



Immaculate Heart of Mary

8 WEST HIGHWAY D • NEW MELLE, MO 63365

**Parish School of Religion Registration  
2019-2020**

July 17, 2019

Dear PSR Parents and Guardians:

Greetings from Shawn Mueller, DRE / coordinator of the Parish School of Religion Program at IHM. I am writing about PSR registration for the 2019-2020 school year. We've opened the **window for registration from today to August 28, 2019** so as to begin getting everything in place for the start of the year.

*SEE SEPARATELY ATTACHED REGISTRATION FORM. PLEASE FILL THIS OUT AND SEND IN DIGITALLY OR IN HARD COPY FORM. YOU CAN MAIL-DROP OFF PAYMENT IN THE OFFICE OR IN THE COLLECTION BASKET AT MASS. (IN SEPARATE ENVELOPE MARKED "PSR").*

Our school year will begin **on Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> with a gathering at 6:00 pm in Church.**

**We ask that at least one (or ideally both) of the parents – guardians would attend with the student on September 4<sup>th</sup> and stay for at least 15 minutes to personally meet your son or daughter's catechist). (If you are new to the program, we invite you to a brief orientation program following—see below).**

**Keep this note for future reference: Here's the outline for the first gathering on  
Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Meet 6 pm Church: There will be a brief welcome and prayer from Fr. Tom. Shawn will then introduce the catechists and parents and students will go to their respective classes.**

**From 6:10 – 6:20 pm parents are to briefly meet with catechists who will give out any relevant information, instructions, expectations for the class year. (If you have multiple students and cannot meet with all the various catechists at the beginning of class, please be sure to stop by at the end of class to touch base). For those who have been part of the program in past years, they are welcome to go home after the meeting with the catechist. These parents are asked to come back at 7:30 pm to pick up the students.**

**If you are new to the program, we ask that you would come back to Church as Shawn offers a brief review of the program, various expectations, what we strive to do, the online homework, test, activities, sacraments, etc. (Any of the other parents who have been part of the program in the past are welcome to come for this review if they would like. There will be no major changes from the past years, but if you'd like to get another overview, you are welcome to join us.)**

*(Note: If there is any dilemma in parents attending this first initial meeting on September 4, please contact us ahead of time, as we do not desire any child to be enrolled in a class / program without some level of "face-time" or contact of parents with catechists---as our collaboration together is crucial to the mission of the program. If it is necessary to bring other younger children with you for practical reasons, that is certainly fine as well.*

Classes will follow on successive Wednesdays from the first Wednesday in September through the first Wednesday in May from 6:00 – 7:30 PM. We will have this schedule posted on the IHM website and have copies for you at our first meeting.

A brief word to reiterate the goal of the program (especially for those who are newly registering).

A parish school of religion seeks to be co-workers with parents, helping moms and dads fulfill the vows of holy matrimony they pledged to one another regarding children. While divorce, separation or other factors may be obstacles to the mutual support of spouses in this pledge towards children, the grace of God and the helps of others are there to help fulfill those sacred promises from one's wedding day, **"Will you accept children lovingly from God, and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?"** Practically speaking, this is about striving to form our children in virtue, character and sanctity, through instruction in the creeds, in the commandments, in the "way" that the Lord Jesus gives us through a life in His Spirit.

For our part of the "program" we strive to help you do this by way of instruction through religious education and formation, what is commonly known as catechesis. Through such catechesis, personally brought to your children by catechists, your sons and daughters are put in contact with the sacred streams of Scripture and Tradition, and personal contact and communion with God through the Sacraments. With every touch of grace and learning, with the prayers and works we involve our children in, we are increasing the odds for your son or daughter to become the "best version of themselves" in body and soul as God created them to be. God willing, this will set them on a course that is fulfilled in eternity through union with God and not separation from Him.

There is no perfect family, program or formula for making this happen, but for the time and conditions we have to work with regarding PSR, we're confident that the program we have will be a valuable help for you. For parents who have an intentional mindset to utilize this program in light of the active practice of their Catholic faith, they have a valuable tool in their parental "toolbox".

Here are some **highlights** of the program. Your sons and daughters who participate in the parish school of religion program will.....

- Have a catechist who will be praying and working with you, striving to be both a good teacher of the course lessons and subject matter, as well as being another adult witness to the beauty and gift of the Catholic faith.
- Have access to the "Faith and Life" text that has been recommended by great teachers and leaders in the faith as a fitting guide to growth in Christ and in the teachings of the Church.
- Have access to the Faith and Life text online, which includes not only the text, but engaging games, video links and more. While this will be part of the student's homework each week, it will provide a real tool for parents to utilize as the primary educators of their children in the home.
- Have a class with other students in which they will discover, learn and experience ways of prayer, the teachings of Jesus and devotions of the Church. They will be engaged through outstanding media resources, have fun through various activities, learn and read Scripture together, and prepare their hearts and minds for the upcoming Sunday Mass.
- Get to know Father Tom Miller, their pastor, in a personal way as Father Tom visits the classes frequently, makes himself available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and other liturgical events and more.
- Be prepared to receive Sacraments worthily, especially in those grades which they will be receiving a Sacrament for the first time.
- Be tested in their lessons so as to ensure to parents the students are learning the content of the faith lesson. Passing a cumulative test will earn the students a "pass" to the next year, and a wristband to wear as well.

- Learn in more detail the lives of the saints, these “holy heroes” and models of faith. Each class will have a “patron saint” in which catechists will study the life of in more detail and present various aspects of the life and virtue of this particular individual.
- Take part in several music-led prayerful praise and worship devotional nights by musicians in the parish and beyond increasing gratitude and thanksgiving to God.

## Registration

**A registration form has been included (or attached). While the preferred way to receive the form is digitally (making it easier for future registrations), a hard copy is fine as well. (Note, we aren’t yet equipped to take payments online so there will have to be some hard copy transfer / mailing either way).**

**Please be sure to note the section regarding the main email address** as one’s email address will be the key means of communication of information, both for the online portion of the program as well as to communicate effectively with the DRE, catechists and parents.

Please send these forms in, along **with payment to the parish office between now and August 28**. You can also drop them in the collection basket at Mass (just be sure they are marked in a separate envelope).

## The registration fees for the 2019-2020 year are as follows:

1 child	\$110
2 children	\$210
3 or more	\$290
Sacramental	Extra Fee of \$25 only for Grades 2 and 8
Homeschool only	\$45 / student* (see note below on HSR)

*\*Note on Homeschool--- (what we’ve abbreviated as HSR instead of PSR). Our program in general is run with a certain “homeschool mentality” ---- as all faith instruction at the parish level and beyond is intended to help support parents in the home. This is basic Catholic magisterial teaching. We encourage all parents to take this call as primary educators with a God-fearing, intentionally focused and creative attitude. As has been said many times, our help at the parish serves as a vitamin supplement to the meal that parents strive to provide at home. To participate in our program by way of “homeschool only” is an option that the pastor supports for all grades 1-7. This homeschool option is with the understanding that parents would collaborate and keep ties with the parish school program to make sure that instruction is being received in a timely and fitting way. During the sacramental “Confirmation” year of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the pastor asks that all candidates for Confirmation attend the parish school of religion program. This is a special year of preparation and it is fitting for students to be prepared for the Sacrament through the special program study we offer here at the parish. If there are any questions regarding this, (or anything else) please contact us.*