

GOOD SHEPHERD
CATHOLIC CHURCH
PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION



PARENT HANDBOOK

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GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION

PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT

Good Shepherd Parish School of Religion is a faith-filled community in which the pastor and staff aim to promote the teaching mission of the church by proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ, forming a community of faith, and reaching out to others.

GOALS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- To foster a secure environment in which religious education and spiritual growth can flourish.
- To help students grow in their knowledge of the Catholic faith.
- To present a Catholic faith that is alive, growing and grounded in a deepening relationship with God.
- To recognize the value of the Sacraments in developing a loving and on-going relationship with God.
- To assist parents in their primary role as educators of their children.
- To prepare children to be able to continue their religious education into and throughout their adult years.

ADMISSION POLICY

Classes are offered for students of the parish attending public school in Kindergarten through Eighth grade. Registration occurs in the spring for students already attending Good Shepherd P.S.R. Parents must submit information regarding the baptism of their child/children and/or attendance at P.S.R. classes at other parishes. Parents must be registered members of Good Shepherd Parish.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Classes are held on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 pm until 8:15pm. Classes are held in Good Shepherd School and other buildings on the property. **Students should arrive after 6:45pm and go directly to their classroom. There is no supervision outside before class.**

Students are dismissed at 8:15pm and are expected to leave at the center sidewalk directly in front of the church steps. Students should not exit between parked cars. Students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade must be picked up at their classroom door by a parent or older sibling (parental note needed for sibling to pick up a younger sibling). Students are dismissed at the final bell at 8:15 pm. Parents need to enter the parking lot at the east entrance and obey the **ONE WAY TRAFFIC**, exiting at the west end of the parking lot

and leaving on Elm Street. Parents should only pick up their children on the parking lot and not on Third Street.

With the limited amount of class time, late arrivals and early dismissals are discouraged. If a student arrives after 7:00 pm, they must report to the PSR office. If a student becomes ill, the student will be brought to the office and parents will be notified.

ATTENDANCE

Weekly attendance is very important in order for your child to receive the best instruction. An attendance record is kept on each child while attending Good Shepherd PSR. If your child is absent, please be sure to go over the lesson of the evening with them.

CALENDAR AND CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

We will display PSR closing information on KTV1 (Channel 2), KMOV (Channel 4), & KSDK (Channel 5). Please keep a copy of the calendar handy throughout the year. The PSR calendar is available on the parish website under the PSR tab. **We do not dismiss for spring breaks.**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, E-MAIL, PHONE, OR FAMILY SITUATIONS

Please notify, in writing or by e-mail, the office as soon as possible if there is a change of address, telephone number, email, or any change that might affect communication with you.

COMMUNICATIONS-(All communications will be by e-mail)

Communication between parents and PSR includes:

- **Newsletters** - Newsletters and other information are sent home periodically by e-mail or with the oldest or only child in the family.
- **Report Cards** - Report cards will be sent home three times during the year.
- **Individual Conferences** - Parents should feel free to contact the teacher and/or PSR Director concerning the progress of their child/children.
- **Registration & Tuition invoices** - Both will be mailed and invoices will be sent out monthly.

TUITION & FEES

Tuition, book, and registration fees should be paid according to the payment schedule listed at the end of this handbook. Fees are assessed for late registration and late tuition.

DISCIPLINE

It is the right of every family enrolled in the PSR to have their children learn in an atmosphere that is conducive to growth and development. It is also the right of the PSR teacher to expect and require an attitude of respect and cooperation by the students. This respect applies to teachers, staff, other students and the property and environment of all facilities at Good Shepherd Parish.

If a student repeatedly shows lack of respect and habitually disobeys, the parents and student will have a conference. If a student continues the misconduct, alternative methods of Religious Education will be discussed with the family. We cannot allow one or two children to take an inordinate amount of the teacher's time and attention depriving the others of what they need.

DRUG, ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs pose a threat to the health of young people and creates an obstacle to their full development as Christian persons. In addition, under federal and state laws, the possession and use of certain nonprescription drugs including narcotics, depressants, stimulants, marijuana, and hallucinogenic drugs is illegal.

Therefore, the possession, use of, or transfer of drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence of any of the above on school premises will not be tolerated. Law enforcement will be called.

HARASSMENT

Parish schools of religion shall maintain a learning environment that is free from all forms of harassment. No student in the PSR shall be subjected to any type of harassment. Parish schools of religion forbid harassment because it is not in keeping with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and the standards of the PSR program.

Harassment is defined as any unwanted and unwelcome behavior that interferes with a student's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. Harassment includes conduct that is verbal, physical or visual.

Each parish school of religion investigates every harassment complaint thoroughly and promptly. All investigations will be conducted in a sensitive manner and, to the extent feasible, confidentiality will be honored. The investigations and all actions taken will be shared only with those who have a need to know.

If, after investigation, the parish school of religion determines that a student has engaged in sexual or other forms of harassment, appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion, will be taken.

VIOLENCE

The parish school of religion shall provide a safe learning environment for all members. The climate of the PSR shall reflect Gospel values including an emphasis on the dignity of all persons which is necessary for respect, the interdependence of all persons which is the basis of community, and the rights and responsibilities of all persons which are the foundation of justice.

Violence is inconsistent with the unity and peace which are essential to living the Catholic faith in community. Violence also inhibits human development and successful learning. Therefore, violence is not tolerated in the parish school of religion.

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, harassment, assault, possession and/or use of a weapon, and theft or vandalism of property.

A weapon is anything used or intended to be used to threaten, intimidate, and/or harm persons. The possession or use of firearms, other weapons, or explosive devices on school/parish premises is not permitted.

In all cases of violence involving or threatening bodily injury, and in cases of possession or use of a weapon, legal authorities will be called. Students will be subject to immediate suspension or expulsion. If the child is permitted to return to school, the school administration must be reasonably assured by a competent professional that the student does not pose future danger to himself/herself or to others before returning to school.

CELL PHONES

Time spent during PSR is dedicated to growing in “wisdom, age, and grace before God and others as Jesus did when he was found in the temple after three days of being lost. Therefore, PSR is not a time for use of cell phones for talking or texting or any other use except in dire emergency in consultation with the teacher.

Students are encouraged to leave cell phones at home to minimize possible loss and misuse. If students do bring cell phones to PSR, the phones are not to be in sight or used at all during PSR.

If students misuse this directive, the cell phone will be placed immediately on the desk of the teacher for the duration of class. It is the student’s responsibility to ask the teacher to reclaim the cell phone after the dismissal bell has rung.

LITURGY

The students will attend Mass, the sacrament of Reconciliation, and other liturgies throughout the year. Parents may attend any of the above with their children.

MEDICATION

Oral medication, including aspirin, will not be administered to students and should not be brought to school. If your child needs to carry special medicine on their person please notify the PSR Director.

Good Shepherd Parish School of Religion

Fees and Payment Policies

2014-2015

The following policies govern students attending Good Shepherd Catholic Church Parish School of Religion:

TUITION

\$195.00 For the first child	Half	(\$97.50)
\$295.00 For the second child	Half	(\$147.50)
\$395.00 For three or more children	Half	(\$197.50)

FEES

Sacramental fee for 8th grade is \$15.00

If family is not registered by May 20, 2014 (with or without payment) there will be a \$25.00 late registration fee added.

BILLINGS AND PAYMENTS

Choices for payment:

- 1) May be paid in full or half at time of registration in April or May.
- 2) Deferred payment:
 - a. one half in September
 - b. second half due in January
- 3) Failure to pay remaining tuition by February 1 will be considered in arrears and be assessed a \$15 late fee.

NOTA BENE:

If the balance cannot be paid due to serious financial difficulty the family MUST make payment arrangements with the Parish Business Manager.

Call the rectory at: 636-789-3356 or send emails to: parishoffice@mygoodshepherd.com

With written notice to the pastor a refund will be issued for any student that does not complete the billing period.

Maintaining School Privacy

PSR understands that students/parents have access to technology that enables them to record, either visually or audibly, a student of the school or a member of the school staff.

Out of respect for the students in our PSR, students and parents are not to publicly post any videos, pictures or audio recordings of students at PSR events unless the student/parent(s) have the express written permission from PSR to do so. This includes, but is not limited to, online photo-sharing and posting videos to YouTube or similar applications.

Additionally, in order to ensure the privacy of members of the staff, students and parents are not to record a member of the school staff without the express permission of the staff member. As such, students and parents are prohibited from recording classroom lessons/discussions and are prohibited from photographing or videotaping teachers without the teachers' permission. Likewise, students and parents shall not publicly post any videos, pictures or audio recordings of staff members unless the student/parent(s) have the express written permission from the staff member. This includes, but is not limited to, online photo-sharing and posting videos to YouTube or similar applications.

HOME SCHOOLING

If you choose to home school your child/children please consult the Parish Coordinator of Religious Education. The normal PSR fees are assessed and the current PSR text must be used. Periodically throughout the year the students meet with the DRE/CRE or the catechist of the appropriate grade level to verify that the student has been able to comprehend the required information. Home schooling is not allowed during the Sacrament years of grades 2 and 8 due to the classroom activities surrounding the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.

Good Shepherd Parish School of Religion Home Schooling Program

The purpose of this addition to the handbook is to assist prospective parents who are thinking of home schooling in their child's Religious Education. Our aim is to help parents make the decision that will most benefit and strengthen their family in the pursuit of their child's Religious Education.

***NOTE--Sacrament years are not eligible for home schooling.**

People choose to provide Religious Education for their children within the context of their own family for many reasons. Some choose home schooling because they have found that it gives them an opportunity to discuss really important values and learning with their children. Some find that the time spent learning together unites the family even more. Others find that the schedule of Religious Education classes just doesn't fit their work or family schedule.

EXPECTATIONS

The parent, the child, and the parish all have expectations about what is to be accomplished by the opportunity for home schooling religious education. The following list should clarify what is expected for each party in the home schooling option.

The parents

- meet initially with the Director of Religious Education
- devote sufficient time to the preparation and teaching of the lessons
- receive support from the parish through the Director of Religious Education
- help the child take the lessons seriously and devote energy and diligence to the learning process
- regularly teaches the child, using a variety of techniques, methods, and style, rather than merely telling the child to complete pages in the text

- complete the year's work according to the schedule of lessons provided by the Director of Religious Education, including turning in the textbooks according to the schedule
- use the text series that has been approved by the Archdiocesan Department of Religious Education
- help the child/children review the lessons to assure understanding and application to daily life
- witness to the Catholic faith by the family's weekly participation in Sunday liturgy, family prayers, and participation in parish activities

The child

- cooperates with his/her parents in the learning process
- listens to his/her parents as they explain the lesson and share their faith with their child
- shares his/her relationship with Jesus and the journey of faith at this time
- completes the current year's work before moving to the next grade

The parish, through the Director of Religious Education

- supports the parents and child in their efforts to learn about the Catholic tradition and practices
- evaluates the thoroughness of instruction and application of the lessons
- helps the family decide about ways its members can effectively live out their faith
- provides to home schooling families the materials distributed to PSR families who are taking part in the classroom option and the calendar
- interviews the parents and child at the end of the school year or before to ascertain completion of material and promotion to the next grade
- maintains accurate permanent records for the Religious Education Office

REGISTRATION

Parents use the regular Parish School of Religion registration form, indicate home schooling, and complete the information needed for the permanent record card required by the Archdiocese of St. Louis. All dates required in the registration form also apply to home schooling families. Parents requesting a transfer from the PSR classroom option to the home schooling option will need the approval and recommendation of the Director of Religious Education, will need to pay any additional book fees, and agree to the requirements of the home schooling program.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Audio-visual materials - Parents may order videos from the Archdiocesan Media Center to enhance the lessons. There is no charge for this service.

Parents are encouraged to consult with the Director of Religious Education regarding catechetical content, methods, or other concerns in the learning process.

Parents are welcome to use resources, books, and other materials available to PSR catechists. Home schooling families are invited to take part in the activities listed on the PSR calendar, especially grade level celebrations of Eucharist and Reconciliation.

TUITION COMMITTEE

The Tuition Committee consists of four persons appointed by the pastor: one elementary school parent, one past parochial school parent, one non-parent, and one member from the Finance Committee.

The Tuition Committee is willing to work with families that are having serious financial problems. Its objective will be to work out some type of payment plan and/or overdue tuition rate on an individual basis so that no one is denied a Christian education. All meetings and financial data obtained by this committee will be held in strictest confidence.

Contact for the Tuition Committee – Fr. Chris @ 636-789-3356

REDUCED PAYMENT

Any family seeking to reduce their payments must request an application for payment assistance from the pastor or from any member of the Tuition Committee. All applicants must be registered parishioners and active in their faith. They will be asked to make use of their time and talents in parish and school activities.

After the completed form is returned, the Tuition Committee members will meet with any family at their earliest convenience. Until a family meets with the Tuition Committee, the family is obligated to pay the full amount. The committee will not routinely apply the reduced amount retroactively.

An application for payment reduction must be completed annually. The Education Commission and the Finance Commission review the payment policy on a regular basis.