

Most Sacred Heart Parish School of Religion
Family Handbook
2010-2011

MISSION STATEMENT

Most Sacred Heart Parish School of Religion is committed to:

- Developing dedicated followers of Christ within the Catholic Church.
- Providing quality religious education for children in grades Kindergarten through 8.
- Promoting responsible citizens of a diverse global community.
- Celebrating individual talents.

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

We are dedicated to promoting and supporting the fourfold mission of Catholic Education:

- Message of Jesus
- Life in Community
- Worship with One Another
- Service to Others

We teach the Good News of the Gospel and strive to prepare our young people to love and proclaim the Good News of Christ. It is our desire to instill in the students the importance of worshipping God respectfully and teaching them the value of service to one another, to people in the parish community, outside the parish and the broader world community.

We believe the students will learn valuable, essential, life-long lessons as we endeavor to develop in our students the following:

- Desire to learn, live and value their Catholic faith.
- An appreciation for the lives of the Saints and of Catholics living their faith today on a daily basis.
- Dedication to work to their fullest potential.
- Self-dignity and a Christian love and respect for all humankind.
- Acceptance and regard for each child as an individual.
- Use of their religious background to think critically when facing various situations, particularly when facing the challenges of living in an ever-changing racially and culturally diverse world.
- Respect for our earth and an awareness and concern for global issues.

We believe the primary responsibility for religious education belongs to the parents/guardians with the support of faculty, staff and the church community at large.

PARENTS' ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

At Baptism, parents receive the call from God to evangelize their children, as here summarized:

You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the Faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor... You will be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the Faith. May you be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the Faith by what you say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Parents are the first and foremost catechists of their children. They catechize informally but powerfully by example and instruction. They communicate values and attitudes by showing love for Christ and His Church and for each other, by reverently receiving the Eucharist and living in its spirit and by fostering justice and love in all their relationships.

-National Catechetical Directory

As parents, you shall make every effort to:

- Provide example and opportunity for frequent reception of the sacraments, especially Holy Eucharist and Penance.
- Include prayer in your daily home life.
- Encourage discussion of faith with your children.
- Assure your child's attendance and punctuality at PSR classes.
- Monitor assignments of each class period. Review each PSR class activity, lesson and procedure with your child.
- Adhere to School Board Policies and ensure your child understands and adheres to Classroom Policies.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between home and PSR is encouraged and beneficial for all. The principal's office is accessible by phone: (636)938-9507 or e-mail: psrprincipal@sacredhearteureka.org. The school subscribes to SchoolReach, an automated phone system, which notifies parents of any emergencies, schedule changes, or other important information. You can also visit the parish website, sacredhearteureka.org for further information. Each semester, *The Good News* is published which details class activities during the semester. It is mailed home along with report cards.

SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

The following policies have been established by the PSR Board:

1. **Class Schedule:** Grades Kindergarten – 8th grade:
Session I: Sunday, 10:05 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.
Session II: Monday, 4:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.
Session III: Monday, 6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.
2. **Student Drop-Off Policy:** Parents will drop off and pick up their child at the child's classroom. Students riding the bus from public school for the Monday, 4:30 p.m. Session will be escorted to their classroom by a faculty or staff member or upper grade student.
3. **Early Dismissal Policy:** Parents must obtain approval from the principal to remove their child(ren) from PSR prior to dismissal.
4. **Attendance Policy:** Since the lessons for PSR are presented in a sequential pattern, children benefit by regular attendance and are expected to attend each class. A written excuse from the parent must be turned in to the teacher after every absence. If a child misses 2 consecutive lessons, parents should contact their child's teacher in order to help their child complete any missed work.

Each student is limited to no more than 5 absences. If it is necessary to miss any additional classes, permission must be received from the principal or pastor and the student will be required to complete a project before advancing to the next grade level. Any student missing 10 or more classes must meet with the principal along with their parents to reconcile the situation before promotion to the next grade level. The student may be required to repeat the grade.

Students who do not start PSR on the first day of class will be counted absent for all days missed unless proof of attendance at another Catholic religion program is received.

5. **Tardiness Policy:** Tardiness disrupts teaching and learning. Classes begin promptly at 10:05 a.m. on Sunday and 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Monday. Students need to be in their classroom at least 5 minutes prior to class time to assure instruction begins promptly. If a student is tardy three times, it will count as one day of absence.
6. **New Students:** Kindergarten students must be 5 years of age prior to August 1st. New students coming into PSR at 2nd grade level or higher must show proof of prior religious education before being placed in their grade level. If necessary, home study will be provided to help bring the student to grade level. A copy of the child's baptismal certificate and any other sacramental certificates is required if the sacraments were not made at Most Sacred Heart Church.
7. **Tuition and Fees:** A tuition fee of \$85 for one student, \$150 for two students and \$200 for three or more students is asked of each family in addition to \$35 book fee per child. This enables us to offer our teachers a stipend for their hard work and dedication and helps defray the cost of textbooks and supplies. Payment must be made at time of registration

either by check, credit card, or electronic monthly payments over ten months. No child will be refused PSR classes because of the inability to pay. Contact the principal if special arrangements are necessary.

8. **Registration Policy:** Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registrations will not be accepted until:
 - a. family is registered in the parish,
 - b. registration form and payment or payment plan form is completed in full, signed and received in the PSR office, and
 - c. copy of baptismal certificate and any other sacramental certificates are received in the PSR office.

9. **Additional Fees:** See chart below

Fee	Rate Per Family
Late Fee: Registration received between August 1 and August 15	Returning Family: \$50.00 New Family: no charge
Late Fee: Registration received between August 16 and the Friday before the first day of class	Returning Family: \$75.00 New Family: \$50.00 (unless relocated to area after July 1 st)
Late Fee: Registration received on or after the first day of class	Returning Family: \$100.00 New Family: \$75.00 (unless relocated to area after July 1 st)
Session Transfer Fee	\$50.00 per family

CLASSROOM POLICIES

We want the students to learn about their faith in an atmosphere that is orderly and relaxed, one which ensures a well-disciplined and educationally conducive environment. We believe that all students can behave appropriately in the classroom and we will not tolerate a student stopping a catechist from teaching and/or other students from learning. Therefore, the following classroom rules have been established:

1. Inattention or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
2. Cheating on tests, assignments, papers or projects will result in a zero grade.
3. Respect is to be shown to the teacher and other students at all times.
4. School property is to be cared for at all times. Students may never remove items from the desks that they occupy.
5. Classroom furniture and materials must be returned to their original location.
6. Food and beverages (including gum) are not allowed in the classrooms.
7. Operation of cell phones or other electronic devices in the classroom is prohibited.

Classroom Discipline Policy

A general policy for violation of classroom policies is:

1. A verbal warning will be given first.
2. If the student is involved in a second incident, the student will be dismissed from the classroom to be supervised in the office until the end of class. During this time, a conference will be held with the principal.
3. If a student repeatedly interferes with the learning process, he/she will not be permitted to return to PSR until a conference has been held with the parents.

SAFETY POLICIES

We shall provide a safe learning environment that reflects the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. No student in PSR shall be subjected to any form of harassment or violence. Children and parents are encouraged to report any concerns to the child's teacher or principal. All reported or observed incidents will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion and legal action, will be taken.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as any unwanted and unwelcome behavior that interferes with a student's performance or creates an offensive learning environment. Harassment includes verbal, physical or visual conduct.

Violence or Threats of Violence

Violence consists of words, gestures and actions that result in or have the potential to result in hurt, fear or injury. Violence includes threats of injury, assault, possession and/or use of a weapon and theft or vandalism of property.

Child Safety

All PSR staff and volunteers are required to attend the Archdiocese ***Protecting God's Children*** program which provides the information and skills necessary to prevent child abuse. Staff and volunteers are also required to undergo a background check.

Children will be given the opportunity to attend the Archdiocese ***Safe Touch*** program that discusses touching safety and effective responses to unsafe touches. Additional information regarding this program is available upon request.

HOMEWORK

Regular homework provides an opportunity for the children to continue to put their faith into practice and should be completed. Parental supervision is welcomed and encouraged.

REPORT CARDS

The school year is divided into two semesters. Report cards will be mailed home at the end of the semester. Progress reports for those students who are showing unsatisfactory progress will be mailed midway through the semester. If appropriate, a parent conference will be scheduled with the child's teacher.

BOOKS & SUPPLIES

A textbook and folder are provided for each student at the beginning of the year. Unless otherwise instructed, students are required to bring both to each class. If a child loses his/her book, it must be replaced at a cost of \$25. Pencils, paper and all other supplies are available in the classroom and are included in the \$35 book fee. Specific teacher requests may be made during the year for religious articles or similar items to be brought to class.

TEXTBOOK SERIES

Faith First, RCL Benziger

The textbook series features a spiral curriculum, which means that presentations are simple and adapted to the capacity and experience of young children. Lessons then will build upon each grade level's previous teaching, following a pattern of continuous growth in depth and scope. Each year there is a major emphasis, all of which correspond to the four pillars of the Catechism:

Creed – What we believe

Sacraments – Celebrating what we believe

Morality – Living what we believe

Prayer – Responding to what we believe

Scripture is in the center of the spiral curriculum. The special Scripture chapters in each unit of *Faith First* help the children come to know and understand the word of God.

-RCL Benziger

For additional information regarding the curriculum, go to the publisher's website, FaithFirst.com, Legacy Edition.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Meetings for parents of children receiving Sacraments will be scheduled and parents will be informed well in advance. At least one parent per child must attend.

CLASSROOM VISITORS

Children are allowed to occasionally bring visitors to class at the discretion of their teacher. Permission must be obtained from their teacher at least one day in advance of the visit. Permission may be denied if class activities and/or resources are not conducive to visitors on the day requested; e.g. testing, guest speakers, substitute teacher, etc. It is the teacher's responsibility to inform the principal of visitors in the classroom.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

In the event classes are canceled due to inclement weather, a phone alert will be directed to all parents through the SchoolReach automated phone system. In addition, announcements will be made on Fox 2 News Snow Watch, KSDK (Channel 5) and on the PSR website.