

St. Joseph Religious Education 2020–2021

Parish School of Religion (PSR) Parent Handbook

God calls each of us in many different ways to serve Him. Your calling is to be a parent. The parish supports the parents' responsibility as the primary educators of their children. As parents, you are the most influential agent of catechesis for your children. Catechesis given by parents to their family "precedes, accompanies, and enriches all other forms of catechesis," as stated in the National Directory for Catechesis.

St. Joseph would like to welcome your family to the Parish School of Religion (PSR) program if you have a child that is within the age ranges of the 1st Grade through the 8th Grade. We would encourage you to enroll your child in the PSR this year and to maintain registration all subsequent years to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation.

Your family's participation in the faith life at St. Joseph through Sunday Mass, service to others, and dedication to daily prayer demonstrate your authentic profession of faith.

St. Joseph bases its curriculum on the [Diocese of Columbus Graded Course of study for Religion](#) and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Our parish family promises to help you, as parents, foster your child/children's faith, and assist you in your role of catechist for your children. Parents are welcomed to attend PSR classes at any time. We encourage parent participation as much as possible.

Class Information:

1st–6th Grade	Session I	Monday, 4:30 PM–5:30 PM
1st–6th Grade	Session II	Monday, 6:30 PM–7:30 PM
7th–8th Grade		Sunday, 9:40 AM–10:50 AM

*****Important—Please Note*****

Classes will begin Sunday, September 13, 2020, for the 7th and 8th Grade Classes and Monday, September 14, 2020, for the 1st– 6th-grade classes.

Class size will be limited to 10 -13 students per class so that the catechist and aide can get to know each child as well as assist in creating _____suitable conditions necessary to learn the Christian message.

The PSR program does not run without cost, nor does it run without the time generously donated by our volunteers. Whether you can contribute your time and talent and/or monetarily, all contributions are equally invaluable to the success of our PSR program. It takes the time, _____talent, and resources of our entire parish community to effectively catechize our children. Your donation in whichever capacity that you can give is greatly appreciated and always welcome. The PSR program cannot run without our volunteer catechists, aides, and hall monitors. *Please prayerfully consider volunteering for one of these positions.*

Any parent volunteering in the PSR program is required by the Diocese of Columbus to be certified in "Protecting God's Children" (PGC) before volunteering in the classroom. No exceptions will be made with this policy. Please contact the office to inquire about registering for a "Protecting God's Children" training session. [Pre-register for PGC here.](#)

Registration and Fees

Student registrations will be processed in the following order as they are received with complete payment and paperwork filed.

1. Registered St. Joseph Parishioners will register online with [ParishSoft](#) from April 30, 2020, thru May 31, 2020.
2. Currently enrolled non-parishioner PSR-only families will register from June 1, 2020, through June 15, 2020.
3. Registration for any remaining open spaces will occur after June 15, 2020.
4. Paperwork and Fees must be submitted by the following deadlines:

Parishioner: May 31, 2020

Non-Parishioner Re-Enrolling: June 15, 2020

New Non-Parishioner Submissions: June 30, 2020

NOTE: Registration will be closed after Monday, August 14, 2020

Registered St. Joseph Parishioner: The non-refundable registration fee is \$75.00 per student with a \$150.00 maximum fee per family. A parishioner is defined as being registered in the parish before January 1, 2020, having a census number assigned by the Diocese of Columbus and contributes to the parish. *Due to the Pandemic we are giving 50% discount if necessary. We would like to offer the volunteer spots for the first step, but if you need the reduction please take it.*

Non-Parishioner: The registration fee is \$150.00 per student with no family maximum. Families with students enrolled during sacramental years the retreat fees will be: First Communion retreat \$35.00, First Reconciliation retreat will be \$35.00 and Confirmation retreat _____ fees will be _____\$65.00. We reserve the right to remove any non-parishioner from our PSR program for any reason.
Non-parishioners must be enrolled in grades 1-8 consistently to receive the sacraments at St. Joseph's.

The following paperwork must be completed and returned with payment by all those in the PSR program before registration is complete:

1. PSR Registration Form
2. Identifiable Release Form
3. PSR Registration Fee / any retreat fees for Non-Parishioners
4. Copy of Baptismal Certificate if not baptized at St. Joseph
5. Signed Harassment Policy Form
6. Non-parishioner Enrollment Policy

Registration Fee Exemptions: Any parishioner volunteering as a catechist, aide, or hall monitor in the St. Joseph PSR program is exempt from PSR registration fees. Two hall monitors are needed for each session. A non-parishioner volunteering as a catechist, aide, or hall monitor will be given half price discount on one student's registration fees.

Community Building and Continuing Education

We encourage the **first grade parents** to assist in the **First Reconciliation and First Communion retreats** so the families can become familiar with the activities their children will be a part of next year. Then the next year they will be catered to by the first grade parents. Please be proactive in selecting when and where you can help so you get what you are best suited for before it is already assigned.

The _____ **seventh grade parents** are encouraged to assist at the **Confirmation activities such as the retreat, the rehearsal and the actual Confirmation.** This way they will be familiar with the expectations for their child in the next year and the seventh grade next year will reciprocate the hospitality for you. Please keep this in mind when you are reviewing the calendar for the year. Please be proactive in selecting when and where you can help so you get what you are best suited for before it is already assigned.

Since we have established that you "as parents, you are the most influential agents of catechesis (teaching the faith by word and deed) for your children." **It follows that your active participation beyond the minimum of Sunday Mass is expected.** Our St. Joseph Community offers many adult faith experiences that you may and should take part in throughout the Liturgical Year. Some examples in order of importance are: **weekly bible studies, Men or Women's Conference, Lecturing or Eucharistic Minister, Knights of Columbus, Walking with Purpose, That Man is You, FORMED.ORG app, and Cap's and Cork's.** This will help you to more convincingly pass on the faith to your children. It is common knowledge if our faith has grown more since our Confirmation or last high _____ school class we can speak more fervently about that faith.

Student Safety

All parents with children in 1st-4th grade are required to escort their child/children into the building and walk them all the way to their classrooms upon arriving.

Parents are also required to return to the building to pick up their child/children from the classroom at the conclusion of class. Catechists and aides are instructed to keep the children in the classrooms until a parent or guardian comes to pick them up. *Please do not leave your child in the classroom unless a teacher or aide is present.*

The parking lot is extremely busy at arrival and departure times of PSR and we need to make sure that all children are safe. **Older children are not permitted to escort their younger brothers and sisters in and out of the building.**

Please note that classrooms will be locked once the class has started; this is for the safety of the children. We appreciate you making every attempt to arrive on time so that the class is not interrupted.

Class Cancellations: If Jonathan Alder Local Schools are closed, PSR and all parish activities are canceled. If PSR classes should be canceled for any reason (snow, tornado warning etc.) it will be posted on Facebook and the parish website, www.saintjosephplainscity.com.

For Sunday PSR classes, if Union County has declared a level one snow emergency then please stay home and be safe. Always use your own discretion when venturing out in questionable conditions.

Sacraments Policy: Students in the year before sacramental preparation begins (1st and 6th grades) and the year of the sacramental preparation (2nd, 7th, and 8th grades) **must have a minimum of a 75% attendance record the entire year.** If a student's attendance less than 75%, a pastoral conference with Father Trapp will be required to determine if the student is ready to move to the next grade level.

Students and parents must attend all meetings and retreats to be eligible to receive the Sacraments.

Attendance: Students engage in age-appropriate coursework each year as a part of their ongoing religious education. Regular attendance is critical for success. A student experiences greater and longer lasting benefit and has increased confidence with consistent participation. Students registered in PSR are expected to attend classes and miss only when there is an unavoidable reason. If a student must be absent from class, a parent/guardian must contact the office by phone or email (not the catechist) stating the student's name, grade, class time and the reason for the absence. If a student is absent he/she will be required to complete the chapter for that day's lesson at home and return completed work to the catechist.

Non-parishioners must be enrolled in grades 1-8 consistently in order in order to receive the sacraments at St. Joseph's.

Diocese of Columbus Graded Course of study for Religion The Diocese of Columbus has created the Graded Course of Study to be implemented throughout the diocese "to ensure that the total content of faith is taught in a systematic and age-appropriate way." This Graded Course of Study is based on the National Directory for Catechesis (NDC) and The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). Each year, the study of the four pillars of the CCC ("The Profession of Faith", "The Celebration of the Christian Mystery", "Life in Christ", and "Christian Prayer") are stressed at a deeper level in an age-appropriate way. Therefore, attendance during every grade level is crucial to the religious education development of each individual. The Graded Course of Study, while it will help to nurture a mature Catholic Christian, is not completed when an individual reaches 18 years of age. They need to seek out adult faith formation opportunities in their college years and beyond.

The basic text for students is *The Faith and Life Series* by Ignatius Press. This series is approved by the Diocese Department of Education for Parish Schools of Religion. This series leads students to the Person of Jesus Christ and then immerses them in the Mystery of Christ. Each grade level has a specific focus within the context of the narrative of salvation history.

Our 7th and 8th-grade students will be doing "The Chosen" program by Ascension Press. *Because these grades are sacrament preparation you cannot home school in 7th or 8th-grade.*

Discipline: One of the most important things we want children to know is that they are loved in our parish. We want to be firm, but kind and accepting to what a child might need at a moment where he/she is having difficulty. We will try to redirect and talk to the child about their actions without it being a distraction to the rest of the class. We will also show genuine praise and encouragement for acceptable behavior. Our goal is to create reasonable and clear limits so the children will know what is expected of them in their classes. In the event that the catechist and aide are unable to help a child a parent will be called in to sit in class and be with their child until the child can display acceptable behavior.

Home School Program: We will be happy to assist families wishing to home school their children. Please contact the office for details. Home schooled children will use the same textbooks used in the PSR program. Home School families must meet with Father Trapp at the end of the year and turn in a completed workbook. Father Trapp will assess a child's readiness to move onto the next grade. If the student is in a sacramental preparation year (2nd, 7th and 8th grades) they cannot be home schooled.

Online School – Only Available if Pandemic continues. Also, we reserve the right to change anything in this text throughout the year if necessary.