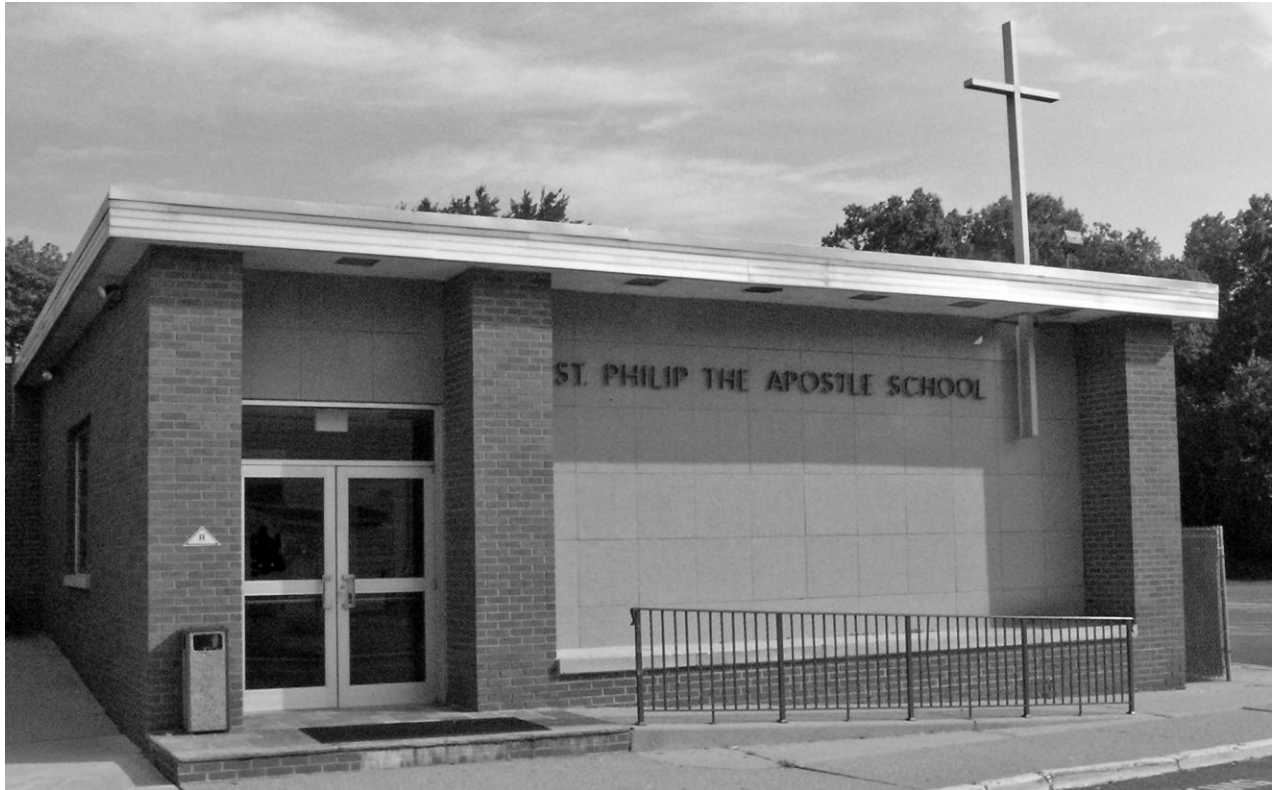


# Catechist / Student / Parent Handbook

## Grades 1 through 8

### 2009 – 2010

[Revision Date: 10/2/2009]



## St. Philip the Apostle Religious Education Program

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## *Holy Days of Obligation*

**The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Newark has provided the following dates for your use. Please pay careful mind to the Holy Days of Obligation, of which we must gather together during mass, to honor God's Law and to give thanks and praise.**

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| • <b>Sunday, November 01, 2009</b>  | <b>All Saints Day</b>                                       |
| • <b>Tuesday, December 08, 2009</b> | <b>Immaculate Conception,<br/>Patronal Feast of the USA</b> |
| • <b>Friday, December 25, 2009</b>  | <b>Nativity of the Lord</b>                                 |
| • <b>Friday, January 1, 2010</b>    | <b>Solemnity of Mary, Mother<br/>of God</b>                 |
| • <b>Sunday, May 16, 2010</b>       | <b>Ascension of the Lord</b>                                |
| • <b>Sunday, August 15, 2010</b>    | <b>The Assumption of the<br/>Blessed Virgin Mary</b>        |

**Each and every Saturday Eve or Sunday Mass**

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# Welcome

We at St. Philip the Apostle Church would like to welcome you to Saint Philip's Religious Education Program for public school students.

We hope to provide information to our students and their parents to make this a productive and enjoyable experience. In order to ensure a climate that is educationally sound, it is the responsibility of all students and parents to familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook. The policies and regulations contained herein are for all to follow unless you are notified specifically of a change.

Various schedules, dates and important events are listed within this handbook. Please jot these dates down on your calendar as soon as possible. Dates may change, so please visit our website for updates at: [www.reled-stphilipsb.org](http://www.reled-stphilipsb.org). You may also find us on Facebook, under the user name *St Philip SPARE*.

To get our electronic news and notifications, please remember to provide the office with your latest email address to ensure the most up-to-date information regarding your child's education. You can mail us at [reled@stphilipsb.org](mailto:reled@stphilipsb.org). Don't forget to include us as a safe sender!

This is done to assist all of us: students, parents, and catechists, in carrying out our mission, which is to provide the children of St. Philip the Apostle Parish with knowledge that is of paramount importance: that is, the knowledge of God.

Mrs. Patricia Schauble, PA  
Director of Religious Education

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Philip's Religious Education Program was set forth by Jesus when he said, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."- **Luke 18:16**. To achieve this goal of bringing children to Jesus, we will provide a current, comprehensive, and flexible curriculum that is in line with the guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Newark.

## PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

God has given all parents the responsibility to raise His children so that they might grow to know Him and to love Him. Parents take the first steps in fulfilling that responsibility when they have their children baptized and then enroll them in a religious education program. Parents, however, have the primary responsibility for teaching their children about God. The parents remain the primary teachers; our religious education program can only supplement what parents teach their children through words and deeds.

## SUNDAY MASS

The Sunday sessions for religious education have been set up so that students and parents can attend Mass together.

Our program emphasizes the Church teaching that as Catholics *we are all required to attend Sunday Mass every week and partake of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist on a regular basis*. Our efforts will unfortunately be for naught unless the parents reinforce through their actions what is taught in the classroom. *Children will only do what they see their parents doing*.

## SESSIONS

**On Sundays, there are two complete sessions for grades 1 through 6.** The first session begins at approximately 9:25 am (after the 8:30 am Mass) and ends at 10:35 am; the second session begins at approximately 10:55 am (after the 10:00 am Mass) and ends at 12:05 pm. Every effort has been made to schedule children according to parental requests. **Grades 7 and 8 meet on Monday evenings from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm.**

## S.P.A.R.E. HOME STUDY

St. Philip the Apostle Church offers the S.P.A.R.E. Home Study as an alternative to classroom study for the entire curriculum except Sacramental preparation classes. Your child needs to be registered for the S.P.A.R.E. Home Study program. The S.P.A.R.E. Home Study program uses the Sadlier "We Believe" textbooks. Please contact the Office

of Religious Education for more information. Sacramental preparation for first Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation **must** take place in the classroom.

Parents will:

- Provide classes which will lead the children in deeper understanding of the Catholic Faith, help them apply faith to daily life, and instill in them a sense of prayer and worship.
- Ensure that their children have completed the program's objectives and assignments.
- Schedule meetings with the Director to review their children's progress.
- Attend parent meetings as scheduled during the year; if unable to attend, will call the Director in advance.
- Show support and interest in our parish and its various activities in order to encourage the faith life of their children.
- Set an example by regularly attending mass with their children to practice your faith with your parish community and to praise and worship God.

## **PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN**

The Archdiocese of Newark requires that each parish take the necessary steps to protect God's children. The catechists and this office will do everything possible to ensure the safety of the children while they are in our care. With their safety in mind, we ask for your cooperation. Some of our procedures may seem to be inconvenient to individual parents, but we cannot do anything that would compromise the safety of any child.

***If a parent refuses to abide by our rules,  
we may have to drop the child from the program.***

## **ARRIVING AND DEPARTING**

**Everyone** entering the school at the beginning of a session **must** enter using the main entrance to the school, which is directly across from the Rectory. The only exception is for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students attending class in the Rectory basement. However, during inclement weather, these 6<sup>th</sup> graders should wait in the main corridor of the school building until the catechist arrives at the main office to collect their attendance sheets and mail. Please do not block foot traffic to and from masses.

**Parents of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students.** We insist that you accompany your child to his/her class and that you stay with your child until the teacher arrives. There are times when a teacher's arrival will be delayed by the length of the Mass. When you come to pick up your child at the end of the session, you must use the main entrance to the school,

which is directly across from the Rectory and **you must depart using the left side door in the first corridor. Do not leave by any other exit! Doing so endangers the children.**

- When you come for your child, we ask that you arrive no sooner than ten minutes before the end of the class. For the safety of all the children, the side entrance to the auditorium **must not** be used. **It is to remain closed at all times.**
- If you also have an older child (grades 3 to 6) whom you are picking up, instruct that child to meet you in the auditorium. Also please give that child a note for the catechist so that the child will be permitted to go directly to the auditorium at dismissal time. **No parent should send an older child to pick up a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> grader while the parent waits in the car!**

**Dismissal of children in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grades.** These children will be dismissed from the doorway at the opposite end of the main entrance corridor next to the fenced-in school playground. 6<sup>th</sup> graders in the rectory classes will be escorted to the main corridor to go out through the left corridor or to the auditorium to meet up with parents and younger siblings. ***For the safety of the children, parents must park their vehicles in the parking lot, and wait for their children near the fenced-in school playground. Parents are not to wait in their vehicles in the driveway between the Rectory and the School. No child will be permitted to exit by the main entrance!***

**Dismissal of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade children** on Monday evenings will be from the main entrance of the school.

- Drop offs in front of the school allowed; pick ups are not allowed.
- No stopping or standing in the driveway during dismissal time.
- At dismissal, have your child meet in the parking lot.
- Do not allow your child to walk home.

Parents wishing to get their children before the dismissal time **must** get a note signed by the office secretary. Our office can be found second from the right when you enter the school building. The catechists have been instructed that they are not to release any child to a parent who does not have a note from my office.

***Parents must be on time when picking up their children!***

## ATTENDANCE

We require the regular attendance of the students and emphasize the responsibility of parents for the students' regular attendance. Since there are 29 Sundays when school is in session, and because we believe that absence for any reason restricts and inhibits the ability of a student to learn, we cannot allow more than **three unexcused absences** during the period from September to June. When there are more than **three unexcused absences**, the child will have to repeat that grade level the following year. *Please note, being late for class by more than 15 minutes is considered an unexcused absence.*

### **Absences will be excused when:**

1. A *serious* illness or a family emergency is called in to the Religious Education Office at 201-843-2240.
2. Family vacations or family functions *are reported one week in advance.*
3. Sporting or Scouting events *are reported one week in advance.*
4. Parents call the Religious Education Office at 201-843-2240 to report that their child will be late for class by more than fifteen minutes.

Parents and/or families taking extended vacations during the school year (missing more than one class) *must advise the director regarding the extended vacation.*

## NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS

When a child is absent from class or late by more than 15 minutes and there is no message on the Religious Education Office machine, parents will be notified of such absence by a phone call during the session in which the child is enrolled.

## MAKE-UP WORK

All students are required to make up work that is missed because of absence, sport/school obligations, or tardiness. If a child is going to be absent for an extended period of time, parents must contact their child's teacher for assignments and work review.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of the program. It is assigned to provide students with another dimension of learning. Its purpose is to reinforce concepts that are taught in the classroom. The assignments will be appropriate for the grade level and ability of the students. All students are required to complete assignments on time. Homework may be accepted after the due date if the teacher believes that there was a valid reason for the lateness of the assignment.

## TESTS

The rationale behind testing is multifaceted. Tests give the catechist information on how well lessons are being taught and how a student is learning. Tests encourage students to have a positive attitude toward their work. Tests reinforce what has been taught. Tests give validity to the course being taught and to the Religious Education Program. ***Tests will be given in all grades.*** Advance notice will be given to students. If a student misses a test because of any absence (excused or unexcused), he/she will be given an opportunity to take a make up test as soon as possible.

***Tests are not the only measure of student progress.*** Homework and class work are equally important and the Progress Report Card evaluations will reflect this viewpoint. If a student is doing poorly in any of these areas, the parents will be contacted immediately either by phone or by letter. ***If a child has a learning disability which may interfere with his/her success, we need to know what steps are taken in the public school to insure your child success so that we can do the same for the child in our program.***

***A student is promoted to the next level based on successful achievements in tests, homework and class work.***

## SCHOOL DRESS

Dress that presents a safety hazard, exposes the wearer immodestly, or is inappropriate for a religious setting will not be permitted. Inappropriate means no short shorts, no midriff tops, no shirts with profanity on them, no shirts with pictures or slogans which are at odds with Catholic teaching. Clothing should be neat, clean, and appropriate. At no time will hats or caps be allowed to be worn in the school.

## SEQUENCE OF CLASSES

The main purpose of our religious education program, as stated above, is spiritual preparation and not sacramental preparation. Preparation for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and for Confirmation is part of the program, but it is not the sole reason for the program. ***Students are required to complete the entire religious education program which begins in the first grade and continues through the eighth grade.***

## SACRAMENTAL REQUIREMENTS:

To receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion, children must complete grades 1 and 2 of Religious Education. Their parents must attend all of the required parental meetings. Copies of the students' Baptismal Certificates must be on file in our office.

To receive the Sacrament of Confirmation students must complete all of the requirements outlined in the **Eighth Grade Confirmation Handbook**. Their parents must attend all of the required parental meetings. Copies of the students' Baptismal and First Communion Certificates must be on file in the religious education office.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING - PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE RECTORY!**

To determine if the Sunday program is cancelled because of inclement weather or emergency situations, parents are advised to phone the Religious Education Office that morning at **201-843-2240** or access the Religious Education website at <http://www.reled-stphilipsb.org>. **If there is sufficient time, parents will be called by their child's catechist. Emails and text messages are sent to those whose current information is on file.** Monday night classes are cancelled when the public schools are closed because of inclement weather. If the schools are opened but the storm intensifies after dismissal time, follow the above Sunday procedure.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Exemplary conduct is expected at all times. Parents will be notified when their child acts in a manner which endangers the property, health, or safety of others or when the child demonstrates disrespect for the school personnel. If parents have to be notified a second time, a conference will be held with the child, the parent, the catechist and the Director of Religious Education to resolve the problem.

## **USE OF CHURCH PROPERTY OCCUPIED BY PUBLIC SCHOOL**

The Brownstone School pays rent to use the church school property. Our program is limited to the space permitted by the Brownstone's use of offices, desks, chairs, and equipment.

All children should respect the property of others. Each child is responsible for the care and proper use of schoolbooks, equipment, and school property. Parents are liable for loss or damage to schoolbooks, furnishings, and property. The program director retains the right to recover costs of damaged school property.

## **ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT**

Use of cellular phones, blackberries, or other electronic equipment is not permitted during class. These items are costly, distracting, and often cause problems among peers. Any electronics confiscated will be released only to the student's

parent/guardian. Parents will be called in if their child is caught using electronic devices for the purpose of cheating and/or communicating.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents are certainly welcome to visit and join in the class. If parents' schedules allow, they are asked to please let the catechist know how they can observe and possibly help. Classroom leaders always need help with music, arts and crafts, snacks, taking attendance and checking homework while the teacher greets the children. All of the catechists are volunteers, not paid professional teachers. They would appreciate another parent in the room to help with correction of papers, giving one or two children extra help with a lesson, or hearing younger children recite their prayers. Parents are asked to check in with their children's teachers and ask "**How can I help this year?**"

### **\*VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED!\***

Please consider actively volunteering in the Religious Education Program. There are so many ways to help, including yourself. Since in most cases, you'll be dropping off and picking up your children-**Save some gas. Stay and help.**

**\*VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED!\***

**CATECHISTS**

Teach a small class, no more than 12 children. We will train and support you. Two adults, especially married couples, can share most classes.

**CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS**

Assist the Catechist in the classroom. Helps the class run smoothly.

**SUBSTITUTE CATECHISTS**

Are called to cover a class when a Catechist will not be able to teach. Lesson plans and material provided.

**CONFIRMATION SUPERVISORS**

Aid the Confirmation Coordinator in directing activities relating to Confirmation (retreats, rehearsals, letter writing, interviews, etc.)

**CLASS REPRESENTATIVE**

Be a link between catechist and parents.

**HOT-LINE CALLER**

Class parent to make calls in the event classes are cancelled on a short notice.

**MEETING COORDINATOR**

Help run mini-series parental catechesis prayer sessions.

**MUSICIANS**

Help classes along with music, fun & laughter!

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Help with planning, set-up and clean-up of special programs like opening and closing events, "Catechesis for All" events, etc.

**\*ALL VOLUNTEERS INVOLVED WITH CHILDREN MUST ATTEND A "PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN" SEMINAR AND COMPLETE A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK. DATES AND TIMES WILL BE LISTED IN THE PARISH BULLETIN, BY EMAIL AND ON THE WEBSITE: [HTTP://RELED-STPHILIPSB.ORG](http://reled-stphilipsb.org) OR CLICK ON [HTTP://RCAN.ORG](http://rcan.org) FOR A LISTING OUTSIDE OF ST. PHILIP THE APOSTLE PARISH.**

**Calendar of Events (Grade 1 to 6) for 2009 – 10**

**Religious Education classes for grades 1 through 6 begin on Sunday September 20<sup>th</sup> and ends on Sunday May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.**

**2009 – 2010 Schedule of Classes**

**September: 20, 27**  
**October: 4, 11, 18, 25**  
**November: 1, 8, 15, 22**  
**December: 6, 13, 20**

**January: 3, 10, 24, 31**  
**February: 7, 21, 28**  
**March: 7, 14, 21, 28**  
**April: 11, 18, 25**  
**May: 2, 16, 23**

**There are no Religious Education classes for grades 1 – 6 on the following dates:**

2009		2010	
<b>November 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	<b>January 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Dr. M.L. King Day</b>
<b>December 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Christmas Vacation</b>	<b>February 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>President’s Day</b>
		<b>April 04<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Easter Vacation</b>
		<b>May 09<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Mother’s Day</b>
		<b>May 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Memorial Day Weekend</b>

**Calendar of Events (Grade 7 and 8) for 2009 - 10**

**Religious Education classes for grades 7 & 8 begin on Monday September 21<sup>st</sup> and ends on Monday May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010.**

**2009 – 2010 Schedule of Classes**

**September: 21, 28**  
**October: 5, 12, 19, 26**  
**November: 2, 9, 16, 23**  
**December: 7, 14, 21**

**January: 4, 11, 25**  
**February: 1, 8, 22**  
**March: 1, 8, 15, 22**  
**April: 5, 12, 19, 26**  
**May: 3, 10, 17, 24**

**There are no Religious Education classes for grades 7 & 8 on the following dates:**

2009		2010	
<b>November 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	<b>January 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Dr. MLKing Day</b>
<b>December 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Christmas Vacation</b>	<b>February 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>President’s Day</b>
		<b>March 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Easter Vacation</b>
		<b>May 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Memorial Day Weekend</b>

# ANTICIPATED SACRAMENT DATES

## CONFIRMATION CLASS 2008 - 09

**Retreat:** Saturday, September 19, 2009 11am-after  
the 5:30 pm mass in the Auditorium.

**Confirmation:** Sunday, September 27, 2009 3 pm in the  
Parish Church.

## FIRST RECONCILIATION

**Group A:** Saturday, March 13, 2010  
11:30 am Parish Church

**Group B:** Saturday, March 20, 2010  
11:30 am Parish Church

**FIRST EUCHARIST** Parents are afforded the opportunity to choose:  
(Either 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> choice)

Saturday, May 22, 2010 11:00 am Parish Church

Saturday, May 22, 2010 2:00 pm Parish Church

Parents *will be notified of the chosen time granted.*

## CONFIRMATION CLASS 2009 – 10

**Commitment** Monday, October 05, 2009  
**Ceremony:** 7:00 – 8:30 pm Church

Requested Dates for the Confirmation Mass will be announced upon receipt of written confirmation from the Archdiocese of Newark.

*Parents will be notified what the date will be  
as soon as the Bishop from the Archdiocese of Newark notifies us.*

**IMPORTANT MEETING DATES FOR 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PARENTS**

**The following meetings are for the Second Grade parents and Eighth Grade parents and children. These meetings are mandatory. *At least one parent must attend; however, both are preferred.***

**First Reconciliation Meetings for 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Parents**

**These two meetings will be held Sunday mornings in the auditorium while your child is in class. Only one parent need attend. Sacramental material will be distributed during the meetings.**

**Both Sessions:** **February 07, 2010 and February 21, 2010**

**First Communion Meetings for 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Parents**

**This one meeting will be held Sunday morning in the auditorium while your child is in class. Only one parent need attend. Sacramental material will be distributed during the meeting.**

**Both Sessions:** **March 14, 2010**

**EIGHTH GRADE PARENTS (attendance is required)**

**7:00-8:30 pm.**

**Monday, October 05, 2009** – **In the Main Church**

***(For Parents and Students) Parent Meeting & Commitment Service***

**The student's will receive the Confirmation handbook that same evening regarding the whole confirmation process.**