

## **Mission Statement:**

PSR stands for Parish School of Religion. This program provides religious education and Sacramental preparation for students in preschool, elementary Grades K-6 who attend non-Catholic schools. The parish staff and catechists work with the families of these children to provide the opportunity for the children to grow spiritually, to understand their faith and to develop their personal relationship with Christ. They meet on Sunday mornings (September-April). The catechists are parishioners who volunteer to teach. Training and support are offered.

-Discipleship Resource Guide

*“And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed?” **Romans 10:14***

## **Purpose of Handbook:**

We are providing this handbook as a resource to our Parish School of Religion Families outlining all the needed information required to understand the guidelines of our PSR Program.

Good communication between parents and PSR is of utmost importance. For any questions or concerns, please contact the Religious Education Office at **216-731-1515 ext 248** or [gmonroe@srweuclid.cc](mailto:gmonroe@srweuclid.cc)

## **General Information:**

Just as we need to nourish our minds and bodies, it is also critical to nourish our spiritual lives in order for our faith to grow. This is a lifelong process but, is especially critical in laying a faith foundation for our children and youth.

*“The source of catechesis, which is also its content, is one: God’s word fully revealed in Jesus Christ and at work in the lives of people exercising their faith- God’s word deposited in Scripture and tradition is manifested and celebrated in many ways. . .potentially at least, every instance of God’s presence in the world is a source of catechesis.”*      -National Catechetical Directory

As the primary catechists, parents teach the most basic lessons to their children. It is for this reason that we encourage all parents to participate fully in the religious journey of their children. We know that without this participation we

cannot hope to fulfill our role of teaching the ways of our faith to our students. As Pope John Paul stated in his *Familiaris Consortio*:

*“The concrete example and living witness of parents is fundamental and irreplaceable in educating their children to pray. Only by praying together with their children can a father and mother- exercising their royal priesthood- penetrate the innermost depths of their children’s hearts and leave an impression that the future events in their lives will not be able to efface.” #60*

It is also necessary for parents to take an active part in parish life. There is no doubt that *“example teaches and participation builds community”*. Example is one of the most powerful sources of catechesis. Again, your role is indispensable. But, by virtue of the fact that you have enrolled your child in the PSR Program, we know that you understand this very important concept. Take heart! The Lord will provide all the grace you need to complete the task with joy! And we are here to help you in this process every step of the way.

### **PSR Calendar:**

Each year a calendar is provided stating when sessions will be held. This calendar also indicates activities that will involve the family. Please **note** these dates so that parents and family will be able to participate in these parish community events.

### **Absenteeism:**

To obtain the full benefit from the sessions, to achieve bonding as community, and to give us the time we need to participate in your child’s faith formation, it is important that children attend PSR sessions each week. Any child’s absence is felt by the entire group as each child is highly valued.

Therefore, *we ask that your child miss no more than three sessions during the year*. If your child will not be in attendance, we ask that you call the PSR Office with as much advance notice as is possible. **For the safety of the children – we need to know whenever your child is absent** to be sure that he/she was not dropped off at the school. ***Please call us at 216-731-1515 ext. 248 a voicemail is available 24/7 for any message you need to leave for the PSR Office.***

**\*\*\*Students with “*perfect attendance*” are acknowledged both at “Mid Term and End of Year” (last class) for their accomplishment\*\*\***

### **Attendance Policy for Grades 1-6:**

If a child misses seven or more classes a year, a meeting with the Pastor and DRE may be suggested. The spirit of this policy is not meant to be “*punitive*” but one that is intended to assist the families by understanding the reason for the continued absence from class. It is our desire to help a child grasp the fullest possible understanding of the faith into which he/she has been baptized at every grade level.

### **Early Dismissal from Class:**

A written note must be given to the catechist before class requesting permission for the child to leave early. The note must be signed by the parent/guardian giving the reason for leaving early from class. Students will be sent to the DRE in main hallway at the appointed time where the parent can pick up the child.

### **Cancellation of Class:**

In the event of “bad weather” we will call the individual catechists and request that they call each of their students to alert the families to the cancellation of classes. Please be sure that we have the phone number where we will most likely be able to reach your family.

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up:**

Due to the fact that our classes meet during our Sunday morning Mass schedule the safety of the children is of utmost concern. Please park and bring students in Grades K-3 into the building to their classroom (classes begin promptly at **9:30 a.m.**) We also ask that you pick your children up promptly at **10:45 a.m.** to allow our catechists and staff to attend our 11:00 a.m. Mass on time. For some, it is the only Mass that they are able to attend on the week-end due to professional or family commitments. If an older sibling is in the program and you want them to pick up younger children, please send a note at the beginning of the year stating this request.

### **Special Needs:**

Parents who have children with physical handicaps, chronic illness (sight, hearing, diabetes, food allergies, etc.) educational handicaps or any special attention – please notify the DRE. It will be kept in confidence in order to ensure your privacy and only shared with the child’s catechist so that they can do their best to meet the child’s needs. It should also be noted on the registration form.

### **Text Books:**

Text books are collected at the end of each session by catechist to assure that they will always be there for our PSR sessions. However, if a parent would like to review the text or work with their child on a missed lesson they should put the request in writing. Books are sent home with the students on the last day of class.

### **Tuition Fees:**

Fr. John has set a fee schedule that is affordable (**\$60 per student with a maximum fee of \$120**) to allow families the ability to participate in the PSR Program. However if a family is in need, they should contact Gail Monroe in the PSR Office regarding financial assistance or an alternate payment plan. It should also be noted on the registration form.

Each student fee must cover the cost of:

Religion textbook/Teaching Materials

Paper and craft supplies

Religious audio-visual materials

Duplicating material

Miscellaneous student materials and activities.

### **Sacramental Preparation:**

It is essential that students who will be receiving sacraments (First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, Confirmation) are adequately prepared to receive the fullness of grace intended through the sacramental encounter with Jesus. Therefore, **in addition to consistent attendance of regular PSR classes**, additional sacramental preparation is required. The meetings for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are noted on the regular PSR schedule. The meetings for Confirmation will be given separately. An additional sacramental fee is charged to cover the workbooks and retreats included in this process.

### **Homework:**

Because home is the extension of the group sessions, we strongly encourage you to discuss what was taught during the PSR sessions with your child. Please assist him/her in any home activity a catechist has requested. Catechists are advised to keep the homework to a minimum so as not to put an undue burden on families. There will be workbooks to complete at home as a part of the Sacramental preparation process.

### **Policy Regarding Bringing Food to Class:**

The catechists are made aware of the children's food allergies in their classrooms (through info provided on Emergency Medical Forms) and a list is kept in their weekly folders. However, we need to take this further by asking you to please **not send in any snacks with your child unless there is a medical reason for doing so.** (This applies throughout the year, as new students may register here at various times in the PSR year.) **One of the most common and dangerous food allergies among children is peanuts/peanut butter**, as well as nuts. (also check for ingredients such as peanut oil, or a nut oil like almond oil) Please refrain from sending any snacks for your child including a peanut ingredient.

***\*\*If you suspect that you forgot to inform us of an allergy for your child, please contact the PSR Office immediately.\*\* Thank you for your diligence in this matter. We want to take every precaution to protect our students.***

### **Stewardship Project:**

Over the past 4 years both our SS Robert & William School and our Parish School of Religion have been participating in a “Stewardship Project”. Each student receives a packet of Children’s Envelopes and are encouraged to participate by donating something to help those who are less fortunate and in need.

Our school students bring their envelopes to our weekly School Liturgy and our PSR students can bring theirs to any week-end Mass or bring to class. The money is combined and donated to a specific charity (chosen by the students) each month. The amount donated is not important. What is important is teaching our children at a young age to be generous with their many blessings. By doing so, they become “good stewards” of those God given gifts. Participation in this program is strictly voluntary and donations are not recorded under the students name only a total given to the charity of the month.

### **Need for Respect and Cooperation:**

We seek to maintain a healthy and pleasant environment in which all may come to know and love the Lord. This requires that children have a healthy respect for authority, themselves and one another. If, after reasonable attempts have been made by the catechist and administration to help a child exercise appropriate self-control and further action is still needed, the Director of Religious Education will ask for a conference to discuss the problem with the parents.

Another way of showing respect is the wearing of proper attire. We trust that parents will monitor this and assure that their children dress tastefully, modestly and wear casual clothing that does not include items like PJ bottoms, or t-shirts with inappropriate messages printed on them.

**Handheld Electronic Devices:** Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices to PSR that are for entertainment value. In the event that a cell phone is necessary for specific communication with their family it must be “silenced” during the class so as not to disrupt the teaching that is taking place. SS Robert & William PSR Program will not be responsible for the loss of any such items.

**Child Protection & Safety Policy:**

All catechists in the PSR Program have been “**Virtus**” Trained and are in compliance with all Parish and Diocesan Requirements regarding Child Protection and Safety.

*Prayer for Our Religious Education Program*

*“The success of our religious education program is in your keeping, Lord.*

*The work of our hearts and hands can organize and implement classes, service projects, sacrament prep programs, prayer services, Masses with children, retreats, and parish catechesis events. But only You, Lord can breathe into these efforts the enduring life of your Spirit.*

*May our religious education program always be in You, of You, and for You.”*

*Amen*

*- Taken from Catechist Magazine’s “Prayers for Catechists”*

It is our sincere hope that this handbook will be of value to our Parish School of Religion Families. You are always in our prayers!

Gail Monroe

Pastoral Associate/DRE

***“Train children in the way they should go and when they are old they will not turn from it.”***

*- Proverbs 22:6*