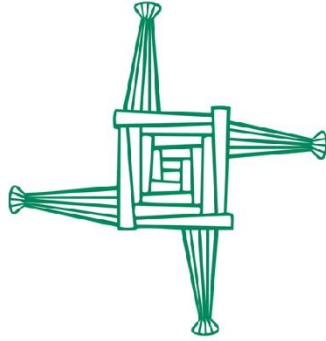


ST. BRIGID OF KILDARE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2025-2026

**ADDRESS: 7175 AVERY ROAD, DUBLIN, OHIO 43017-2702
PHONE: 614-761-1176**



SAINT BRIGID OF KILDARE

Religious Education

St. Brigid of Kildare Religious Education Mission Statement

“One Faith, One Family”

Catholic faith formation is a lifelong process of spiritual growth, increased understanding, and commitment to the faith and traditions of the Catholic Church. Our desire at Saint Brigid of Kildare is to share as a community in the ministry of Christ, living as One Family and sharing in our One Faith. We hold dear the vital sacramental life of the Church, given to us by Christ, calling each of us to act justly, with love and mercy, living in communion with one another. Following Christ is a lifelong journey and we invite you to join us.

ST. BRIGID OF KILDARE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF

Andrea Komenda

Director of Religious Education
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Lauren Geibel

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Beth Kelty

Administrative Assistant
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Religious Education Office Hours

Monday through Thursday
Additionally on Monday

8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
4:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Friday

8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

St. Brigid Religious Education Office
7175 Avery Road
Dublin, OH 43017

614-761-1176 (*Religious Education Office*)

614-718-5831 (*School Fax*)

614-761-3734 (*Parish Office*)

SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

Our *Safe Environment Program* is designed to protect children while they are in the “care, custody, or control” of any volunteer on behalf of the Religious Education Program.

All volunteers must complete four (4) requirements prior to the first day of volunteering:

1. Complete a **Protecting God’s Children (PGC)** awareness session offered throughout the Diocese of Columbus. This program helps raise the awareness of adult volunteers for the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse and steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.
2. Undergo a Civilian Criminal Background/Fingerprint check (BCI&I) and if needed, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). There are two options: you can walk in to Fast Fingerprints located at 1486 Bethel Road, www.fastfingerprints.com, or make an appointment with Washington Township Administration and Training Center located at 6200 Eiterman Road, 614-652-3920. The Washington Township Fingerprints form can be found on the parish website. Please complete (but do not sign) this form and bring it with you to Washington Township.
3. Complete an online Volunteer Application Form which includes the signed Code of Conduct.
4. Submit a copy of driver license or photo ID to the Safe Environment Coordinator.

To clarify, you only need to complete the **Protecting God’s Children** course once and this will cover you for any volunteering assignments at St. Brigid of Kildare parish. The Background/Fingerprint (BCI&FBI) will require updating as per current guidelines of the Office of Safe Environment. Should you remain inactive as a volunteer for the period of 18 months or greater, you will be required to resubmit updated BCI&FBI. Questions should be directed to the Safe Environment Coordinator.

VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

Volunteers are critical to the success of every program, and their time and talents are a gift to the program and very much appreciated. However, there are certain expectations that must be met on a weekly basis. These expectations include and are not limited to the following:

- Volunteers are expected to be compliant with the **Safe Environment Program** as outlined above. Non-compliance will result in a loss of the volunteer position.
- Volunteers are expected to fulfill their commitment to the program by being present at their assigned position.

- We understand that unforeseen circumstances arise. If you are unable to fulfill your volunteer assignment, we ask that you notify Lauren Geibel either by email or telephone so a substitute can be found for your position. We must remain in compliance with the **Safe Environment** ratios for the protection of the students and the safety of our program.
- Volunteers are expected to abide by the **Harassment Policy** and the **Code of Conduct** which is included in this handbook.
- Volunteers are expected to wear their ID badge for the entire duration of their volunteering duty for security reasons. Volunteer ID badges will be picked up at Volunteer Sign-In and returned to the same area upon dismissal.
- Volunteers should remember they are representatives of the parish and the Religious Education Program and should conduct themselves accordingly.

ROLES OF THE VOLUNTEERS

St Brigid offers four (4) types of volunteer opportunities in the Religious Education Program—Small Group Leaders, Office Aides, Hall Monitors, and Childcare during our Small Group Sessions. Each type of volunteer position has a specific role which is herein explained.

SMALL GROUP LEADERS:

- Volunteers should arrive at least 10 minutes prior to the beginning of class.
- Volunteers should check in by signing the sign-in sheet and obtaining their ID badge from a member of the Religious Education Staff. ID badges must be **returned** to the Religious Education Office at the end of class time **each week**.
- Small Group Leaders prepare the room by setting out supplies, distributing any folders, papers, projects, or name tags needed for the day's lesson.
- A Small Group Leader will ask for Hall Monitor to escort students to and from the room during the session time unless a Religious Education Staff is summoned. If student is going to the restroom, a Hall Monitor will be asked to watch the child as they go to and from the restroom.
- Small Group Leaders maintain discipline during the session.
- Small Group Leaders set forth a good example of attentiveness by refraining from cellphone use in the classroom and conversing “socially” that distracts from the lesson being presented.
- Small Group Leaders refrain from sharing any information about any child with anyone other than a member of the Religious Education Staff. The Small Group environment is one of openness with all members. For this reason, we ask that all classroom discussions be held in confidence.

OFFICE AIDES:

- Volunteers should arrive 10 minutes prior to the start of class time.
- Volunteers should check in by signing the sign-in sheet and obtaining their ID badge from a member of the Religious Education Staff. ID badges must be **returned** to the Religious Education Office at the end of class time **each week**.
- After checking in, Office Aides should report to the assigned tables in the cafeteria. The Religious Education Staff will have a Weekly Assignment sheet prioritizing projects to be completed. Detailed directions and all necessary materials and supplies for these projects will be provided.
- Office Aides understand that he/she may be called upon to take on a different Religious Education position during their chosen class time. To abide by compliance rules and upon the discretion of the Religious Education Staff, Office Aides may transition into another volunteer position as needed during the respective class time/assignment.
- Office Aides will be given a basic tour of the Catechist Resource Center and the Main Office. Office Aides will accept training on office equipment such as paper cutters, copiers, die-cut machines, etc. and agree to use all equipment and supplies responsibly.

HALL MONITORS:

- Hall Monitors should arrive 10 minutes before class time and check in by signing the sign-in sheet and obtaining their ID badge from a member of the Religious Education Staff. ID badges must be **returned** to the Religious Education Office at the end of class time **each week**.
- Hall Monitors **maintain security** in assigned hallways by monitoring all activity in the hallways. This includes being alert for all **unauthorized** visitors or students out of their assigned classrooms. Only **authorized** St. Brigid Staff and Volunteers are allowed in the hallways during class time.
- Hall Monitors help maintain a smooth traffic pattern in the hallways and direct people from using unauthorized entrances and exits. This is especially important during arrival and dismissal procedures.
- Hall Monitors escort students to and from classrooms.
- Hall Monitors must refrain from using cell phones and holding excessive conversations which negatively affect the Hall Monitors ability to maintain alertness. Quiet reading is permitted as long as the Hall Monitor remains diligent to the activities occurring around their assigned station.

CHILDCARE VOLUNTEERS:

- One Lead Volunteer should arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of class time.
- Volunteers should check in by signing the sign-in sheet and obtaining their ID badge from a member of the Religious Education Staff. ID badges must be returned to the Religious Education Office at the end of class time each week.
- After checking in, Childcare Volunteers should report to Room 101. Parent volunteers will be bringing members of the Childcare Program to you, in this space.
- Childcare Volunteers are responsible for keeping attendance for all children assigned to childcare. Childcare Volunteers should use the assigned form to be sure that all volunteers sign-in their children at drop-off and sign-out their children at pick-up.
- In case of emergency, Childcare Volunteers should keep the attendance sheet with them throughout the class hour.
- Childcare Volunteers maintain a safe environment for all children in their care. Please be sure that there are always two (2) adults per 10 children in the Childcare Room. If a second volunteer does not arrive, please notify a member of the Religious Education Staff.
- Childcare Volunteers should be mindful of the borrowed space they are occupying. Play resources will be provided for the Childcare Program for use during the class hour. Outdoor playtime is encouraged.
- While we do not provide snacks for Childcare, each child may bring an allergy friendly snack with them to Childcare and any materials a child would need during that hour (e.g diaper bag).

HARASSMENT POLICY

1. Harassment can take many forms. Harassment can occur at any parish activity, and/or can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, gymnasium, or even at programs sponsored by the parish at other locations. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability or other protected characteristics.
2. It is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus to maintain a spiritually enriching environment, in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. No participant, volunteer adult leader, or parish staff member – male or female – should be subject to unlawful harassment in any form, and specifically not to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.
3. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Offensive sexual flirtations, advances, propositions;
 - Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual or gender-based nature;
 - Explicit or degrading sexual or gender-based comments about another individual or his or her appearance;
 - The display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures, or objects;
 - Any offensive or physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
 - Graffiti of a sexual nature;
 - Fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
 - Spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.

Sexual harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature – it also includes harassment that is based on **gender**. Gender-based harassment, which is also prohibited, is conduct that would not occur except for the sex of the person involved. An example would be referring to a woman by or as a female body part, or a demeaning sex-based term, or treating people differently because of their gender. The same prohibitions apply with regard to inflammatory or offensive comments or conduct which are based upon race, color, age, religion, disability, or national origin. In short, working relationships between employees and volunteers must be based on mutual respect.

Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take, any personnel or other action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to unwelcome sexual activity will have any effect on the individual's employment,

assignment, compensation, advancement, development, program evaluation, participation in parish programs or activities, or any other condition of employment or achievement.

Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature. (For example, a catechetical leader hugging a child after an accomplishment, a catechist consoling an adolescent with an injury or physical conduct during an activity to enhance catechetical learning like engaging in movement to accompany liturgical music would not be considered sexual conduct.) However, peer-based sexual harassment is a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.

4. A sexually hostile environment can be created by a parish employee, volunteer, participant, or visitor to the parish activity.
5. Any person who believes that he/she is subject to unlawful harassment or intimidation must contact the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor, or (c) diocesan director of religious education. A complaint must be filed in writing. In the event that an individual alleges harassment by a program administrator or a pastor, the individual may file the complaint with the diocesan director of religious education. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.
6. Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action against any program administrator, volunteer, or staff engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account the individuals and circumstances. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, disciplinary measures up to and including termination of services.
7. No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated. The Diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.

PARISH RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Periodically each parish shall give staff and volunteers a copy of the Harassment Policy. It is recommended that the Harassment Policy Verification Form be signed and returned.
2. Each parish program shall follow diocesan procedures for timely investigation and response to complaints.
3. Each parish shall periodically train program administrators, staff and volunteers to ensure that they understand which types of behavior constitute harassment, the prevention of harassment, and how they should respond in the event of experiencing such behavior. Records are to be kept of training dates and names of those in attendance.
4. Each parish program shall include the Harassment Policy in materials distributed to the program's staff/volunteers.

HARASSMENT POLICY VERIFICATION FORM

I, _____, am (check all that apply):
(Print Name)

- an employee of St. Brigid of Kildare
- a volunteer at St. Brigid of Kildare
- a parent/guardian of a youth participant
- a youth participant (grades 6-12)
- have received copies of the diocesan policy on harassment.

I understand that it is necessary that any complaint of harassment must be filed with the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor or (c) diocesan director of religious education. I have had an opportunity to read the policy and am confident I understand the content and purpose.

St. Brigid of Kildare Church Religious Education

(Name of parish and program)

(Your signature)

(Date)

Department of Religious Education
Catholic Diocese of Columbus

Adopted: 08/04

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received and read the **Parent Handbook** for St. Brigid Religious Education Program. I understand that I am responsible for and will abide by the information contained therein.

(Volunteer printed name)

(Your signature)

(Date)

Please return to St. Brigid Religious Education Office by **September 29, 2025**.