

Religious Education at St Dominic's

The aim of Religious Education in the Catholic School

Our Dominican motto "Veritas" remains central to all our teaching and informs our approach to education to enable the School to be permeated by the Christian Spirit. Christ is our teaching centre and model for all we do.

St Dominic's School exists as an expression of the Catholic Church's mission to share the Gospel of Jesus. What must be assumed, therefore, is that anyone who joins the school community is open to the school's principles and practices and therefore to the school's Religious Education programme.

Our Religious Education programme strives to be respectful and sensitive to the diversity of religious paths of individuals within the school community. We must endeavour to promote mutual understanding and respect among our learners. Our aim of Religious Education is to nurture in our learners their personal gifts of faith so as to bring awareness, growth, true freedom and healing into their daily lives. We hope it will equip them in every sphere to help in the building of responsible and life-giving communities that are signs of hope for the world.

Recognising our call to participate in the Catholic Church's mission to share the gospel of Jesus, we the staff, learners and parents of St Dominic's School acknowledge our responsibility to provide an environment in which the Gospel is lived out and experienced. This includes:

- Maintaining and fostering the Catholic ethos and faith environment of the whole school.
- Recognizing the dignity of each person and our duty to see Jesus in everyone irrespective of colour, creed or gender
- Ensuring that our ministry extends to the students religious knowledge, experience and skills in a spirit of critical reflection in order to help them in their personal process of coming to own a faith.
- Being a place of evangelization, well-rounded education, enculturation and initiation to the dialogue of life among young people of different religious and social backgrounds.
- Recognising that Religious Education is a privileged opportunity for addressing the urgent need to develop values and moral sensitivity in our society and tolerance and acceptance of other people's beliefs.

St Dominic's offers a co-ordinated, comprehensive Religious Programme, under the leadership of a Religious Education Co-ordinator that includes:

- A Religious Education Curriculum
- A weekly assembly programme including worship and reflection
- The setting aside of daily times for prayer
- Celebration of the Eucharist
- Paraliturgies
- Religious pictures and statues
- Having a chapel for prayer and worship
- Retreats
- Outreach projects
- A clear understanding with the Catholic Learner's parish regarding the school's role in sacramental preparation

Partnerships with family and parish

- We acknowledge the role of parents as first educators and aim to assist them in their task.
- We liaise with parents and parishes to agree upon the role of the school in specific preparation for the Sacraments. We acknowledge the responsibility and interest of the parish community in the Catechesis of its young members, realising that there is a limit to what the school can do and that it does not replace the parish community.

Multi-Faith Dimension

- We keep class groups together for Religious Education as far as possible. We divide them when learners are preparing for the Sacraments in the Primary and High Schools.
- We take the trouble to raise awareness by observing days that are important to the world community, to the nation, and to various religious communities, as well as the seasons and feast days of the Church's year.

Our values which are ecumenical are sought in the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church.

All of this is done through our programme of teaching, through prayer and celebration and in a spirit of vocation and service.

References

"Fostering Hope" – Policy for Religious Education in South African Catholic Schools 2006
The Church in Africa
"Here I am" – A Religious Education Programme for Primary Schools.

Sacrament Of Confirmation

In Grade 10 Catholic girls can prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The preparation lessons are conducted during Religious Education lessons. The school's programme is integrated with parish activities. Candidates and their parents and their Confirmation Sponsors are invited / expected to attend Masses and Meetings at St Dominic's Church from time to time. A yearly retreat is also organised for Confirmation candidates.

The Rite of Confirmation takes place towards the end of the Grade 10 year at St Dominic's Church.