



**Our Lady of Good Counsel  
Roman Catholic Church  
5950 State Road 16  
St. Augustine, FL 32092-0626  
904-824-8688  
[www.olgc-church.org](http://www.olgc-church.org)**



**Our Lady of Good Counsel  
Parish Religious Education Program (P.R.E.P.)  
Family Guidebook 2011-2012**



***But Jesus called them to him, saying,  
"Let the children come to me,  
and do not hinder them,  
for to such belongs the kingdom of God."  
Luke 18:16***

You may contact the OLGC Church Office  
Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.  
The phone number is 904-824-8688 and  
the fax number is 904-824-5110.  
You may also visit the church website at  
**[www.olgc-church.org](http://www.olgc-church.org)**

*Family Guidebook written as of March 03, 2011*

**LETTER FROM REVEREND GUY F. NOONAN, PASTOR  
OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL CHURCH**

Dear Parents,

Our Lady of Good Counsel is the newest Parish to be established in the Diocese. As such, we are just at the beginning of a yet-to-be-written long future of faith. This faith will be lived out in our households, in our church community and in our society.

Just a few years ago, we showed only about 30 children registered in our program, and we offered classes only up to the third grade level. How things have changed! In the past school year we had almost 200 children registered in our classes which had been expanded to include students from first to eighth grade. We also offered an individual adult study session for all parents whose children were celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2010 and 2011. Other parents also participated in these sessions for their own faith-education and development.

None of these advances happens automatically: The Parish has worked hard to make space available for this growth, even though we are clearly limited by the size and shape of our building. Numerous parishioners have also offered their love and dedicated service to your children by volunteering to be Coordinators of the program or to be their catechist. How grateful we are to have this gift of their time and talent.

Our growth has not been without difficulties. Adequate space remains a problem. As does coordinating our registrations and parish data to adequately keep track of students and their progress. In order to make this tracking more smooth this year, new policies are now in effect for all registrations. (Please see the enclosed inserts for this information which will determine whether your child(ren) will be able to participate in classes starting in the Fall of the year.

I am very concerned to make sure that all parents understand that the Church can only *partner* with parents in the faith-formation of their child. If parents do not participate in the sacramental and faith life of the community, and if there are no significant signs in the home of being truly a Christian/Catholic household actively practicing the faith, we will be swimming upstream in a current of mud! We simply must have a coordinated effort between home and parish church.

Please know that participation in the sacraments and the full faith-life of the church is a requirement of all households. Be assured that I as Pastor will do everything in my power to help you in your parental role as 'leaders in the faith' in your household. I am also open to any constructive suggestions as to how to help you in the same capacity.

Sincerely,

Father Guy F. Noonan,  
Pastor

DATE	DAY	EVENTS	SETUP BREAKDOWN TEAM
01/16/2012	MONDAY	NO CLASS - MLK DAY	NO SETUP
<b>01/23/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS and Confirmation Class #3</b>	<b>YELLOW</b>
<b>TBA</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>Confirmation: "Rite of Calling" Mass</b>	<b>12 Noon Mass</b>
<b>01/30/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS and Confirmation Class #4</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>TBA</b>	<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>2nd CONFIRMATION RETREAT 9:00 am to 3:00 pm</b>	NO SETUP
<b>02/06/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS and 1st Communion (Parent Meeting) and Confirmation Class #5</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>02/13/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS &amp; 1st Communion (Child) #1</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
02/20/2012	MONDAY	NO CLASS - PRESIDENT'S DAY	NO SETUP
<b>02/27/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>TBA</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>Confirmation: "Rite of Affirmation" Mass</b>	<b>12 Noon Mass</b>
<b>03/05/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS &amp; 1st Communion (Child) #2</b>	<b>GREEN</b>
<b>03/12/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS &amp; 1st Communion (Child) #3</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
<b>03/19/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS &amp; 1st Communion (Child) #4</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
<b>03/26/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
04/02/2012	MONDAY	NO CLASS Spring Break - Happy Easter	NO SETUP
<b>04/09/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
<b>TBA</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>*CONFIRMATION REHEARSAL</b>	NO SETUP
<b>TBA</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>*CONFIRMATION MASS with BISHOP</b>	NO SETUP
04/16/2012	MONDAY	NO CLASS — FCATS	NO SETUP
<b>04/21/2012</b>	<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>1st Communion Retreat (Child and Parent)</b>	<b>11:30 am to 3:45 pm</b>
<b>04/23/2011</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
<b>04/30/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>BLUE</b>
<b>05/05/2012</b>	<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>FIRST COMMUNION REHEARSAL</b>	<b>2:00to3:00 pm</b>
<b>05/06/2012</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>FIRST COMMUNION MASS</b>	<b>12 Noon MASS</b>
<b>05/07/2012</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>CLASS and End of year celebration and clean-up</b>	<b>BLUE</b>

\*The Confirmation date is dependent upon the Bishop's schedule.

**OLGC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CALENDAR**

**2011-2012**

**UPDATED 02/15/2011**

DATE	DAY	EVENTS	SETUP BREAK- DOWN TEAM
09/12/2011	MONDAY	FIRST CLASS	RED
09/19/2011	MONDAY	CLASS & MANDATORY PARENT MEETING	RED
09/26/2011	MONDAY	CLASS	RED
10/03/2011	MONDAY	CLASS	RED
10/10/2011	MONDAY	CLASS and 1st Reconciliation (Parent and Child) #1	RED
10/17/2011	MONDAY	CLASS and 1st Reconciliation (Child)#2	ORANGE
10/24/2011	MONDAY	NO CLASS - SCHOOL HOLIDAY	NO SETUP
10/31/2011	MONDAY	NO CLASS - Halloween	NO SETUP
TBA	SATURDAY	1st. Confirmation Retreat 9:00am—3:00pm	NO SETUP
11/07/2011	MONDAY	CLASS and 1st Reconciliation (Child)#3	ORANGE
11/14/2011	MONDAY	CLASS and 1st Reconciliation (Child)#4 Confirmation Family Meetings with Pastor & CRE & Catechists (by appointment) at Rectory 9:00 am—3:00 pm	ORANGE
TBA	SATURDAY		NO SETUP
11/21/2011	MONDAY	CLASS - Happy Thanksgiving	ORANGE
11/27/2011	SUNDAY	1st Sunday of Advent - New Roman Missal	NO SETUP
11/28/2011	MONDAY	CLASS	ORANGE
12/05/2011	MONDAY	CLASS	YELLOW
12/12/2011	MONDAY	CLASS	YELLOW
TBA	TBA	ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE	NO SETUP
12/19/2011	MONDAY	NO CLASS - CHRISTMAS BREAK	NO SETUP
12/26/2011	MONDAY	NO CLASS - CHRISTMAS BREAK	NO SETUP
01/02/2012	MONDAY	CLASSES Resume & Confirmation Class #1	YELLOW
01/09/2012	MONDAY	CLASS and Confirmation Class #2	YELLOW

**FAMILY CHECK LIST FOR LIVING THE FAITH AS A HOUSEHOLD**

*THE FAITH IS CAUGHT, NOT JUST TAUGHT!*

*AND IN MANY/MOST INSTANCES, PARENTS ARE THE PITCHERS!*

- 1. Participate at weekly Eucharist (Saturday 4:00 PM;  
Sunday 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM and 12:00 Noon)
- 2. Celebrate the Sacrament of Penance annually (Saturdays at 3:15 PM to 3:45 PM) or at the Parish Communal Penance Services (Advent before Christmas and Lent before Easter)
- 3. Regular Family Prayer — Examples:
  - -- Family Rosary
  - -- Family Reading of the Sunday Scriptures. These are listed on the parish website at [www.olgc-church.org](http://www.olgc-church.org). Go to the link under "Today's Readings" on the first page of our website.
  - -- Night prayer together, before the family or the children go to bed.
- 4. Involvement in the Ministries of the Church. There are MANY of these. Please see the Parish bulletin for contact persons.
- 5. Regularly supporting the ministries of the Church. It costs minimally \$20.00 per household per week to cover the costs of the church's operations.
- [FYI: An Annual Report is distributed to the Parish and an audit is done regularly].
- 6. Vocation Awareness: When was the last time you spoke to your children about your and their call to live as a Son or Daughter of God, and to choose vocations for marriage or single or religious life according to talents, gifts, interests, etc...?
- When was the last time you spoke with your children about a vocation to the Priesthood or Religious Life?

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for enrolling your child in the Parish Religious Education Program (P.R.E.P.) at Our Lady of Good Counsel Roman Catholic Church. Our goal is to provide you and your family with faith formation of quality that will allow you to grow and to experience the unfathomable love our God has for each of us. We aim to be examples of Christ's love in all that we do and hope that your children will feel loved and respected in our program.

Please take the time to review this handbook. It is designed to answer all of your questions. This year we have made progress in streamlining the registration process for returning students and hope to make continued improvements next year.

As you know, your child's most important teacher is you. It is through your actions, words, and example that your child will learn the marvelous love of our Lord. The values that you instill in them today will carry them throughout their lifetime of faith.

We can provide you access to various books, videos, materials and websites to assist you in your child's religious formation as well as your own faith formation. The parish website, [www.olgc-church.org](http://www.olgc-church.org), includes links, schedules and reference information.

Your participation in the program is essential to our success. Because our multipurpose building is used for liturgy and many other events, **it is critical for you to assist in the set up and breakdown of the classrooms each week.** This year, we will again divide this task into teams and assign each family (that are not catechists) certain weeks to perform the set up and breakdown. Normally, the set up occurs after the 12:00 Noon Mass on Sunday and breakdown after class on Monday evening. If you are unavailable for your week(s), please trade with another family. Our team of catechists and volunteers look forward to working with you this year.

If at any time you have questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the OLGc Church Office at 904-824-8688. No question or concern is too small!

May God bless you and your family,

Older children seeking the Sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation and First Communion will meet with a priest or the CRE and their parent(s) to determine a plan for preparation. It may include family participation in the RCIA process.

### **Guidelines for all Parents**

- Parents should ensure that their children attend classes and special events regularly and on time.
- Parents should communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect a child within the classroom.
- Parents should be an active part of their children's learning through involvement in the classroom at the catechist's request, reviewing material with their children, by going to Mass weekly with their children, and being good Catholic role models by setting a good moral example and by their own active participation in parish events.
- In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, parents may contact the Church Office at 904-824-8688 to determine if classes have been cancelled. If your child has an emergency situation, you will be contacted immediately.
- Parents, Guardians and age-appropriate children are expected to be actively involved in church ministries and activities. **Families are also required to serve a designated number of hours at the OLGc Parish Harvest Festival on Sunday, October 23, 2011 (approximately 5 hours per family).**

### **Guidelines for Catechists and Other Volunteers**

- Individuals involved in any of the parish religious education programs, teaching or otherwise, shall be of high moral values. He/she should be a Catholic example to students through witness and prayer.
- Catechists should provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that children will be able to grow in their faith.
- Catechists shall be provided with training and necessary resources to prepare them for teaching.
- All catechists and volunteers 18 years of age and older who work with children and/or youth are required to attend VIRTUS training ("*Protecting God's Children*" course is mandatory).
- Catechists & Volunteers 18 years and older MUST also be fingerprinted, have a completed background check performed and have three reference forms on file with the office.
- Residents of Florida for 5 years or longer will have their fingerprints taken on the **green card** and can have their fingerprints taken at the church/Church Office.
- New residents to Florida (less than 5 years) will have their fingerprints taken on a **blue card** and will be required to have this done at the Sheriff's Office. Prints will then be submitted to the Church Office.

# Sacramental Preparation

## First Reconciliation and First Communion

- Documented attendance in a Parish Religious Education Program in a church or school for two years
- If your child is transferring from another church, written proof of program attendance from the former church is required.
- A basic understanding of course content
- Parent participation at the parent meetings and workshops
- Attendance at retreat(s) and Attendance at First Communion rehearsal
- First Reconciliation: normally students and parents are expected to participate in the scheduled Advent Penance Service. Check-in at this event is required for sacramental record keeping.

*You will receive a Sacrament Preparation Guide,  
with all dates and guidelines, closer to the time of the Sacrament.*

## Confirmation: Normally Eighth Grade and older

- Documented attendance in a Parish Religious Education Program in a church or school as per Diocese of St. Augustine policy
- If your child is transferring from another church, written proof of program attendance from the former church is required.
- Parent participation in parent/sponsor meetings/classes
- Attendance at workshops/retreats
- Attendance at Confirmation rehearsal
- Completing and submitting all required forms and processes

*All the following items to be satisfied at least four (4) weeks before the Sacrament:*

- Family Meeting with Pastor, CRE, Catechists during the first semester
- Retreats –normally one (1) per semester
- Candidate should normally go to Confession during the Lenten Season wherein there is a scheduled Penance Service. Regularly scheduled Confession is also available throughout the year.
- Scheduled Rituals at Mass:
  - “Rite of Calling to the Sacrament of Confirmation” and
  - “Rite of Affirmation declaring the intent to receive the Sacrament”
- Sponsor Certificate with Church Seal on Original
- Confirmation Saint name with written reflection (worksheet)
- Letter written to Bishop (due to Bishop’s Office 3 weeks prior to Sacrament)
- Signed proof verifying active involvement in parish ministries (information regarding ministries will be provided); choice of ministries may begin the year before the Sacramental year
- Completion of student sacramental preparation classes and family/sponsor sacramental preparation classes

*You will receive a Sacrament Preparation Guide,  
with all dates and guidelines, closer to the time of the Sacrament. -8-*

# Parish Mission Statement

To become a community of disciples, called to walk “The Way” of Christ Jesus in our households, church community and society.

## Introduction

Recognizing that parents are the primary religious educators of their children and that our role is one of assisting, not replacing, parents in teaching the faith to their children, the purpose of this handbook is to ensure that parents, students, catechists, and other volunteers understand the guidelines, rules and policies of our Parish Religious Education Program. This handbook is to help ensure that programs can run efficiently by providing pertinent information to all involved in these programs.

## General Guidelines for Students: P.R.E.P.

**Depending on the number of students enrolled, we hope for ONE SESSION on Monday evenings with Sign-in at 6:30 pm and Classes from 6:45 pm to 7:45 pm.**

**However, in the event enrollment increases,**

**we will then have to teach double sessions as follows:**

**FIRST SESSION: Grades PreK4 to 4th Grade meet on Monday evenings:  
with Sign-in at 6:15 pm and Classes from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm.**

**and**

**SECOND SESSION: 5th Grade to Adult meet on Monday evenings:  
with Sign-in at 7:30 pm and Classes from 7:45 pm to 8:45 pm.**

***Number of Sessions to be determined before Classes start in September 2011.***

**All Grades meet in the main church (SR 16).**

## Registration

- Complete a registration form and submit with program cost. [see form]
- Families new to the program must provide a **copy** of any sacramental certificate received from another Catholic Parish or another Christian denomination.
- *No child will be allowed to attend classes unless all documents are received in the Church Office. All fees must also have been paid.*
- In the case of a non-baptized child, permission for enrollment must be cleared with the Pastor.
- A transfer student going into sacramental preparation classes at OLGc must have written proof of their religious education preparation from a previous Catholic parish or school to ensure enrollment at OLGc.
- In the event of court-determined custodial concerns, proof of custodial rights documentation may be requested if your child intends to receive a sacrament.
- Any student who transfers from another local Parish to OLGc for the reception of a sacrament must be approved by our Pastor and an “out-of-parish” fee may be charged.

## Weekly Mass

In order to properly connect religious education and sacramental preparation, students need to participate at Mass each weekend. **It is impossible to expect a parish religious education program to succeed if the central act of worship is ignored.** Class attendance does not take the place of the Eucharist.

Regular Mass attendance at OLGC is a minimum 40 weekends per year, with Stewardship contributions of Time, Talent and Treasure to OLGC Parish.

*All families are weekly to use the OLGC envelopes to document support for the community and/or presence at Mass.*

## Attendance

We want every student in P.R.E.P. to have a successful and positive experience and to receive a complete, well-rounded religious education. Please assist us with this by placing a high priority on this part of your child's life. Of course, the text material may be made up, but class time includes many activities such as prayer, films, and discussions which cannot be made up.

The following guidelines have been established so that students will be assured that they are ready to be successful in the next year of religion class. If special circumstances warrant long absences, contact the Coordinator of Religious Education to arrange for special home study.

## Expectations for Behavior

- Respect and courtesy toward catechists, volunteers and classmates is required at all times.
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum in classrooms without specific permission from the adult in charge.
- Students are to use supplies and facilities properly.
- Leave the facility neat and clean.
- **Parents of students** are expected to clean the floor and follow the set up/breakdown procedures.
- Students should cooperate through completion of assignments and class participation.
- The catechist reserves the right to request a parent meeting if necessary to discuss the student's completion of assignments and/or class participation.
- Use of cell phones or other electronic devices are not permitted in class.

## Arrivals/Departures

Parents **MUST** sign their child in prior to each session and out after each session. The sign in sheet will act as your child's attendance. Children **MAY NOT** sign themselves in. Sign in sheets can be found with each catechist. Signing your child in assures that your children are safe and in the care of a responsible adult at all times.

Parents will pick their students up in their classroom. Parents **MUST** collect their children directly from the teacher. **Prior approval is REQUIRED IN WRITING to release a child to another adult. Allowing children to come into and out of the building unattended puts them at risk of injury or abduction - please follow the rules.**

*Please get students to class on time.* Classes are held Monday evenings with the number of sessions that will be determined by the number of students enrolled in the Program, please see details on page 5. **DO NOT just drop your child off for class and then drive away!** Please be prompt in picking up your children. The catechists are volunteering their time.

## Catechist/Parent Communication

Parents should always feel free to speak with a catechist about a child's progress, or any other concerns that may arise. The CRE is also available to discuss matters with parents.

## Curriculum

In grades PreK4-8, we are using a series approved by the Diocese. In addition to good textbooks and resources, the vendor provides good websites, offering additional activities for catechists and families.

## Dress Code for ALL Parish and Parish-Sponsored Events

Keep in mind that we always want to set a good example. We have developed a dress code, and following this should eliminate complaints, embarrassing situations, harassment, and giving offense to anyone.

- Everyone is expected to wear modest clothing to all functions.
- No low-cut tops, see-through garments, halter tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, muscle shirts, bare midriff outfits, or shirts or blouses that are tied and rise above the waist.
- Miniskirts and short-shorts are not allowed.
- No emblems, insignias, badges, slogans or tattoos that distract or disrupt. This would include anything related to alcohol, tobacco, racism, sex, or any other inappropriate topic.
- No piercing jewelry other than earrings.

Remember---If in doubt, wear something else! Students will be reminded of the rules once. If following these guidelines continues to be a problem, the student will be referred to the CRE, who will set up a conference with the parents. In certain instances, the child might be dismissed from the class for a serious infraction.

## Substance Abuse Policies

Substance abuse is defined as the possession of, use of, selling or distributing any unauthorized, illegal drug, chemical, alcohol, or tobacco-like substance, which can be introduced into the body through ingestion, inhalation, or injection. Any student found in possession of an illegal or unauthorized substance on parish property or at parish-sponsored events will be immediately suspended from the program. A conference with the Pastor, CRE, student and parent is mandatory for re-admittance. Any student selling or distributing will be turned over to local authorities.