



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 Ed Program or your child/ren's class, please contact Karen Brandstetter, Pastoral Associate (513) 484-7555 or kbrandstetter@stdominicdelhi.org or the PSR Coordinator, Megan Mattei (865) 607-2070 or mmattei@stdominicdelhi.org

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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 parish 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 in 1st through 8th grade. There is special emphasis on the sacramental years, usually 2nd and 7th and 8th grades, with added activities for parents and candidates.

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.

Role of Parents

The Church sees the parents as the primary religious educators and the family as the model for Church. St Dominic Parish recognizes and supports the parent’s role. The PSR provides formal instruction in doctrine, history, and traditions of the Catholic faith, to support the work of parents. To support the PSR, parents are expected to:

- Attend Sunday Mass with their children; attending as a family as often as possible
- Pray with their children;
- Share faith experiences with their children;
- Together experience and share 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;
- Encourage their children to participate fully in PSR class.

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. Upon completion of these steps, ongoing participation in "SafeParish" is required, including the completion of quarterly interactive bulletins.

Communications

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

Catechists 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

Our Parish School of Religion begins after Labor Day and ends the third week of May, prior to the parish festival weekend. As much as possible, PSR follows the combined calendar of St. Dominic School and Oak Hills Local Schools. Both were considered in setting up the program schedule.

- **Grades 1 – 8 Sunday mornings from 10:30 – 11:25 AM.** Class time allows for attendance at either 9:30 or 11:30 Mass with family.

Child/Parent PSR Activities

At times, there may be child/parent or child/sacramental sponsor activities, prayer opportunities, etc. – particularly if your child will be involved in sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation, First Communion or Confirmation this year. These sessions are a part of the PSR program and

attendance is expected. Notices will appear in the bulletin and 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

Classes are held in our school classrooms. Enter at the covered porch off the church parking lot. Children will be dismissed from this door also. Students are to be in their classrooms by 10:30 am (or as soon as 9:30 Mass has ended for those attending that service) and picked up at 11:25 am.

Parents are to come into the school and pick their child up at their classroom each week. To assure safety when moving through the parking lot, we cannot release any student without being picked up by a parent or other approved adult identified on the PSR registration form.

Classroom assignments will be communicated prior to the start of each school year.

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: ***Gospel Weeklies***, published by Pflaum publications

With Gospel Weeklies, we have a faith formation program that is centered on the Sunday liturgy and focuses on teaching the tenets of the Catholic faith through the scripture messages that we find in Mass each Sunday. This program is highly attractive and engaging for our students and involves the families of our students as well as their weekly catechists. The beliefs, morals, traditions and rituals of our faith are embedded in the program each week at age appropriate levels. The main focus of this program is to invite each child into a loving relationship with God that is deepened each year.

Grade 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 Coordinator and parents is done through written communications and scheduled Parent Meetings.

Because of the parish's commitment to assuring children are ready to receive the sacraments, (Reconciliation and First Eucharist in Grade 2 and Confirmation in Grade 8), there are more stringent attendance requirements for students during this preparation time (2nd grade and 8th grade). See Attendance info on the following page.

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. These sessions are a part of the PSR program and attendance is expected. Notice will appear in the bulletin, and 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.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. If your grade school child will be absent from class, please call the PSR Coordinator, Megan Mattei, at (865)607-2070 to leave a message or send email to mmattei@stdominicdelhi.org.

Regular attendance and punctuality are important 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 sessions during the year.

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. Three or more unexcused absences from religious education sessions will result in suspension from the team and/or the Athletic Association.

Students preparing to receive First Reconciliation, First Eucharist or Confirmation (2nd grade and 8th grade) are expected have no more than two absences/quarter.

Q1 = Sept thru Nov

Q2 = Dec thru Feb

Q3 = Mar thru May

Excessive absences prevent sacramental readiness and can delay your child's receiving the sacrament(s) as planned.

PSR teachers will take attendance at each class.

Accident and Illness Procedures

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES - In case of a medical emergency or illness, parents will be contacted. The Emergency phone number provided at registration 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 Coordinator will sign it. A copy will be given to the parent and one will be kept in the PSR program office.

Behavioral Expectations

The class catechist/teacher and the PSR Coordinator 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 Coordinator 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:

- Students are expected to show respect and consideration for the 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 catechist or PSR Director.
- 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.

Behavioral Do's and Don'ts:

Do:

Students should eat before coming to PSR

Students should use the restroom before coming to PSR

Students should wear comfortable, modest clothing, appropriate for the season and devoid of any offensive words or images

Students should respect school property in their classrooms and in the hallways

Don't:

Students should not bring food or drinks to PSR

Students should not bring electronic devices or toys to PSR

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

Sunday Morning Program – You will be notified by email if class is cancelled due to weather. Again, please notify the parish if your email contact information changes during the school year.

Registration / Enrollment

The **Grade School Religious Education Program** is open to all Catholic children in grades 1-8 who attend public or non-Catholic private schools. Online registration will start in July. There will also be an in-person registration opportunity after all weekend masses during the month of August. We ask that families register as early as possible to ensure that we have the appropriate materials for each student.

Change of Address or other contact info

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