

# **St. Charles Borromeo Religious Formation Program Family Handbook**



**St. Charles Borromeo  
7790 South 192nd St.  
Gretna, NE 68028  
402.916.9750  
[www.stcharlesomaha.org](http://www.stcharlesomaha.org)  
RF email address: [jschuler@scbccomaha.org](mailto:jschuler@scbccomaha.org)**

Revised 7/05/16

## **PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK**

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the basic guidelines necessary to insure good organization and order within our Religious Formation Program and parish community. Our ministry team looks forward to working with your children and helping to form them into mature, responsible Catholics.

Religious Formation in our parish exists as an aide to the parents both in their own lives and in the lives of their children. Particular emphasis in our Religious Formation program is put upon adult involvement. Parents are the primary religious educators of their children (CCC 1653). The home is where a child should first experience the Catholic faith. As a parent, you are constantly teaching and catechizing by your attitudes, actions, values, by the way you encourage prayer, and by your active participation of worship. The Religious Formation Program aims to work in partnership with parents, in order to assist them in living their vocation as educators of their children. The Religious Formation Program should merely complement, not replace, the catechesis that children should receive in the home.

**Each family is provided access to a Religious Formation Program Family Handbook. It is the responsibility of each family to read the handbook and become familiar with its guidelines.**

## **ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSES**

Religious Formation classes meet at the St. Charles Borromeo Parish Center on  
**Tuesdays**  
**4:30 – 5:30 p.m.**

**Wednesdays**  
**4:00 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**5:45 – 6:45 p.m.**  
**7:00 – 8:00 p.m.**

You must be a registered member of the parish to enroll your child in Religious Formation classes unless approved by the pastor. We ask that children do not arrive earlier than 10 minutes before class time and are picked up promptly when class has ended.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **TEXT BOOKS**

The textbooks used for the program are from St. Mary's Press, RCL Benziger, and Our Sunday Visitor. Books for each grade are as follows:

Grades 1, 3, 4, 5: "Be My Disciples"

Grade 2: "Encounter With Christ"

Grade 6: "The Break Through Bible" and T3 Bible Series

1st Year Confirmation Prep: "Decision Point" and "The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers"

2nd Year Confirmation Prep: "Chosen"

### **CIRCLE OF GRACE**

This is a program required of all RF programs and Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Omaha. It helps children to understand their own (and others') dignity in mind, body, and spirit. Its age-appropriate lessons include things such as good/bad relationships, safe/unsafe situations, boundaries, etc. Parent information for this program is found at [www.stcharlesomaha.org](http://www.stcharlesomaha.org) or in the RF office.

## **ENROLLMENT**

Unless approved by the pastor families who enroll their children in Religious Formation must be registered members of the parish before enrollment can take place. Religious Formation registration forms are available at the parish office weekdays 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and on the parish website at [www.stcharlesomaha.org](http://www.stcharlesomaha.org), under the Faith Formation heading.

Once you have enrolled your child in one of the Religious Formation classes, this is the day/time they must remain in for the entire year. We cannot move children to different classes throughout the year.

Please be sure to notify the office if your child has a health problem which may affect his/her routine. We will notify the catechist so that he/she is sensitive to any problem that might occur. This should include allergies, hyperactivity, hearing problems, etc.

NOTE: Please help us make this Religious Formation experience enjoyable for your child. Inform the child's catechist of any special situations that exist within your family, such as: pending divorce, health problems of other family members, death of a parent or close relative, etc.

## **ATTENDANCE-ABSENCES**

To assure continued quality of religious formation for your child, your assistance is requested by having your child on time and present for ALL CLASSES. It is extremely important for your child to be present in the sacramental classes as absences may place your child's reception of the sacraments in jeopardy.

For absences, a phone call or email from the parent is requested to the office. Please contact us at **402-916-9750** or at **[jschuler@scbccomaha.org](mailto:jschuler@scbccomaha.org)**. If we have not had prior notice, we assume that the child should be in class.

Students must be in their classrooms before class begins. Any student who is late should report to the office table before going to class. No student may leave the parish premises during class time or activity without a note from parents and permission from the office. If a child is leaving early parents must come in to check them out.

Chronic absences and tardiness may be addressed with a call to parents from the Religious Formation Director.

Unexpected absences (personal illness, family emergency or serious illness) should be called in to the Religious Formation Office at 402-916-9750. Family vacations that will result in absences should also be reported to the office.

**NOTE: Extracurricular activities of any nature or sponsored by any group DO NOT constitute justifiable absences.**

## **CATECHISTS - VOLUNTEERS**

Many adults share their time and talents with the children in the Religious Formation program by assisting in classrooms and a variety of other ways. We welcome your offer of assistance. Please contact the Religious Formation Director if you would like to help in any way. Catechists who have children in the program will have their registration fees waived. Please note: This does not include Sacrament fees. Catechist training is also provided at no fee.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents are asked to be active participants in the Religious Formation Program. Each family should incorporate meaningful religious rituals in their homes. Children will often bring examples of rituals home with their other work. The times of Advent and Lent can bring the family together in special ways of observing these yearly Church periods.

Parents should assist their children by praying and aiding in memorization of our Catholic prayers. A list of grade-appropriate prayers is included in the back of this handbook, as well as on the parish website. Parents also need to assist their children by participating in the weekly Sunday Mass and in the reception of Sacraments.

A practice of making the Sign of the Cross on your child's forehead before he/she leaves for school is a simple yet meaningful practice of placing your child under God's protection each day. Saying morning prayers and night prayers also reinforces the concept that we live each day for God.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Children enrolled in the Religious Formation Program are expected to maintain a high standard of behavior. Our purpose is to encourage and strengthen each child's character in accordance with Catholic principles and to promote order within the classrooms so that an atmosphere of learning may prevail.

Our team consists of catechists and assistants who are volunteers. They give generously of their time, talents and energies and deserve your utmost respect, consideration, and support at all times.

Since the true form of discipline is self-discipline, it is our goal to assist the child in acquiring self-control. Disciplinary actions will be meted out, if necessary, to help the individual grow in this area. Conduct unbecoming a Catholic will not be tolerated. Catechists who see a need for correcting inappropriate behavior in the classroom are asked to do the following:

1. The catechist will correct the child.
2. If there is not improvement and the inappropriate behavior continues, the catechist will correct the child again.
3. If the behavior continues for a third time the catechist will refer the student to the RF Director. Continued inappropriate behavior will result in the parents being notified.
4. The catechist and the RF Director will discuss the conditions for the child's return to the classroom. The parent may need to accompany the child to the classroom and attend classes with the child until the behavior problem is solved.

## **DRESS CODE**

Appropriate dress is expected. In order to have a program conducive to prayerful learning and Christian values, some clothing may be deemed inappropriate. For this reason, the following guidelines should be followed: 1) shorts and skirts must be of reasonable length, 2) no yoga pants or leggings unless a long shirt is worn, 3) halter tops, tops which do not cover the midriff area, and spaghetti straps should not be worn, 4) clothing with inappropriate slogans or graphics, or shorts or pants with wording on the seat should not be worn, 5) pants hanging off of the hips should be avoided, and 6) no hats/caps should be worn in the building.

Candy, pop, toys and electronic devices are not allowed in the building. Anything that does not contribute to learning in the classroom should be left at home. Gum is never allowed in our facility.

Cell Phones: If a child brings a cell phone to class we will expect them to turn them off and place them in a designated area for the duration of the class. They will be returned at the end of class.

## **POLICY REGARDING BULLYING**

Bullying disrupts our ability to educate students, threatens public safety by creating an atmosphere in which such behavior can escalate into violence, and is prohibited. Bullying means any intention, hostile or offensive verbal, written, graphic, demonstrative, electronic, or physical act that has the purpose of exerting domination over another student through the act of intimidating, frightening, oppressing, or adversely controlling the student, and that is disruptive of the educational process, or any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, written, graphic, demonstrative, or electronic abuse on parish grounds. This may include, but is not limited to, verbal, graphic, written, or electronic activities such as name-calling, taunting, blackmailing, inciting to fight, terrorizing, physical or demonstrative activities such as poking, blocking or impeding, following, hair pulling, mock hitting motions, intentionally bumping, tripping, and damaging clothing.

Conduct unbecoming a Catholic will not be tolerated. Catechists who see a need for correcting inappropriate bullying behavior in the classroom are asked to do the following:

1. The catechist will notify the Religious Formation Director.
2. The RF Director will notify the parents.
3. The catechist, parent, and the RF Director will discuss the conditions for the child's return to the classroom.
4. The child will have a meeting with the RF Director prior to returning to class.

The Religious Formation staff members are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at their discretion.

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Students receive special, intense preparation for Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation. This is done in cooperation with the parent/guardian. Students will receive the sacraments only if they are adequately prepared. In most cases it is in the best interest of the student that sacramental preparation be done through the RF program, instead of at home. Pastor approval is necessary for any home schooling.

Students in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade ordinarily receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist for the first time. To receive these sacraments, St. Charles Borromeo requires that a student must have attended 1 year of a Catholic religious formation program. Meetings and retreats are scheduled during the year so that parents may review the content of preparation, deepen their own understanding of the sacrament being received, and help prepare their children for receiving these sacraments.

Preparation for Confirmation typically involves students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades\*. This preparation requires candidates to participate in special retreats and Masses and to complete some additional work, including but not limited to: Saint reflections, letters to the Archbishop, and service activities. The four areas of catechesis (instruction, service, community, and prayer) are incorporated into each year. Students should complete two years of preparation prior to receiving the Sacrament. A parent meeting regarding Confirmation is held in the fall for all parents of 1<sup>st</sup>- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-year Confirmation preparation students.

\*In the Archdiocese of Omaha, students are generally confirmed in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. High school students who were not confirmed in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade may participate in the Confirmation Preparation program. Specific cases will be addressed on an individual basis.

Instruction is available for older students who have not received the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and First Communion. Please contact the Religious Formation Director or Pastor for more information.

## **BUILDING SECURITY/VISITORS**

The main doors to the building will be monitored 15 minutes before class and during classes. During these times parents can enter the building, but must remain in the entryway during class. If you are picking up a child early, the child will be brought to you. Upon dismissal, children can meet parents in the entrance or proceed to your vehicle via the west gym doors as noted in the dismissal policy.

You are welcome to visit your child's room/area during the regular Religious Formation classes if you have made prior arrangements with the catechist. The Religious Formation Director must also be notified that you will be in the class area. Please note: Younger siblings should not accompany parents into the classroom area as this is a distraction to our students.

## **SAFETY**

For the safety of our children, the following guidelines are to be observed by everyone:

1. All drivers should drive safely and slowly. Children arriving by car should be dropped off in the designated loading/unloading areas. Do not expect children to cross traffic. Use the proper unloading areas or park and walk with your children to the building. **Do not leave your car unattended in the loading/unloading area by the front door.**
2. Parents should be prompt in picking up the children.
3. Children are not to bring skateboards, in-line skates, Heelys, or skates of any kind to classes.
4. We are not responsible for theft or damage to personal property brought in by families or the children attending classes.

## **BUILDINGS AND PARISH PROPERTY**

Children are expected to assist in the good order of building and parish property. Those who deface tables, walls, or any other property (i.e. books, Bibles, catechisms) within the church building or deface the grounds of the building will be subject to disciplinary action according to the policy on expulsion. We must be good stewards of these resources. Please encourage your children to:

1. Conduct themselves properly in the restrooms.
2. Deposit waste papers, etc. in proper receptacles.
3. Respect the property of others.
4. Refrain from chewing gum in the building.

## **CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION**

A family newsletter will be sent each week of class via email to the email addresses provided on your registration form. Please notify the RF office for any change in information so we can keep our records updated. To receive a hard copy of the newsletter please contact the RF office.

Should you have a concern about a catechist, schedule an appointment to meet with that individual. If you still have difficulties, make an appointment with the Director to meet with both of you. If the situation cannot be resolved, the pastor will be invited to attend a subsequent conference.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

There are times throughout the religious formation year when it may be necessary to cancel classes due to severe weather.

Religious Formation classes are automatically canceled if Millard Public Schools are canceled for the day due to severe weather.

In case of approaching storms later in the afternoon/evening, an email will be sent to all Religious Formation families regarding cancellation announcements or you may call the RF office at 402-916-9750.

If you would like to receive a message on your cell phone if RF classes are cancelled, please log onto the following website to sign up for this free service.

[https://www.rainedout.net/team\\_page.php?a=0f2e244629d2feda8401](https://www.rainedout.net/team_page.php?a=0f2e244629d2feda8401)

If severe weather strikes while in Religious Formation, children will remain at the Parish Center until parents pick them up. Children will be made aware of fire escape plans and severe weather safety plans.

## **BUILDING EVACATION PROCEDURES**

If it becomes necessary for any reason to evacuate the building, parents should gather at the south parking lot of Reeder Elementary to be reunited with your child.

## **REASONS FOR PARENT CONFERENCE/PROBATION/EXPULSION**

1. Disrespect toward staff/ministry team members.
2. Cheating, stealing, and fighting.
3. Foul or unbecoming language.
4. Consistent disruption of class.
5. Drinking, smoking, drugs.
6. Leaving the building/grounds before dismissal.
7. Destroying or defacing property.
8. Any other inappropriate behavior, conduct, or activity that may result in harm to self or others

## **POLICY REGARDING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

If a child is found in the possession of drugs or alcohol, whether it is in the act of using, passing, or selling the drug, he/she will be subject to the following regulations:

1. The catechist will refer the child to the Religious Formation Director.
2. The parents will be called immediately.
3. The student will be expelled from the Religious Formation program.

Police will be contacted when there is a suspected violation of criminal laws concerning drugs or alcohol.

The Religious Formation staff members are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at his/her discretion.



## **POLICY REGARDING WEAPONS/SEARCH/SEIZURE**

Children are forbidden from knowingly and voluntarily possessing, handling, transmitting or using any instrument in our Religious Formation program or at Religious Formation activities/events, which is generally considered a weapon.

Any object which could be used to injure another person and which has no Religious Formation related purpose will be considered a weapon for purposes of this code. The following are examples of instruments ordinarily or generally considered weapons: knives of all types, guns, lead pipes, chains, chuck-sticks, throwing stars, darts, metal knuckles, blackjacks, unauthorized tools, fireworks, explosives or other chemicals.

If a child is found in possession of such a weapon, he/she will be subject to the following regulations:

1. The catechist will refer the child to the Religious Formation Director.
2. The parents will be called immediately.
3. A written statement/report will be filed.
4. If the parents are unable to be present immediately, the Director will ask the child to cooperate. If search/seizure is necessary, the parent or another adult staff member must be present to witness the search/seizure.

Police will be contacted when there is a suspected violation of criminal laws concerning weapons.

A first offense in violation of weapons policy will result in immediate suspension and may result in expulsion. A second offense in violation of weapons policy will result in immediate expulsion.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

With cooperation among parents, children and staff, the Religious Formation year will be a time of learning the Word of God, growth in faith, and sharing in His love. It is our hope that parents will take an active interest in what is being taught to their children and will help their children learn these important lessons. May God bless our work and may the power of the Holy Spirit be recognized and realized in our lives and that of our Parish Community.

**If you have any questions or concerns, call the St. Charles Borromeo Religious Formation Director at 402-916-9750.**

# ***Faith at Home***

## Catholic Family Prayers, Truths, and Traditions



These pages are not an outline of the Religious Formation Program of our parish, but are designed as an aid for parents in their responsibility to teach their children the prayers of our Church. Along with the usual prayers are some of the basic truths of our faith. The prayers, truths and traditions should be memorized and fully understood. Listed below is a guide to parents in teaching your child. The Religious Formation Ministry Team will assist by reviewing with children these prayers as they learn them at home. Your cooperation is needed in this shared responsibility of the religious formation of our parish family.

### **Prior to 1st Grade:**

The Sign of the Cross, Grace Before Meals, and Grace After Meals.

### **1st Grade:**

The Lord's Prayer (Our Father), Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

### **2nd Grade:**

10 Commandments and Act of Contrition

### **3rd Grade:**

The Apostle's Creed and the Rosary (child should be able to pray the Rosary by himself/herself)

### **4th Grade:**

The Memorare, The Holy Days of Obligation, and The Seven Sacraments

### **5th Grade:**

Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer.

### **6th Grade:**

The Beatitudes and the Precepts of the Church.

### **7th Grade:**

The Six Spiritual Works of Mercy and The Six Corporal Works of Mercy

### **8th Grade:**

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, The Hail, Holy Queen, Act of Faith, Act of Hope, and Act of Love

## **THE SIGN OF THE CROSS**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

## **GRACE BEFORE MEALS**

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **GRACE AFTER MEALS**

We give thee thanks for all thy benefits, Almighty God, who lives and reigns forever.  
Amen.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER (OUR FATHER)**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

## **THE HAIL MARY**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

## **GLORY BE TO THE FATHER**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

## **THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

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 lie.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.



## **AN ACT OF CONTRITION**

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.



## **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he arose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

## **THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY**

### ***The Five Joyful Mysteries***

1. The Annunciation
1. The Visitation
2. The Nativity of Jesus
3. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
4. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

### ***The Five Luminous Mysteries***

1. The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River
2. The Miracle at the Wedding at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration of Jesus
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

### ***The Five Sorrowful Mysteries***

1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death

### ***The Five Glorious Mysteries***

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
4. The Assumption of Mary
5. The Coronation of Mary

## **THE MEMORARE**

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of Virgins, My Mother! To thee I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

## **HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION**

January 1 - Mary, Mother of God  
40<sup>th</sup> day after Easter - Ascension  
August 15 - Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
November 1 - All Saints Day  
December 8 - Immaculate Conception  
December 25 - Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ

## **THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS**



**BAPTISM** is the sacrament of rebirth as a child of God sanctified by the Spirit, of unity with Jesus in His death and resurrection, and of cleansing from original sin and personal sins, and of welcome into the community of the Church. It permanently relates him or her to God with a relationship that can never be erased. It joins him or her to the priestly, prophetic, and kingly works of Christ through His Church on earth.

**CONFIRMATION** is the sacrament by which those born anew in baptism now receive the seal of the Holy Spirit, the gift of the Father. Confirmation, as the sealing of the candidate with the Spirit, is linked with the other sacraments of initiation, Baptism and the Eucharist. This sealing of the Spirit prepares us for the witness of a mature Christian life, and for the apostolate of living in the world and extending and defending the Faith.

**THE EUCHARIST** is a celebration of the Last Supper of Jesus with His Apostles and fulfills the command of Jesus, "Do This in Memory of Me". Through the ministry of priests, Christ perpetuates the sacrifice of the cross in an unbloody manner. In this meal, the underlying reality of bread and wine is changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, Who is then given to us for our spiritual nourishment in Communion. Because Jesus is really present in the Eucharist we adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament which is always reserved in our Churches.



**PENANCE (RECONCILIATION)** brings the Catholic God's merciful forgiveness for sins committed after baptism. Sacramental absolution, which follows upon sincere confession of sins, true sorrow, and resolution not to sin again, is a means of obtaining pardon from God. This sacrament also brings about reconciliation with the faith community, the Church, which is wounded by our sin.



**THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK** is the sacrament for the seriously ill, infirmed and aged. By this anointing the priest asks the Lord to lighten the sufferings of the sick person, forgive their sins, and bring them to eternal salvation. The Church encourages the sick to offer freely their sufferings to Christ and remind them that the Church is with them in their illness.

**MARRIAGE** is the sacrament whereby man and woman are joined together in an unbreakable bond of married love for the purpose of sharing their mutual love and needs and for the begetting and education of children.

**HOLY ORDERS** in a special way conforms certain members of the people of God to Christ, the Mediator. In this sacrament, they are given a sacred power to guide and shepherd the faith community, proclaim and explain the Gospel, and guide and sanctify God's people by celebrating and administering the Sacraments, primarily the Eucharist.

## **MORNING PRAYER**

My God, I offer You my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of your Son's Sacred Heart, for the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the reunion of Christians. Amen.

## **EVENING PRAYER**

O my God, I thank you for the gift of this day. Please pardon any evil which I have done and take care of me while I sleep and deliver me from any danger. May your peace be with me and my loved ones. Amen.

## **THE BEATITUDES**

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.
4. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
5. Blessed are the clean in heart, for they will see God.
6. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.
7. Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

## **PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH**

From time to time the Church has listed certain specific duties of Catholics. Some duties expected of Catholic Christians today include the following:

1. Participate in Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, and rest from unnecessary work on Sunday.
2. Confess sins at least once a year in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
3. Receive Holy Communion at least once a year during the Easter season.
5. Observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence.
6. Provide for the material needs of the Church according to one's abilities.

## **SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY**

1. Advise
2. Instruct
3. Console
4. Comfort
5. Bear wrongs patiently
6. Forgive

## **CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY**

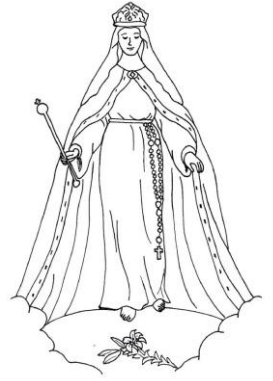
1. Feed the hungry
2. Clothe the naked
3. Visit the sick and imprisoned
4. Shelter the homeless
5. Bury the dead
6. Give alms to the poor

## **GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

1. Wisdom is the gift by which the Holy Spirit enables us to judge all things as God sees them.
2. Understanding helps us understand better what God has revealed.
3. Courage gives us the courage to do what is right, joyfully, in a difficult situation.
4. Counsel helps us to know what to do in particularly difficult situations.
5. Knowledge enables us to see the things of the world as they really are.
6. Piety helps our worship of God and our regard for people and things connected with God.
7. Awe in God's Presence (Fear of the Lord) strengthens in us the wholesome fear of offending God and being separated from Him who we love.

## **HAIL, HOLY QUEEN**

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.



### **Act of Faith**

O my God, I firmly believe that You are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that Your divine Son became man, died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches, because you have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

### **Act of Hope**

O my God, relying on Your infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

### **Act of Love**

O my God, I love You above all things with my whole heart and soul, because You are all good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of You. I forgive all who have injured me and I ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.