



Immaculate Heart of Mary
8 WEST HIGHWAY D • NEW MELLE, MO 63365

Parish School of Religion: 2016-2017



Parent Handbook

WITNESS STATEMENT

For Those Whose Children Attend Catholic Education Program

One of the supreme gifts of marriage is bringing forth new life. God entrusted children to parents who have a primary right and duty to educate their children in the practice of their faith. Parents carry out this responsibility by creating a home full of love, forgiveness, respect, and fidelity. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one honors God and learns moral values.

In the rite of the sacrament of Baptism, parents receive the call from God to evangelize their children. The Baptismal rite so states:

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 faith by what you say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Church teaches that the home is the domestic Church. It is in the intimate environment of the family that parents are, by word and example, the first heralds of the faith with respect to their children. This environment is enhanced and deepened through the parish Eucharistic community that is the heart of the spiritual life for Christian families.

Religious education programs are in partnership with the family in proclaiming and witnessing to the person and life of Jesus Christ. They assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility as the primary religious educators of their children.

Aware, then, of the dignity of this holy parental call, and with a reverent awe for that responsibility which is mine, I commit myself to be, in word and deed, the first and best teacher of my children in the faith.

Practically, this means that it is necessary to: (See also "Seven Precepts of the Church")

- **Participate at Mass every Sunday and Holy Day.**
- **Commit to speak more with my children about God and to include prayer in our daily home life.**
- **Participate in and cooperate with the Parish School of Religion programs that enable me as a parent to take an active role in the religious education of my children, including sacramental preparation for Catholic children.**
- **Support the moral and social teachings of the Catholic Church to ensure consistency between home and the Parish School of Religion.**
- **Teach my children by word and example to have a love and concern for the needs of others.**
- **Meet financial responsibilities of stewardship in supporting the Parish and other works of charity.**

GOALS

Following are the goals of the religious education program:

- To assist the parents in their primary role as religious educators of their children.
- To enable students to develop a personal relationship with God.
- To present Jesus Christ as the center of focus in the Christian message.
- To proclaim Scripture as the Living Word of God.
- To recognize the value of the Sacraments in developing an ongoing relationship with God.
- To teach Roman Catholic doctrine and the varied traditions of the Catholic Church.
- To give opportunities for various prayer experiences.
- To provide opportunities for service within the family, the faith community, and society.
- To foster in each child a positive self-image.
- To encourage a sense of vocation in young people eager to live out the Baptismal commitment.
- To support the formation of Catholic Christian judgments regarding moral issues.

POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

IHM Parish School of Religion admits learners of any race, color, nation origin, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to participants in these programs.

ADMISSION POLICIES

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish School of Religion Program will admit children from Catholic families who live in the parish boundaries and meet the following criteria:

- **The family should to be registered in IHM – New Melle Parish**
- **The family is be faithful to Sunday Mass Attendance and Participation**
- **The parents are to provide Baptismal certificates and other Sacramental information at the time of registration**
- **The parents are expected to demonstrate a desire to assist in the Catholic education of their children through their spiritual and financial support**

With permission of the pastor, the IHM PSR Program also admits children from other parishes that do not have a PSR Program. Under certain circumstances, again with approval from the proper pastor, children from a parish with a PSR Program may be admitted. These families are expected to fulfill the last three requirements as stated above.

REGISTRATION FEES

As a Parish, we firmly commit ourselves to using all the gifts with which God has blessed us as a means of supporting His Kingdom here on earth. Since our parish is deeply involved with stewardship in both time, talent, and treasure, we expect all of our families to participate in the total stewardship of the parish to help cover the cost of the program. (See precept of the Church # 5)

The registration fee: One Child \$110
Two Children \$210
Three or More Children \$290.
(A \$20 fee / student is added for those with late registration)

Sacramental Fee:

First Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation- \$25 for each student

Homeschool Fee: \$45 per child (contact DRE / catechist)

Registration and Sacramental fees offset the costs of catechist and speaker stipends, books, supplies, retreat fees, etc. If there is a financial hardship, please contact the pastor or DRE for the potential working out of a payment plan or other possible alternatives / suggestions.

TIME OF CLASSES

Classes for grades 1st – 8th are held on Wednesday evenings.
There is one session, beginning at 6:00 P.M. and concluding at 7:30P.M.

CANCELATION OF CLASSES

If classes need to be canceled because of weather or problems with the facility, each family will be notified through the cancellation notice on KMOX, KMOV-TV or KSD-TV. If classes in the Francis Howell School District are canceled because of weather related reasons (Snow Storm) the PSR classes may still not be canceled. Each teacher will be contacted by e-mail and he/she in turn may call his/her students or initiate a calling list.

CONSISTENT ANNUAL ENROLLMENT

In order to provide comprehensive formation in the faith, continual yearly enrollment and consistent class attendance is expected for all students in grades one through eight. Faithful and regular attendance in first and second grades and in seventh and eighth grades is of particular importance since those are years of immediate preparation for the reception of Sacraments.

In order to gain satisfactory knowledge of the Catholic faith, it is important that religious education have a **priority** in the life of the family. Therefore, it is important that students attend class faithfully and on time. **Three or less absences would be considered faithful participation.**

If the student is unable to attend class a phone call should be placed to the office (**636-398-5270**) informing administration of the absence. If a student is absent and there is no advance notification, a phone call will be placed to the home of the student inquiring of the whereabouts of the student. (This is done in particular for the safety of the child).

EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

If it is necessary for a child to leave class early, a note from the parents must be sent to the teacher prior to the start of class. The note will be initialed by the teacher and sent to the office with the attendance form. When the parent or guardian arrives to pick up his/her child, he/she will need to report to the office to sign the Early Dismissal book indicating the time of check-out. The student will be obtained by the volunteer in the office and brought to the parent.

CLASS WORK/HOMEWORK

Parents are expected to keep abreast of their child's assignments, particularly with the online component. It is necessary for children to come to class prepared. Assignments may sometimes include family interaction and parental assistance.

STUDENT MEDICAL NEEDS AND EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Families complete an Emergency Information Form at the time of registration that indicates names and phone numbers of persons to be contacted in case of sickness or other emergency during class time. Information regarding special medical needs and procedures to be followed is also requested at that time. Parents are asked to keep this information current through a note or phone call to the parish office.

SUPPLIES

The children will be given a textbook and are expected to take proper care of their book. Parents are expected to provide basic supplies for their child that is requested by the teacher. Catechists may require other supplies for a craft or special class project during the year.

HOME SCHOOL

Since parents have been home schooling their children all their lives through their teaching and example, homeschooling is a "given" as the parental norm of faith instruction. Regarding the faith formation that takes place in union with PSR and the texts that are used, homeschooling may be the best option for a child if parents come to that discernment. If a student is registered for homeschool and receives the text and online component, here is a plan to consider. In order to have more accountability of the instruction the child is receiving at home, it would be good for the parent and the teacher to communicate about the weekly lesson and any activity the class may be participating in (the Holy Mass, Sacrament of Reconciliation in particular). All students, whether homeschooled or those in regular PSR classes alone, ought to demonstrate a satisfactory level of understanding of grade level material before entering or promotion to the next grade level. This can be shown by periodic tests, culminating in a comprehensive test for each grade. With the goal being to help the students know the information, these comprehensive tests (which can be taken more than once to determine entrance to a particular grade level) will serve as something of a marker to help parents, catechists and the DRE determine what would be the best course of action for a particular student in a particular year. See handout about the pass / fail aspect of the comprehensive tests.

STUDENT CODE FOR THE PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Students are expected to come prepared to class. This will include the following items:

- students will be prepared for class with the materials the teacher may require
- students will be on time for class so as not to disturb the other students and teacher

DRESS CODE

- Students are to come to class dressed appropriately for class. Rule of Thumb: wear what is appropriate for Church ---- not what one might see at a beach) Hats are not to be worn in class. If a child comes to class inappropriately dressed, he/she may be asked to call home for a change of clothes.

Students are expected to demonstrate Christian behavior. This will include:

- Respect given to those in positions of authority: teacher, aides and any adult assisting
- Respect given to other students by taking turns, raising ones hand, walking properly through the building. There will be no physical contact between students unless supervised by the teacher.
- Respect for property – this will include the use of the student textbook, parish property and the property of the other students. Please, **no chewing of gum** during class and especially in Church.
- Respect will be shown through the speech and action of the student toward everyone.

Students will not leave class unless it is an emergency. If a student needs to leave class, he/she must have the permission of the teacher.

If there is a serious problem with a student in the classroom, the DRE will determine appropriate action which may include the involvement of parents, or in a more serious case, the pastor.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

All students receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation will be asked to attend the practices for the celebration of the sacrament with their classmates. Advanced notice will be given to the parents of the day and time (typically a week to ten days before the celebration).

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

All Students who have received the sacraments are encouraged to participate fully in Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation as well as receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Parents, who are the primary educators of their children, are encouraged to be the example for their children at these celebrations.

PROTECTION FOR OUR CHILDREN

We encourage parents to participate with their children and possibly volunteer when teachers request help, but a parent or any volunteer cannot participate unless they have attended the “Protecting God’s Children” course and completed the paperwork for a background check. This is the policy of the Archdiocese which is followed by all organizations.

To ensure that the students are aware of unsafe circumstances, each grade level will participate in the Archdiocesan mandated “Safe Touch Program” that is designed to be age-appropriate. Parents will be notified when this program is scheduled.

SAFETY

In order to make the arrival and dismissal of the children safe, parents are asked not to park in the first row of the parking spaces by the Founders Hall.

Children in Grades 1, 2, 3 are to be brought to the classroom by a parent or guardian for the beginning of class at 6:00 p.m. The parents of these same children are asked to pick up their child at dismissal from the classroom. It is also very important that the parents do not interrupt the class until the teacher has officially ended the class.

Children in Grades 1 & 2 are to be picked up in the “waiting area” by the restrooms in the lower level of Founder’s Hall. Grade 3 students can be picked up at their classroom door, or these parents, like the parents of Grades 4 & 5, may wait in the hallway outside the classrooms in Founder’s Hall.

WEAPONS AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Any student found to be in possession of drugs or any controlled substance will be immediately suspended from the program. Any student found bearing a weapon of any kind will be immediately suspended from the program. Depending on the nature of the offense, the police or other public authorities might need to be notified.

HOMEWORK

Each grade level may have assignments that the student is expected to complete with the help of the parent. This will particularly be the case with the online component. Spending some time each week with the student using the online tool, reading information sent home from PSR, reviewing prayers, reading religious stories or the Sacred Scriptures and reviewing suggested topics sent home by the teacher reinforces the message of the class lesson, gives validity to the child’s religious formation, and fosters parental involvement in the religious formation of the child.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Catechists will use written or oral activities throughout the year to regularly evaluate the student’s understanding of the material being presented, completion of assignments, knowledge of faith facts, attention and participation. Parents are encouraged to discuss the progress of the child with the catechist as the need arise. The Catechist may also contact parents for the same purpose.

REPORT CARD

An academic evaluation of the student’s progress will be made during the year. Report cards will be distributed twice a year. Marks are given in the areas of Understanding of Material; Attention/Participation; Assignments and Behavior. Days Absent and times tardy are also included. Final grades and attendance are included in the Student’s permanent record card which is kept as part of parish records.

SEVEN CHURCH PRECEPTS

While the 1983 Code of Canon Law (law that governs the universal Church) has 1,752 laws, the Church has only six (sometimes rendered as seven) precepts, which are the Catholic Church's house rules – the basic recipe for spiritual health for each and every Catholic. These precepts are like the minimum calorie intake that is required to both “stay alive” and to remain at some basic level of health. To be a good, practicing Catholic means at minimum to obey these basic guidelines for spiritual health, thus believing and “be-living” what the Church teaches.

The authority of the Church to govern her flock and to make laws was given to it by Jesus Christ Himself when He said to the apostles, the first bishops: “Whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven” (Cf. Mt 16:18, Lk 10:16). From time to time the Church has listed the certain specific (minimum) duties of Catholics. See CCC # 2041ff. These are presented below.

- 1. To keep holy the day of the Lord's Resurrection: to worship God by participating in Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation**
- 2. To lead a sacramental life: to receive Holy Communion frequently and the Sacrament of Penance regularly (as needed if in serious sin or for devotional growth in the spiritual life)**
- 3. To study Catholic teaching in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, to be Confirmed and then to continue to study and advance the cause of Christ.**
- 4. To observe the marriage laws of the Church.**
- 5. To strengthen and support the Church: one's own parish community and parish priests; the worldwide Church and the Holy Father.**
- 6. To do penance, including abstaining from meat & fasting from food on the appointed days.**
- 7. To join in the missionary spirit and apostolate of the Church.**

REPORT CARD SAMPLE



REPORT CARD PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION Archdiocese of Saint Louis

Name _____

Grade Level _____ Year 20 ____ 20 ____

Teacher _____

Dear Parents:

We believe that the home is the most important influence on a child's faith. It is especially from the parents that the child learns to know, love, and serve God. The Parish School of Religion assists parents through a systematic presentation of the Good News, designed to help the child's faith become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction.

We ask your cooperation in assuring your child's regular attendance in class and participation in the sacraments. We encourage you to talk with your child about God, to pray with him/her, to review each week's lesson, and to show the importance you place upon good Christian living.

We send you this progress report in the sincere hope that it will help you guide and encourage your child in learning and valuing our faith. While we cannot grade in any way a child's relationship with God, we can make objective judgments about one's knowledge and effort. We welcome your comments so that together we may further your child's religious formation.

PERIOD ONE

	Very Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Understanding of Material			
Attention/Participation			
Assignments			
Behavior			

Days Absent _____ Times Tardy _____

Teacher comment: _____

PERIOD TWO

	Very Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Understanding of Material			
Anticipation/Participation			
Assignments			
Behavior			

Days Absent _____ Times Tardy _____

Teacher comment: _____

PERIOD THREE

	Very Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Understanding of Material			
Attention/Participation			
Assignments			
Behavior			

Days Absent _____ Times Tardy _____

Teacher comment: _____

	Very Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Understanding of Material	Fully or mostly understands and remembers all ideas and concepts taught	Understands and remembers at least 50% of ideas and concepts learned	Does not understand or remember majority of ideas or concepts learned
Attention and Participation	Always or almost always: -stays on task -pays attention to class discussions and readings -volunteers answers	Usually -stays on task -pays attention to class discussions and readings -volunteers answers	Rarely -stays on task -pays attention to class discussions and readings -volunteers answers
Assignments	Always or almost always -completes chapter reviews -completes in-class assignments	Usually -completes chapter reviews -completes in-class assignments	Rarely -completes chapter reviews -completes in-class assignments
Behavior	Always or almost always -Obeyes class rules -Speaks only when	Usually -Obeyes class rules -Speaks only when	Rarely -Obeyes class rules -Speaks only when