



**FAMILY**

**HANDBOOK**

## INDEX

Attendance Policy -----	7
Books and Supplies -----	9
Cancellation of Classes -----	10
Child Safety -----	8
Class Schedule -----	4
Class Sizes -----	5
Classroom Discipline Policy -----	6
Classroom Policy -----	6
Class Schedule -----	4
Classroom Visitors -----	6
Communication -----	4
Early Dismissal Policy -----	7
Edge (Middle School Youth Group) -----	10
God's Own Making -----	8-9
Homework -----	9
Media Authorization -----	5
Mission Statement -----	3
New Students -----	5
Parental Plan -----	5
Parent's Roles and Responsibilities -----	3-4
Parent Witness Statement -----	5 & 11
Philosophy and Goals -----	3
Protecting God's Children -----	8
Report Cards -----	9
Registration Policy -----	4
Sacramental Preparation -----	9
Safety Policies -----	7
Safe Touch Program -----	8
Tardiness Policy -----	7
Tuition and Fees -----	5
Textbook Series -----	9
Youth Group – Middle School -----	10

**Most Sacred Heart Parish  
School of Religion Family Handbook  
2016-2017**

**Mission Statement**

Most Sacred Heart Parish School of Religion is committed to:

- Developing dedicated followers of Christ within the Catholic Church
- Providing quality faith formation 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
- A practice of prayer and worship in their life.
- 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.
- To acquire self-dignity and a Christian love and respect for all humankind.
- Use of their religious background to think critically when facing various situations, particularly when facing the challenges of living in an ever-changing and diverse world.
- As a practice of our faith, we have respect for our earth and an awareness and concern for global issues.

**Parent's Roles and 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. ....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 Reconciliation.
- 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 CRE’s office is accessible by phone: 636-938-9507 or email: [cre@sacredhearteureka.org](mailto:cre@sacredhearteureka.org). The school and PSR subscribes to School Messenger, an automated phone system, which notifies parents of any emergencies, schedule changes, or other important information. You can also visit the parish website, [www.sacredhearteureka.org](http://www.sacredhearteureka.org) for further information.

### **Registration Policy**

Most Sacred Heart Parish welcomes all children and families to the faith formation process in the Parish School of Religion. No child will be refused PSR classes because of the inability to pay. Contact the CRE if special arrangements are necessary. Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first serve basis. Registrations will not be accepted until:

- Family is registered in a parish
- Registration form and payment or payment plan form is completed in full, signed and received in the PSR office,
- Copy of baptismal certificate and any other sacramental certificates are received in the PSR office

### **Class Schedule**

Grades: Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade:

Session I: Monday, 5:00 – 6:20 p.m.

Session II: Monday, 6:30 – 7:50 p.m.

Session III: Tuesday, 6:00 – 7:20 p.m.

## **Class Sizes**

The maximum number of students in each class will be 15 students. For optimum learning and community building, the minimum size is 6 students in each class.

## **Tuition and Fees**

One student - \$265.00

Two students - \$480.00

Three or more students - \$670.00

Late fee: \$50.00 after September 15

Session Transfer Fee: First change is free; \$10.00 for second change

These fees enable us to offer our catechists a stipend for their hard work and dedication. They 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.

## **New Students**

Kindergarten students must be 5 years of age prior to August 1<sup>st</sup>. New students coming into PSR at 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## **Parental Plan**

If a legal parenting plan has been issued by the state, a copy needs to be on file in the PSR office

## **Parent Witness Statement**

All parents are required to read the Parent Witness Statement located in the registration packet, family handbook, and on the website: [www.sacredhearteureka.org](http://www.sacredhearteureka.org). The statement in the registration packet needs to be returned to the PSR office stating that the Witness Statement has been read.

## **Media Authorization**

Most Sacred Heart PSR is required to have a yearly release from your family. The media authorization form is in the registration packet. If a parent has concerns regarding certain media, there is a form with exceptions that upon request is available in the Parish School of Religion Office.

## **Classroom Policy**

Most Sacred Heart's goal is for 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:

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

## **Classroom Discipline Policy**

A general policy for violation of classroom policies is:

- A verbal warning will be given first (Catechist will speak to student outside of class.)
- Catechist will inform the CRE of the issue. Catechist will speak to the parents.
- 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, the CRE will speak with the parents as well as the student.
- If a student repeatedly interferes with the learning process, a second conference will occur with the CRE, student and the parents until a satisfactory resolution occurs for all parties.
- After the second conference, if there is another incident, CRE will have a discussion with the Pastor or his representative regarding removal of student from the classroom setting. An alternative study arrangement will be provided for the student if at all possible.

## **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 CRE of visitors in the classroom. The visitors must sign in at the office on the day they visit.

## **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 parent should call the PSR office to notify the Coordinator of Religious Education (CRE) of an absence. If a child misses 2 consecutive lessons, parents need to 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 CRE or pastor and the student will be required to complete the grade level book and online tests before advancing to the next grade level. Any student missing 10 or more classes must meet with the CRE 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

## **Early Dismissal Policy**

Parents must obtain approval from the CRE to remove their child(ren) from PSR prior to dismissal. Parent must go to main office of the school to receive an Early Dismissal slip in order to remove the child(ren) from PSR prior to dismissal.

## **Tardiness Policy**

Tardiness disrupts teaching and learning. Classes begin promptly at 5:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Monday and 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday. 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.

## **Safety Policies**

Most Sacred Heart Parish 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 CRE. 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** 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** 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.

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.

Parents are required to serve as hall monitors at least one time during the school year. A schedule of hall monitors will be sent home at the beginning of each school year. In addition, there will be permanent hall monitors present during PSR sessions that will be trained to assist if there are any emergencies.

Once a year for the safety of the children and the volunteers, there will be a fire drill and a tornado drill performed during PSR. In this way, everyone in the building will know what to do if such a situation should occur.

## **Protecting God's Children**

The Archdiocese of St. Louis provides the sexual abuse prevention program "Protecting God's Children" to all parishes and Archdiocesan entities. **All Archdiocesan employees and volunteers who work with children are mandated to attend this program.** For a schedule of classes follow the link: [www.archstl.org](http://www.archstl.org) click on Protecting God's Children. The class is approximately three hours long. At Most Sacred Heart, parents are scheduled to be hall monitors. All parents are encouraged to attend the prevention program

## **Safe Touch Program**

This program is conducted by a trained catechist who will implement the Archdiocesan ***Safe Touch Program***. The program will be presented to all grade levels (1-8). This program is required by the Archdiocesan guidelines for a safe and healthy environment for our children. This is a school based curriculum that contains practical information to assist children to protect themselves from dangers in today's world. There is information that can be shared with parents who are interested with details. As primary educators of your children, parents can opt out of the program. If you choose to do so, parents need to contact the PSR office and request a form that needs to be completed and signed by parent/guardian.

## **God's Own Making**

According to the National Catechetical Directory, parents are the primary religious educators of their children. Most Sacred Heart Parish PSR program supports the parents in their effort to raise their children as faithful Catholics. ***God's Own Making*** is a chastity education program that begins in the fourth grade through eighth grade levels. This is the chastity education program approved by the Archdiocese of St. Louis. All PSR programs are



required to provide *God's Own Making* in the curriculum. There is no physical information discussed in the classroom; the only information discussed will be the teaching of the Magisterium of the Church. Parents will be given notification when the curriculum will be taught in class. Information will be sent home upon request. If a parent does not wish for their child to participate in the chastity education program, the CRE needs to be notified.

### **Homework**

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

### **Textbook series**

*Blest Are We - Faith and Word edition* - RCL Benziger publisher

The textbook series features a topical curriculum, which means that presentations are simple and adapted to the capacity and experience of young children. Lessons 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 of the Catholic Church. The four pillars are Doctrine, Worship, Morality and Prayer. For additional information regarding the curriculum, go to the publisher's website, [www.blestarewe.com](http://www.blestarewe.com) Search under Faith and Word Edition and parish edition

### **Books and supplies**

A textbook will be provided for each student at the beginning of the year. The student needs to bring the textbook to every class unless otherwise instructed. 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 registration fee. Specific teacher requests may be made during the year for class projects.

### **Report Cards**

The school year is divided into two semesters. Report cards will be picked up by parents during the last class 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.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

Meeting 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.

## **Cancellation of Classes**

In the event classes are canceled due to inclement weather, a phone, email and text alert will be directed to all parents through School Messenger automated phone system. Typically, if Rockwood School District cancels classes, we will cancel as well.

## **Youth Group – Middle School**

### **EDGE**

Most Sacred Heart offers a youth group to students in 6<sup>TH</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades. This program is open to all youth who are involved with Most Sacred Heart Parish. Phill Wamser is the youth minister for the Most Sacred Heart Parish. The young people who are involved with **EDGE** meet once a week on a Sunday. EDGE is designed to be a spiritual and social gathering in which participants come to know peers in their faith community.

Contact: [youthminister@sacredhearteureka.org](mailto:youthminister@sacredhearteureka.org) ; phone number: 314-954-9445

**Most Sacred Heart Parish  
Parental Witness Statement, 2016**

With awareness of the Catholic Church's vision on my vocation as a parent, I ask to have my child enrolled in PSR at Most Sacred Heart. In doing so, I acknowledge and accept my responsibility to be the primary religious educator of my children. I understand that the PSR program is a way in which my Church seeks to assist me in my vocation. However, I know that no matter how clearly and effectively the PSR program communicates the truths of our faith, unless my children see these truths take root in our family, then there is little hope that the faith will take root in their hearts. I believe that the PSR program can deepen, enrich, and reinforce a faith that my children experience at home. I understand that the PSR program supports me as the primary educator, and I in turn support the PSR program.

Practically, I understand the above to mean:

1. To acknowledge and accept my responsibility to be the primary religious educator of my children.
2. To participate actively each week in the Sunday Eucharist.
3. To speak to my children about the things of God, and to make prayer an integral and important part of the environment at home.
4. To do my fair share in supporting the PSR program financially; by my service; and through relating in a Christ-like manner to the other members of the community.
5. To teach my children by work and example to have a love and concern for the needs of others, especially the poor.

I understand and accept these responsibilities and commit myself to live these values.