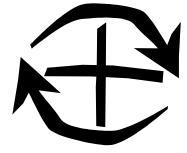


**ST. CLARE PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION
JUNIOR HIGH HANDBOOK
SEPTEMBER 10, 2019**



As we begin our year together united by God's love, it is our hope & prayer to encounter the Living Christ with our children and community, and also encourage them to find for themselves a personal encounter with the Living Christ in ALL of God's creation. We look forward to a year full of vibrant growth together celebrating God's goodness and mercy for each of us, our families as well as our family in Jesus Christ here at the Church of Saint Clare. We as catechists are not just teachers of our Catholic faith and tradition but we are called to share our own ongoing faith journey in the discipleship of Christ. This sharing, echoing, of our faith is called *catechesis*.

It is our goal to share with your children our Catholic faith, beliefs, prayers, as well as help them deepen their friendship with God that proves itself in love and service to others, especially with Jesus in the Eucharist in our liturgical thanksgiving celebration of Mass and Holy Communion. **We introduce your children to a lifelong process and ongoing relationship with God, and not a program that is passed through and eventually completed upon Confirmation.** There will be many opportunities to continue this journey of faith not only for this year, but for the rest of their lives!

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's (USCCB) theme this year is ***Stay With Us***. This theme focuses on the importance of creating opportunities to encounter God through Christ and accompaniment of the young people we serve in order to nurture their spiritual desire so that they may grow in fraternal love, community life and service as missionary disciples. (Pope Francis. Apostolic Exhortation, *Christus Vivit!* 213-214). What a grace-filled year of faith in which we have the opportunity and challenge to share with the children and families of our Saint Clare community!

Here at Saint Clare we are privileged to have an excellent & gifted staff of background checked, trained and certified volunteers. **The people listed below are wonderful individuals who who have answered God's call and volunteer their time** each week to help your children grow in their understanding of their Catholic faith. We hope that you will support and encourage these catechists in their ministry. Please pray for them and for your children throughout the year. Your children need people who care about them and are willing to take the time to train them in their faith. Don't let them down! We assure all parents of our prayers for YOU in your primary role as religious educators of your children. May God's love and peace be in your hearts and homes and may the Holy Spirit guide you in this most important vocation!

Jr. High PSR Staff

Director of Faith Formation & Religious Ed ~ Ms. Lori Mascia

Assistant to the Director ~ Miss Mary O'Neill

Grade 7 – Room 5 ~ Mr. Jack Gurtiza

Grade 8 – Room 3 ~ Mr. Michael Fontanella

Grade 8 – Room 4 ~ Miss Jen Zimmerman

Office Assistants ~ Mrs. Amanda Ambrogio & Alexa Scimone

All Confirmandi, the 8/9/10th grade students, AND their parents, (sponsors if possible) MUST attend the Confirmation Commitment Service on Tuesday, October 15th, 7:30pm in the Church.



**“The family is the fundamental cell of society,
where we learn to live with others despite our differences and to belong to one another;
it is also the place where parents pass on the faith to their children.”**

Evangelii Gaudium (Joy of the Gospel) #66. Pope Francis. 11/24/13.

GENERAL POLICIES FOR PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION

- 1) **ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES** - It is extremely important that children attend PSR classes on a regular basis. **If your child will be absent, please call 440-449-4242 Ext. 119 or email lmascia.stclare@att.net with the child's name, class room teacher and reason for absence.** We realize that there will be times when children are ill or there is a family conflict or special occasion, but we ask that a child miss no more than 5 classes throughout the year. Children missing more than 5 classes will be asked to repeat the year, unless the material is made up. This is the only way to ensure that the children are receiving the basics of their faith on each grade level. The teacher will inform you of the material your child needs to do to make-up for the missed class and ensure that they not fall behind in their religious studies. If a child will be missing a number of classes for any reason (extended illness, participation in a sport, etc.) the **parents must make arrangements with the particular teacher and in writing to the office to do work at home and make up the lessons missed** so that the child will be up to date when returning to class. These notes will be kept on file in the office. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the office or teacher. **If all work is kept up and completed in accordance with the teacher's requirements, then the child will not need to repeat the year.**
- 2) **CLASS TIME** – **Classes begin at 7:15pm promptly on Tuesdays.** All students are expected to be in their classrooms by that time and stay until the classes are concluded at 8:30pm. **Drop off and pick up is from the north doors from the parking lot behind the school building. For their safety, no child will be allowed to leave the building except with their parent/guardian or authorized adult.** PSR Pick Up Authorization forms are online at: <https://saintclare.net/religious-education#>
- 3) **BOOKS & FOLDERS** – Each student receives his/her own **books and folder.** These are to be used at home throughout the week but **must be brought to class each week. 7th graders are to bring in the bible they received last year.** Bibles can be purchased for \$15. **Parents need to check both the folder for newsletters and notes.** If a student forgets his/her book repeatedly, the parents will be called and asked to bring the book to the student's classroom. It is extremely difficult for a student to follow a lesson without a book. If a book is lost at any time, a new one will have to be purchased at \$20 each.
- 4) **DISCIPLINE** – See our Christian Behavior Contract.
- 5) **REPORT CARDS** - Simple evaluation records are sent home with the children three times throughout the year: **November 5th, January 21st, and March 31st.** This is not an evaluation of a student's faith, but merely a tool to find their basic understanding of the doctrines taught in the classroom. **The first two report cards are to be SIGNED by the parents & RETURNED to the teacher by the next class.**
- 6) **MASS ATTENDANCE** – As a Catholic community we believe in teaching our children that the centrality of our faith lies in the celebration of the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist. We teach the children that as Catholics we have the privilege and responsibility to attend Mass each week. **THIS IS NOT AN OPTION.** Parents who have children enrolled in our PSR process are expected to show their children by example of **faithfully attending Mass each week.** Because we feel so strongly about this, the parish staff considers it as an utmost priority. We hope that if you are choosing to send your child to PSR, you are serious about your responsibility to take your children to Mass each week.
- 7) **PARISH REGISTRATION** – Parents of students attending our PSR Process must be registered in St. Clare Parish. If you are not registered, you will be contacted to complete a parish census form. If you wish to have your children attend PSR and are registered at another parish, we must have a letter of permission from the pastor of the parish in which you are presently registered in order for your children to attend classes here.
- 8) **TUITION** – The tuition for each child enrolled in PSR is as follows:
 - \$100 One Child
 - \$150 Two Children
 - \$200 Three or more Children per family
 - \$150 Per child for those not active, registered and participating members of the parish

Tuition checks are to be made payable to: St. Clare PSR. We ask that you pay the tuition within the first month of classes in order for us to pay our book and supply bills. Every child is welcome to join us. If the tuition payment poses a hardship for you and you are not able to pay within the first month or would like to make other confidential financial arrangements, call Ms. Mascia 440-449-4242 Ext. 119.

9) **VISITATION** – Anyone wishing to visit a classroom can do so only by coming to the office in Room 22 and receiving permission from the Director of Faith Formation and Religious Education. We need to be aware at all times of persons who are in the building for the safety of the children.

10) ALL cell phones, as well as hats & sport shoes with cleats are to be off in the building.

DIOCESAN POLICY FOR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

If you know, believe or have a reasonable cause to suspect that a child under eighteen years of age or a mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or a physically impaired child under twenty-one years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound injury, disability, or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse (Examples include, but are not limited to, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse) or neglect of the child you SHALL immediately report that knowledge or reasonable cause to suspect to:

Cuyahoga County 216-696-5437 (KIDS)
Diocesan Resource 216-334-2999

You SHALL also: Immediately notify your parish catechetical leader, principal or program coordinator that a report has been made, or jointly make that call together. That person (the one you notified) must then report the same to the Bishop’s Office.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

December 7th, Advent Family Night ~ for families, friends & relatives ~ 5:30pm in the Academy Gym

February 29th, Lenten Family Night ~ for families, friends & relatives ~ 5:30pm in the Academy Gym

RSVP: Ms. Mascia, 440-449-4242 Ext.119 or lmascia.stclare@att.net

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS (RCIA)

Want to know the #1 reason why people haven’t joined the Catholic Church? . . .They haven’t been INVITED yet!

Jesus is calling all of us to invite someone we know who may be interested in joining us in the Catholic Church.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the exciting & life-changing journey in which people of any background explore, study & pray together with anticipation of entering into the Catholic faith & community at the Easter Vigil. RCIA is right for you if you:

- ~ Have never been baptized
- ~ Are baptized in another Christian denomination & would like to become Catholic
- ~ Are baptized Catholic but never received Confirmation and/or Holy Communion



RCIA meets every Sunday 9-11am in the Harvest Room of the Sister Lucy Center beginning Sunday Sept. 22nd

Any questions? Fr. Cosgrove is eager to talk with you!

Please contact him at 440-449-4242 Ext. 107 or email frcosgrove@gmail.com

We ask all students & their families to join us to take time to pray the following prayer.

Please consider making a commitment to pray throughout the year ahead:

Official Family Prayer for World Meeting of Families

God, our Father,

We are brothers and sisters in Jesus your Son, One family, in the Spirit of your love.

Bless us with the joy of love.

Make us patient and kind, gentle and generous, welcoming to those in need.

Help us to live your forgiveness and peace.

Protect all families with your loving care, especially those for whom we now pray:

[We pause and remember family members and others by name].

Increase our faith, strengthen our hope, keep us safe in your love,

make us always grateful for the gift of life that we share.

This we ask, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Mary, mother and guide, pray for us.

Saint Joseph, father and protector, pray for us.

Saints Joachim and Anne, pray for us.

Saints Louis and Zélie Martin, pray for us. Amen.

<https://www.worldmeeting2018.ie/en/About-Official-Prayer>

