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**ST. ANTHONY  
YOUTH FORMATION  
CATECHIST HANDBOOK**



**Grades K-12**  
St. Anthony Youth Formation  
4 Union City Road  
Prospect, CT 06712  
(203)758-4848 ext 14  
E-mail: [stanthonyre@comcast.net](mailto:stanthonyre@comcast.net)  
Website: [stanthonyprospect.org](http://stanthonyprospect.org)

Dear Catechists,

Thank you for all that you do for our Youth Formation program and for our Parish children. Being a catechist is a significant commitment of your time and energy. It takes a special dedication to God and your faith.

There will be truly rewarding moments along with, if we are honest with ourselves, a few which are frustrating. Let God guide you in all that you do and the rewards will far outweigh any frustration that you encounter.

Communication is vital for our program to succeed. If you have any question or problem, no matter what it is about, please contact me. If there is a problem, there is a solution. We can work together to make this program the best that it can be.

Contact information:

Office of Youth Formation  
4 Union City Road  
Prospect, CT 06712  
203 758 4848 ext. 14

DYF, Katie Blinstrubas: [stanthonyre@comcast.net](mailto:stanthonyre@comcast.net)

Asst. DYF, Carmelina Calabrese: [stanthonyre3@comcast.net](mailto:stanthonyre3@comcast.net)

God bless you for all that you do.

Yours in Christ,  
Katie Blinstrubas

**Program Schedule: All classes are in the Parish Center.**

K-2 <sup>nd</sup> :	Mon.	3:45-4:45	6 <sup>th</sup> :	Tues.	5:00-6:15
		5:00-6:00		Wed.	6:00-7:15
		6:15-7:15		Fri.	3:00-4:15

3 <sup>rd</sup> :	Sat.	9:00-10:15	7 <sup>th</sup> :	Tues.	3:00-4:15
				Tues.	5:00-6:15
				Wed.	6:00-7:15

4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> :	Mon.	3:45-4:45	8 <sup>th</sup> :	Tues.	5:00-6:15
		5:15-6:30		Wed.	6:00-7:15
	Tues.	5:00-6:15		Fri.	3:00- 4:15
	Wed.	6:00-7:15			

High School: Various Evenings. Please check course schedule.

**Registration**

- Beginning in the spring, registration will be in the Parish Center during class times.
- The Parish Finance Council sets the Registration fee and it will be announced before registration begins.

**Expectations for Catechists:**

Please remember that above all, that you are a role model for of faith for your students. Almost more than the lessons, they will remember you and how you showed them to be a true follower of Christ!

1. Prepare lessons and maintain discipline in the classroom.
2. Contact parents and the child at the beginning of the year to introduce yourself. Please send an

introductory letter to your students. Labels are provided by the Youth Formation Office.

3. Arrive at the building fifteen minutes (15) prior to class time.
4. Take attendance.
5. Fill out report cards and give to parent(s) at the appropriate time(s).
6. Keep parents informed as to what is being covered in class.
7. Arrange a substitute if unable to attend class and inform the RE Office.
8. Let the DYF know if your group has any plans or meetings outside of your designated space.
9. Report all injuries to DYF.
10. Keep the classroom in good order. Return it to original setup. Turn out lights. Close windows.
11. Attend catechist meetings and in-service days, including "Protecting God's Children."
12. Follow Archdiocesan policies.
13. Consider continuing education/certification.
14. Complete the required background check.

### **Responsibility of the Parish to you**

1. The director will keep you informed of changes to the schedule.
2. Provide regular in-service enrichment sessions.
3. Notify you of archdiocesan training programs and enrichment events.
4. Provide a resource library.

### **Arrival and Departure for Teachers**

- Teachers need to arrive at 15 minutes before class start time to welcome the students upon arrival, pick up class folders, and set up.

Teachers or Room Parent needs to stay until your last student is picked up

## Arrival and Departure of Student

### Parish Center Drop Off

- Children should not be brought to class any earlier than 10 minutes before class.

K-3 parents should walk their children to the side of the Parish Center. A catechist or room parent will escort them to class.

### Parish Center Pick Up

- There are two dismissal points: 1) from the side entrance to the Parish Center; 2) from the stairs to the lower level classroom.
- Catechists will escort the children to their assigned exit. Parents will sign the children out. Orderliness is important to ensure students are safely and properly dismissed.
- Parents are not to wait in the hall of the Parish Center or knock on doors to let teacher know they are there.
- If someone other than the parent needs to pick-up child a note **MUST** be brought in by child prior to class.
- If a child needs to leave early they must submit a written note prior to class to the teacher. A room parent will walk child to side door at proper time.
- If a child's parent comes to pick up child without prior notification, she/he will need to notify the RE Office **FIRST** and then proceed to the classroom with a note saying I.D. had been verified.

### Cancellations

- Snow Day cancellations are announced on: WATR or TV Channels 3 and 8.
- If time, schools will be called to make an announcement.

- All Catechists will be called by RE Office or Lead Teacher. Also, an announcement will be made via message on Religious Office answering machine.
- Upon learning of a cancellation, catechists and room parents will call their students. Not all students are from Prospect and might not know of cancellation.
- Cancellation lessons will be given the following week to be done at home with parent or caregiver.
- **All classes:** If school is cancelled or let out early, classes are canceled. If conditions deteriorate after school hours, parents will be notified by catechists or Religious Ed. Office.

### **Student Attendance Policy**

- It is important that attendance is consistent since we only meet once a week.
- Please notify the RE Office if a child has more than 2 unexplained absences.
- Please notify the RE Office of any conflicts such as parent visitation, sports, or illness that a parent or caregiver has communicated to you.
- A call will be made to the parents after multiple absences when no notification of absence has been made. More than 6 unexplained absences require a meeting with the DYF, parent and child.
- It is expected that families attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days as well as at least 2 parish spiritual events. Students in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8th grades and students in our High School program must sign an attendance sheet and hand it to a priest or deacon after Mass. Altar Servers may fill out and leave forms in the sacristy.

### **Classroom Material and Benchmarks**

- Each classroom should have a prayer corner, an area that is used to bring students into a prayerful attitude.

- This year we will continue to use Phlaum's *Gospel Weeklies* series for grades K - 8 to ensure continuity of our Youth Formation Program.
- Grade 3 will use Phlaum's Sacramental series for Reconciliation and Eucharist.
- We are providing parents with benchmarks for each grade.
- For supplemental material, please feel free to visit <http://www.pflaum.com/teachingres.htm>. Also, use any materials that we have available in our office to supplement your lessons.

### **Homework and Assessment**

- Each week, a *Gospel Weekly* will be sent home for parents to review and discuss with their children.
- At the end of each *Gospel Weeklies* cycle, please review the vocabulary and concepts with the children. Be aware that the benchmarks for your grade level are being covered.
- Over the course of grades 7 & 8, a test will be given on catholic beliefs. This is to ensure that our students have the basics before entering our High Scholl program.

### **Report Cards**

- Progress and attendance will be recorded.
- Report Cards will be distributed 2 weeks prior to distribution for teachers to make comments.
- Grades on the Report Cards - "understanding of content" is to be assessed by class participation.
- Report Cards will be distributed at the end of January and the last day of class. All catechists should hand out report cards on the assigned day, not before.
- All areas of the report card should be completed.

### **Supplies and Crafts**

We have art supplies and paper in the Parish Center. Each room will have scissors, crayons, and glue sticks. Additional supplies such as construction paper are in the supply closet located in the hallway with rooms Justice and Prudence. We will provide you with other supplies if you request them.

Each class and grade level may order 2 crafts per year such as Christmas or Easter craft. If you are interested in ordering a craft through a catalog such as Oriental Trading, please get prior approval before ordering it. When planning a craft, please talk to other catechists about ordering, so that we can do 1 order and save money on shipping and handling. Once you provide us with your receipt, we will request reimbursement for you.

### **Resources**

- The Youth Formation Office has a variety of books, music, and videos for supplementary material for the classes. Please feel to call or stop in to look for and use any of the resources.
- Phlaum has a wonderful website. We encourage you to check it out, as well as any other Catholic websites.  

<a href="http://www.sadlier.com">www.sadlier.com</a>	<a href="http://www.faithfirst.com">www.faithfirst.com</a>
<a href="http://www.catholic.org">www.catholic.org</a>	<a href="http://www.catholic.com">www.catholic.com</a>
<a href="http://www.catholic.net">www.catholic.net</a>	<a href="http://www.catholicmom.org">www.catholicmom.org</a>
- Various seminars and catechetical training is available. The RE office will forward information to you as it becomes available.
- The Youth Formation Congress is Saturday, November 6th. It is a very educational, inspirational, and team building day. We strongly encourage all catechists to attend. Once you attend, the fee is reimbursed. Subs will be provided for Saturday catechists.

### **Guidelines for Parish Center Usage**

1. Adult must be present in every room where there is a child
2. Classrooms must be left clean and neat for the next group using the room.
3. Children should not be allowed to use the white boards.
4. Garbage must be disposed of in receptacle located in kitchen.
5. No running in halls, fooling around in bathrooms or defacing property.
6. Only use the side door in the Parish Center.
7. Close all windows and doors upon leaving the class for the day.
8. All school rules remain in force during Youth Formation classes.
9. Emergency exit routes are posted in each classroom. In the event of an emergency, please proceed to the exit in an orderly fashion.

### **Behavior Guidelines**

**The Golden Rule: Total Respect 100% of the time. "Do unto other as you would have them do unto you."**

- Respect for everyone by using well mannered language with considerate attitude.
- Respect for each other and all Parish property.
- To be open about learning about the faith.
- To be polite and respectful to all teachers and staff.
- To be quiet and attentive once the class begins.
- To bring all books and other material needed for class each week and do all homework assignments.
- Any lost textbook will be charged the replacement cost.
- To review material and be prepared for tests and quizzes.
- To remove all hats while entering the building.
- Respect themselves by wearing modest clothing, having appropriate shirt designs with nothing offensive.

We are proud of the behavior of the young people who have gone through our program. However, we would like to remind you that proper behavior and conduct is expected. Please inform the DYF of any behavioral issues so that it may be addressed with the DYF.

**THREE STRIKE SYSTEM:** Behavior problems or inattentiveness will be handled with the following "Three Strike" system:

1. The teacher/leader will speak to the candidate directly as to the problem and what must be done in order to correct the situation—Behavior Log. (STRIKE 1)
2. If the situation continues, the teacher/leader will notify the DYF who will meet with the candidate, his/her parent(s), and the teacher/leader (if possible) to discuss what must be done in order to correct the situation. (STRIKE 2)
3. If the situation continues, the teacher/leader will notify the DYF, who in turn, will notify the Pastor and request that the student be removed from the program. (Strike 3)

### **Behavior Log**

This will be filled out by the student at the time of the disruption and mailed to the parent. It must be signed by both a parent and the student. This makes the child accountable for his/her behavior. It also alerts parents to any unacceptable behavior. It will returned be to the teacher the following class.

### **Youth Formation Office Hours**

Office hours vary week to week due to the varied schedule of our programs. Please check the bulletin for the posted weekly hours. If you need to reach us, please leave a message at the Youth Formation Office,

758-4848 ext. 14

You may e-mail Katie at  
[stanthonyre@comcast.net](mailto:stanthonyre@comcast.net)

and Carmelina at  
[stanthonyre3@comcast.net](mailto:stanthonyre3@comcast.net)

Please visit our website: [stanthonyprospect.org](http://stanthonyprospect.org)

If we are not available, we will return your call or answer your e-mail ASAP. We hope always to be able to respond quickly to your questions and concerns.

