



St. Dominic Parish
GENERATIONS GROWING IN FAITH
4551 DELHI PIKE, CINCINNATI, OHIO 45238

***Parish School of Religion
(PSR)
Religious Education Program
Handbook***

If you have any questions or comments concerning the Religious Education Program or your child/ren's class, please contact the PSR Director, Theresa Eagan at 471-7741 x481.

4551 Delhi Pike
Cincinnati, OH 45238

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St. Dominic Parish School of Religion

Mission Statement

The mission of St. Dominic Parish Community is the same as the mission of the greater Church – to bring about a connection with and response to God’s love in our world – and truly live out the Reign of God. We do this through the Sacraments, Scripture, prayer and our interconnections with others – the family, the Parish community of Faith and the larger community and world.

We welcome all families to our Parish School of Religion (PSR) and are here to assist parents in their task of raising their children in the Faith. Instruction in PSR is offered during the school year for children age 3 through 8th grader. There is special emphasis on the sacramental years, usually 2nd and 8th grades, with added activities for parents and candidates.

The Church sees the parents as the primary religious educators and the family as the model for Church. The PSR staff is here to assist parents in the religious education of your children. We look forward to working together with you this year to provide the best religious education possible for your children.

Child Protection Policy

St. Dominic Parish PSR follows and implements the Archdiocese of Cincinnati’s Decree on Child protection. All adults who work with the children under the auspices of the PSR are required to complete the Child Protection Workshop and have a criminal background check (Selection.com) through the state of Ohio. Employees of the parish are required to complete a manual fingerprinting and any volunteer or employee who has resided outside of Ohio during the last five years will also complete an FBI background check.

Role of Parents

St Dominic Parish recognizes and supports the parent's role **as primary religious educator of their children**. The PSR provides formal instruction in doctrine, history, and traditions of the Catholic faith, to support the work of parents. In order to support the PSR, parents are expected to:

- Include their children in the Sunday liturgies;
- Pray with their children;
- Share faith experiences with their children;
- Together experience the Good News of God in their lives;
- Actively participate in the formal religious education of their children;
- Make PSR attendance a priority;
- Notify the PSR Director/teacher if a child is absent;
- Attend planned parent functions that pertain to the religious education program and sacramental preparation and encourage their children to participate fully.

Communications

This handbook explains the main policies and guidelines of the Religious Education Program. Families will receive letters/e-mails throughout the year concerning such matters as sacramental preparations and celebrations, Parent Meetings, special events and changes in the schedule.

Catechists/teachers may, at times, depend on their students to relay messages to parents. Parents should check weekly with their child/ren for information. Please notify the parish of any changes in phone or email contact information.

Schedule

- **Preschool Program – Sunday Mornings 9:30 am - 10:30 am**
 - **Elementary (Grades 1 – 5) – Sunday mornings from 10:30 – 11:25 am. Class time allows for attendance at either 9:30 or 11:30 Mass with family.**
 - **Grades 6 – 12 Tuesday Evenings 7:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.**
- (con't.)

Our Parish School of Religion follows the combined calendar of St. Dominic School and Oak Hills Local Schools. Both were considered in setting up the program schedule. If your grade school child will be absent from class, please notify the PSR Director, Theresa Eagan, at 471-7741 ext. 481 or via email at teagan@stdominicdelhi.org to leave a message. Absences should be reported a least 30 minutes before the start of class for that day. Preschool absences do not need to be reported. (continued)

Child/Parent PSR Activities

At times there may be child / parent or child / sponsor activities, prayer opportunities, etc. – particularly if your child will be involved in sacramental preparation this year. These sessions are a part of the PSR program and attendance is required. Notices will appear in the bulletin, in The Torch parish newsletter and in in flyers or emails sent home. As much as possible, these events will also be included in the PSR schedule at the start of each school year.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Preschool: Sunday mornings 9:30 am - 10:30 am. Classes are held in the School Library, in the church undercroft.

Sunday Morning program: (Grades 1 – 5) On the first Sunday of Class (Sunday, Sept. 11, 2016 for the 2016/17 school year) students will meet their catechist in the gathering space at 10:30 am.

On following Sundays, students can go directly to their classroom or you can escort them to their classroom if you choose to. **Students are to be in their classrooms by 10:30 am.**

Students will be dismissed from class at 11:25 AM to allow families who are attending 11:30 Mass to get into church for the start of Mass. **Please be in the Gathering Place by 11:25 to pick your child up.**

For the safety of the children, plan to pick up your child(ren) in the gathering space vs. having them walk to the car to meet you. There are vehicles coming and going in our lot at this time and an unescorted child could be hard to see between the rows of parking places.

Evening Program: (Grades 6 – 8) please arrive no later than 6:55 pm. Enter the school at the gym foyer entrance doors. Children will be dismissed from the gym foyer doors at 8 P.M. Please park in the gym lot near these doors to pick up your child after class.

Curriculum

St. Dominic PSR uses texts that are approved by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. The classes follow a scope and sequence that is in agreement with the Archdiocesan Graded Course of Study.

Grades 1 - 8: ***FAITH FIRST*** published by RCL Benziger.

The *Faith First Legacy Edition* text is concerned with Catholic faith, religion, and belief. Its goal is to transform children and bring them to a deeper relationship with God through an exposition of their Catholic heritage—its beliefs, moral code, rituals and practices, and life of prayer.

Via a systematic process of faith reflection that helps young people make important connections between their increasing knowledge of the Catholic tradition and their daily lives. (con't.)

Grades 7 & 8 also use ***CONFIRMED BY THE SPIRIT***, published by Loyola Press in preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation

Sacramental Preparation

Because parents are the primary religious educators of their children, their role in the preparation of their child for sacraments is of utmost importance.

Communication between teachers and/or PSR Director and parents is done through written communications and scheduled Parent Meetings.

Child/Parent Activities for Sacramental Preparation - At times there may be child and parent or child and sponsor activities, prayer opportunities, etc. – particularly if your child will be involved in sacramental preparation this year. (Grades 2 and 8) These sessions are a part of the PSR program and attendance is expected. Notice will appear in the bulletin, The Torch parish newsletter and in in flyers or emails sent home.

As much as possible, these events will also be included in the PSR schedule at the start of each school year.

Excessive unexcused absences can prevent your child from being ready to receive sacraments (First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in Second Grade; Confirmation in Eighth Grade.)

Attendance

It is important that PSR students maintain good attendance and punctuality throughout the school year. Religious education is sequential and each year builds on the last year's learning. **If students are to learn and experience the richness of the Catholic Faith and be prepared for the reception of sacraments, it is imperative that they attend all classes and other preparation sessions during the year.**

When your child is not feeling well, they should not be sent to class. Aside from illness, the PSR staff would expect **no more than three unexcused absences for reasons other than illness throughout the school year.** **Excessive unexcused absences can prevent your child from being promoted to the next grade or from being ready to receive sacraments** (First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in Second Grade; Confirmation in Eighth Grade.)

Report absences to PSR Director Theresa Eagan at 471-7741 ext. 481 or via email at teagan@stdominicdelhi.org. Absences should be reported at least 30 minutes before the start of class for that day. **Any unreported absence will be considered an unexcused absence.**

Per the Constitution of the St. Dominic Athletic Association, any student actively participating in the PSR Program is eligible to play on St. Dominic sports teams. Conversely, any student not actively participating and with regular attendance in the PSR may not play on St. Dominic sports teams. Per St. Dominic Athletic Association guidelines, **three or more unexcused absences from religious education sessions will result in suspension from the team and/or the Athletic Association.**

Accident and Illness Procedures

If a child becomes ill or has an accident during attendance at PSR, he or she will be sent to the Director. If needed, parents will be called to pick up the child. Emergency contact information is obtained as part of PSR registration for this purpose.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES - In case of a medical emergency, parents will be contacted. The Emergency phone number will be used if parents cannot be reached.

INCIDENT REPORT - If a student has an accident or injury, the catechist will aid the student and secure whatever help is needed. Then the catechist will prepare an Incident Report Form with all pertinent information. The parent, the Catechist and the PSR Director will sign it. A copy will be given to the parent and one will be kept in the student's file.

Behavioral Expectations

The catechist, Coordinator and DRE are responsible for maintaining proper order during Religious Education classes. They have the authority to discipline students whose behavior is inappropriate. No corporal punishment is permitted. Students choosing not to observe these standards and behavioral expectations may be subject to expulsion from the classroom. Parents will be consulted by the PSR Director and/or catechist in the case of serious misconduct, constant talking, and disregard of rules, or negative attitude that is detrimental to the class at large.

Students are expected to observe the following minimum standards of conduct.

- Students are expected to show respect and consideration for the teacher/catechist and other students.
- Silence should be observed in the hallways while classes are in session and in the classroom during appropriate times.
- No food, drink or chewing gum is permitted in the classrooms or hallways unless approved by the DRE or catechist.
- Students will respect the parish property, the materials in the classroom and materials they have been given to use.
- Students are not permitted to leave the classroom unless the teacher/catechist gives permission.

Cell Phones / Electronics Policy

Cell phones and all electronic gear need to be turned off before the opening prayer at the start of class – and must be put away until dismissal. If a student cannot conform to this policy – the catechist will ask for the cell phone/electronic gear – and return to the student at the end of class.

Weather Delays or Cancellations

Tuesday Evening Program - There will be no Religious Education classes on days when Oak Hills has closed because of bad weather.

Sunday Morning Program – Please watch the local network channels for notification of cancelled class. The listing will be as St. Dominic Parish School of Religion Classes.

Registration / Enrollment

Religious Education Program is open to all and is held in July/August. Watch for announcements of registration dates in the weekly bulletin and in The Torch monthly parish newsletter.

Late registration may not be a possibility due to the lead time needed to order textbooks and other class materials. Please make every effort to register your child(ren) within the registration deadlines to assure their place in class.

When PSR fees are necessary, they help to cover the textbooks, supplementary materials, supplies and the salaries of those employed in Religious Education. This fee is non-refundable but can be waived, if necessary.

Field Trips

A field trip may be scheduled at some time during the school year. Attendance on a field trip is not mandatory. Participation can be refused to any student whose conduct is less than satisfactory as determined by the teacher/catechist and DRE. Parents must sign and return an Archdiocesan Permission Slip before the field trip.

Drivers of cars transporting students must provide a valid driver's license.

Change of Address or other contact info

Please notify the Parish Office immediately of any changes of address, primary phone number or email address.