

**St. Joseph Religious Education
2017–2018
Parish School of Religion (PSR) Parent Handbook**

We are all children of God! We are called in many different ways to serve the Lord. You have been called to be a parent and the parish supports the parents' responsibility as the primary educators of their children. Your participation in the life of the parish, Sunday Mass, service to others and dedication to daily prayer demonstrates the authenticity of your profession of faith. Catechetical leaders (PSR teachers) will support and encourage you as you carry out the role as the primary educator of the faith. As parents you are the most influential agents of catechesis for your children. The catechesis given by parents with the family "precedes, accompanies and enriches all other forms of catechesis" as stated in the National Directory for Catechesis. Our curriculum is based on the Diocese of Columbus Graded Course of study for Religion and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The parish promises to help you, as parents, foster your child/children's faith, and assist you in the role as a catechist for your child/children whether you assume complete responsibility or look to the Parish School of Religion (PSR) for help and support. 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 Grades	Session II	Monday 6:30 PM–7:30 PM
7th–8th Grades		Sunday 9:40 AM–10:50 AM

*****Important—Please Note*****

Classes will begin Sunday, September 10th for the 7th and 8th Grade Classes and Monday, September 11th for the 1st–6th grade classes.

Class size will be limited to 15 students per class so that the catechist and aide are able to know each child as well 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 are able to 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 are able to 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" prior to 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.

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 from April 30, 2017 thru May 31, 2017.
2. Currently enrolled non-parishioner PSR-only families will register from June 1, 2017 thru June 15, 2017.
3. Registration for any remaining open spaces will occur after June 15, 2017.

Paperwork and Fees must be submitted by the following deadlines:

Parishioner: May 31, 2017

Non-Parishioner Re-Enrolling: June 15, 2017

New Non-Parishioner Submissions: June 30, 2017

NOTE: Registration will be closed after Monday, August 14, 2017.

Registered St. Joseph Parishioner: The registration fee is \$65.00 per student with a \$130.00 maximum fee per family. A parishioner is defined as being registered in the parish prior to January 1, 2017 and having a census number assigned by the Diocese of Columbus.

Non-Parishioner: The registration fee is \$130.00 per student with no family maximum.

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
4. Copy of Baptismal Certificate if not baptized at St. Joseph
5. Signed Harassment Policy Form
6. Non-parishioner Understanding of PSR enrollment

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 a \$65.00 discount per student on registration fees.

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 cancelled. If PSR classes should be cancelled for any reason (snow, tornado warning etc.) it will be posted on Facebook and the parish website, www.saintjosephplaincity.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. 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 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.

Diocesan Graded Course of Study

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 the 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.