

# St. Anselm Catholic Church Confirmation Program



## Parent/Guardian – Student Handbook

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." – MT 19:14

# Purpose and Mission

When Jesus was asked what out of all the commandments was the most important, Jesus replied, “The first is this: ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” – Mark 12:29-31

Our purpose and mission are one in the same. We, St. Anselm Church, strive to provide a safe environment where your children’s relationship with God can flourish and also help them build a relationship with the community of believers. We are many parts of one body.

## Philosophy

Catechesis always begins in the home, and parents/ guardians are their children’s first catechists. With this in mind, the Confirmation Program desires to build off of an existing spiritual and religious foundation already formed by the child’s family. Parochial catechesis does not replace parental catechesis. They are mutually dependent on each helping the other. Passing on our Catholic Faith is both a tremendous joy and opportunity, but it also presents a challenge to both parents/ guardians and the parish community. True and honest spiritual and moral growth in children will only occur through the mutual engagement of both parents and the faith community. For this reason, the Confirmation Program desires to partner with parents/ guardians to encourage consistent spiritual and moral growth. Only through partnership will the child *and* the community of faith *both* grow in spirit, truth and love.

Our curriculum aims to teach and supplement the entire person: mind, body and soul. It is through the dynamic interplay of both topical instruction and liturgical prayer that the child grows in a more natural and fruitful manner. In short, the Confirmation Program aims not to be an academic course but an initiation into a broader, and much deeper, life of faith.

**THE CONFIRMATION PROGRAM FOLLOWS THE POLICIES, GUIDELINES, AND CURRICULUM OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO.**

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## Role of Parents/Guardians

As mentioned, a child's first and most lasting catechist will be his or her parents/guardians. As parents/ guardians you encourage the faith development of your child(ren) through:

- ❖ Taking your child(ren) to each Sunday Confirmation class on time.
- ❖ Attending the family mass with your Youth immediately following Sunday preparation classes.
- ❖ Engaging and discussing both the content that was discussed during your youth's class and the liturgy of the mass.
- ❖ Involvement in the sacramental life of the Church, for example, regularly celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- ❖ Participation in parish activities and ministries.
- ❖ Sharing your own faith with your child(ren).
- ❖ Praying daily with your youth.
- ❖ Becoming a Volunteer!
- ❖ Learning more about the Faith through adult formation programs and taking the time to address your own spiritual needs.

## Role of the Youth

In order to foster a healthy and fruitful learning environment for all our children we have the following expectations for your child(ren):

- ❖ Be respectful and cooperate with your teachers and teacher assistants.
- ❖ Be respectful of other youth in your class.
- ❖ Listen carefully and participate in all the activities and lessons.
- ❖ Share what you have learned with your parents/ guardians.
- ❖ Follow all the attendance and safety guidelines outlined in this handbook.

## Role of the Parish Community

As in any healthy partnership, the expectations and responsibilities are spread equally. For this reason, our parish community, made up of clergy, staff and parishioners, have the following expectations:

- ❖ To provide a safe and healthy environment for our youth, teachers and parents.
- ❖ To foster an atmosphere that encourages the spiritual and moral growth of our children and their parents, and to do so holistically.
- ❖ To show how important our youth and children are to our parish by providing our support, as both clergy and parishioners, at every opportunity and through the liturgy.
- ❖ To support both catechetically and spiritually our volunteer Catechists.
- ❖ To provide consistent and systematic curriculum for our children that, at all times, nurtures them in their faith, challenges them to excel, and gradually initiates them into our Catholic Faith.
- ❖ To remember and live the belief that each individual child and their family is an immeasurable gift to our parish.
- ❖ To serve our children and their parents as Christ served, out of a place of love.
- ❖ To hold our Program and its curriculum to the highest standards and to constantly evaluate for improvement.
- ❖ To continuously pray for our children, their families, and our teachers.

## Program Overview

St. Anselm Church welcomes all youth in grades 8<sup>th</sup> and up. The youth must have previously be baptized and have had their First Communion before they can receive the sacrament of Confirmation. **They must complete 5 service hours and attend a Confirmation retreat in order to be confirmed at the end of their preparation.** At least 3 hours must be done within our parish or parish school community. The remaining 2 can be done at an approved non-profit.

**Classes are held on Sunday from 3:30pm-4:50pm at our parish hall.** The program is made up of two phases, the curriculum-based phase which takes place in the classroom and the liturgical phase which includes attending the 5pm mass. **Mass attendance is a requirement of the Confirmation Program. The first 5 pews are reserved for the youth to seat with their classmates.**

## Curriculum

This year we will be using the curriculum from Accession Press called “Chosen.”

Here is how Accession Press describes this new curriculum:

“*Chosen’s* carefully designed methodology features highly effective and engaging material conveyed through videos, student workbooks, and classroom experience. Guides for leaders, parents, and sponsors—as well as additional online resources—make *Chosen* unlike any program available in the Church today.”

### **The Sacrament Preparation Team:**

Pastor: Fr. Jose Shaji

Director of Religious Education: Natalie L.

### **Children with Special Needs**

If you have a child with special needs, arrangements can be made for catechesis as a group or on a one-on-one basis. Please contact the Director of Religious Education to find out more information. The Archdiocese of San Francisco also provides resources, classes and retreats specifically for children with special needs.

### **Baptismal Certificate**

Youth who will be receiving the sacrament of Confirmation are required to have their Baptismal Certificate on file with the parish office. Please attach a copy of your youth’s Baptismal Certificate to your complete registration forms.

# Program Rules and Guidelines

## Arrival and Dismissal

Classes begin **promptly at 3:30pm**. Parents are to drop off their youth at the front of our Parish Hall, unless the schedule says class is at the Parish School. Pick up will be at the Church after the 5pm mass.

**If you need to pick up your youth before class or mass is over, the procedure is to let our DRE know ahead of time.**

**It is an Archdiocese policy to have sign in and sign out sheets for arrival and dismissal. Since we allow parents and guardians to drop off instead of walk in their youth, I need you to sign the release form which is in the registration packet. This allows you to continue to drop off your youth in the front of the parish hall/ school and pick them up at the church after mass.**

## Food and Drinks in the Classroom

As long as your youth are being respectable to others and cleaning up after themselves, food and drinks are allowed.

## Change of Address/Phone/Email

Please notify the Director of Religious Education if you have changed your address, phone or email.

## Student Rules

Part of the role of the Confirmation Program is to ensure the safety of all our youth and to provide a healthy environment that fosters growth. To accomplish this we ask the youth to abide by the following rules and guidelines:

- ❖ Students are asked to be respectful and courteous to their catechists, catechist assistants, staff and other children.
- ❖ Students are asked to be respectful of Church/ School property.
- ❖ There is no running or horseplay
- ❖ No electronic games, radios, etc. should be brought into the classrooms. *Cell phones must be turned off.*

## **Attendance**

Since this program is only one year while other parishes with the county have it as a two year program, we will ONLY allow 2 excused absence. If you know your youth is going to miss class, please contact the DRE ahead of time to be emailed a makeup assignment.

## **Visitors**

For the safety of the youth and our catechists, adult visitors may attend a classroom only if given permission in advance by the Director of Religious Education.

## **Parent/ Guardian – Catechist Communication**

Partnerships require healthy communication. For this reason, the Religious Education Program/ Sacramental Preparation Program promotes communication between parents/guardians and catechists. Parents/Guardians may speak with catechists after mass or they can make an appointment through the Director of Religious Education.

## **Discipline Policy**

One of the most basic concerns of the catechist is to maintain an environment that fosters growth through a comfortable setting. It is for this reason that part of the child's role is to be attentive during lessons and respectful to catechists and other children. If a youth misbehaves in class or is disruptive, parents or guardians will be notified. The Director of Religious Education, in consultation with the pastor, is the final recourse in all disciplinary actions.

“No child may be disciplined corporally or corrected with abusive language.” Policy C.4 in the *Decree on Child Protection*.

## **Emergency and Safety Procedures**

In case of an emergency, the Emergency Procedure Plan will be followed. In the event of a disaster all students will be evacuated to the church parking lot. Catechists and will remain with the youth until either a parent or designated person picks the youth up. A checkout system will be provided for parents/guardians to sign out their child.

## **Medical Emergency/ Accident/ Sudden Sickness**

In the case of an accident or sudden sickness, the Director of Religious Education or a delegate will give appropriate immediate care and notify the parents/guardians. No medication may be given by the Director of Religious Education or catechists without written parental permission.

## **Dangerous Materials**

The Director of Religious Education or designated persons have the right and duty to protect the health and welfare of the participants of the Confirmation Program. This

includes the right to inspect property of any individual suspected of possessing alcohol, drugs, weapons and other illegal materials. If alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons, or other dangerous materials are found, then the police, parents/guardians and the pastor will be notified as appropriate.

### **Child Protection**

The Confirmation Program is committed to the protection and safety of all children entrusted to its care. As mandated by the Archdiocese of San Francisco, teachers and any adults, who work with children, volunteer or paid, are required to be background checked and follow the Archdiocesan Policies and Procedures Regarding Child Abuse and Harassment and participate in a Child Protection Workshop.

**Each year, as required by the Office of Child and Youth Protection for the Archdiocese of San Francisco, all youth will be asked to take the online course developed by professional trainers at the website: [www.shieldthevulnerable.org](http://www.shieldthevulnerable.org).**

As required by state law, evidence of apparent non-accidental injury, suspected neglect or child abuse will be reported to Child Protection Services.

### **Harassment**

As part of our commitment to ensure a safe and healthy environment the Program does not tolerate any harassment. Any form of harassment violates the guidelines set forth in this handbook and will not be tolerated. Please notify the Director of Religious Education of any possible concerns.

### **Right to Amend**

The Director of Religious Education and the Pastor of St. Anselm Catholic Church have the right to amend this handbook at any time. Parents/ Guardians will be given prompt notification if changes are made.