

October 3, 2018

Dear Parents,

Many of you are aware this past Sunday Cardinal Timothy Dolan addressed the congregation regarding the issue of sexual misconduct amongst the clergy. He spoke of the protocol put in place to address this crisis. Here at St. Joseph's there has been an allegation of inappropriate behavior by Fr. Thomas Kreiser. Fr. Kreiser is no longer in residence and will no longer exercise his priestly ministries while this allegation is under investigation.

We have decided to cancel all classes today, Wednesday, October 3, 2018. This will give us the opportunity to meet with our staff to regroup, advise and pray for our program and church.

We are writing to inform you that the safety of your children is of the utmost importance to us. In response to your concerns about the safety of your children in our program we would like to share how we have and continue to keep your children safe during Religious Education classes:

- since last year we have had a police officer on site during program hours.
- all adults associated with the Religious Education program have had background checks and have participated in the safer spaces training, and character references have been verified.
- four years ago, we installed 32 security cameras in the school building and parish grounds; the police have access to these cameras.
- new and enhanced lighting has been installed around all the buildings.
- hall monitors are in place for each session.
- no adult can enter the building once the sessions have begun without being buzzed in and reporting to the Religious Education office. If a parent needs a child for early dismissal, an office staff member goes to the classroom to get the child.
- we are required by the Archdiocese of New York to have one lesson in Safe Environment for the participants in the religious education program. This lesson is completed in the first month of the program.
- when made aware of concerns from the students, parents, or catechists we address them immediately and accordingly.
- we conduct fire drills as well as lockdown drills during the program year.

We continually evaluate all our policies and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all who are in the building during Religious Education time. You entrust your children to us, and their safety and well-being are our highest priority.

Peace and God Bless,

Fr. Peter McGeory, Pastor

Mrs. Antoinette Gilligan, Director of Religious Education