. If a disciplinary problem arises in the 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, the catechist will try to handle the situation. If it becomes necessary, the Director of the program will step in. If the Director needs to step in more than once for a particular student, the parents/guardians will be informed. If action needs to be taken by the Director two or more times, other arrangements will be made for the student's religious training. In addition, if at any time it is felt a child is a danger to him/herself or to others, he/she will be removed from the in-school program immediately.

In the event a Confirmation student is disrespectful, he/she will be sent home and an automatic absence will occur.

**Keep cell phones out of sight.** Students are not to text or use their cell phones during the class unless it is for an urgent matter.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FOR 1<sup>ST</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS**

Classes will take place Sunday mornings beginning at 10:00 am.

### Arrival:

**1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> graders** will line up in the School All Purpose Room according to their assigned grade and Catechist. Parents are encouraged to stay in the AP Room until the students process out with their Catechist to their classroom.

**5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders** are to go directly to their assigned classroom at 10:00 am.

### Departure:

Parents of 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders will go directly to their child's classroom at the end of class to pick up their child. If a parent has more than one child, please go to the youngest child's classroom first. Catechists will remain in the classroom with the students until a parent arrives. *Parents are given the option of allowing their 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grader to leave class on their own at dismissal time.*

## **HOME SCHOOL OPTION**

While there is a home school option for students, *no such option is permitted for students in the Sacramental programs of **First Eucharist** and **First Penance** (2<sup>nd</sup> grade) and the **Confirmation program** (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Grades).* Parents who choose to home school will use the parish-approved curriculum. Home-schooled student workbooks will be periodically reviewed by the Director of Religious Education. It is highly recommended that home-schooled children participate with their parents in the Family Faith sessions.