

**Parish School of Religion
Family Handbook
2026-2027**



**Pastor- Fr. Gerald Blessing
Parish Religion Coordinator- Mrs. Christine Anderson**

PARENT WITNESS STATEMENT

One of the supreme gifts of marriage is bringing forth new life. God entrusts 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, as here summarized:

You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of leading 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 the faith. May you be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what you say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

No wonder, then, that the Church understands the home to be 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.

Catholic schools and parish religious education programs are in partnership with the family in proclaiming and witnessing 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 I should:

GOALS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- To foster a caring environment in which religious education and spiritual formation can occur.
- To help students grow in their faith as Catholics.
- To present a Catholic faith that is alive, is growing, and is grounded in a deepening relationship with God.
- To recognize the value of the sacraments in developing a loving, ongoing relationship with God.
- To assist parents in their primary role as educators of their children.
- To prepare students to live their lives based on Gospel values.

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ADMISSION POLICY

Classes are offered for students of the parish attending public school in First through Eighth grade. Parents should be registered members of Holy Family Parish, however, children from other parishes may attend PSR with pastoral permission. The registration process for families includes:

1. Verification of parish registration.
2. Submission of registration form to the PSR office with tuition payment.
3. Verification of the date of baptism by a review of the baptismal certificate and the dates of the other first sacramental celebrations.
4. Verification of custody arrangements in cases in which the parents of the students are divorced. (A copy of the divorce decree, which verifies custody arrangements must be provided.)
5. Tuition payments from the previous year must be up to date.
6. Submission of records from former school or parish.
7. Completion of missed years of religious education and payment of fees for missed work.
8. Completion of the present year's class work.

A family loses the right to register a student in Holy Family Parish School of Religion if all steps to finalize enrollment are not complete.

Students missing one year or multiple years of religious education must make up missed work and will not necessarily be placed in a PSR grade level that matches their school grade level. **Students missing sacraments must attend a full year of PSR classes before they will be allowed to fully be prepared for the reception of the sacrament the following year. First-grade PSR or Catholic school is required for second-grade PSR and the preparation of First**

Reconciliation and Eucharist. First through Eighth grade PSR or Catholic School is required for preparation of Confirmation in Eighth grade. Students intending to enter Eighth Grade without prior PSR or Catholic School attendance will be required to complete at least one year prior.

The placement of students in grade levels may be determined by the PSR Director and the Pastor.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Classes are held on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 to 7:15 PM. **Students should arrive after 5:45 PM and go directly to his or her classroom, where they will begin class. Students will be dismissed from their classrooms. Parents should be at the main school door for dismissal at 7:15 PM for all grades.** Your children must be picked up on time. Should an emergency detain you, please call the school office to let us know that you will be late. (636-321-0002 ext. 123)

With the limited amount of time for class, late arrivals and early dismissals are not encouraged. If a student becomes ill during class, the student will be sent to the office. The parent will be notified that the student needs to be picked up. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to go home without parental permission.

ATTENDANCE

For the optimum opportunities for your child, weekly attendance is necessary. Students are expected to attend all classes and activities scheduled by the parish school of religion. An attendance record is kept on each child while in the program. **When students are absent, they are expected to make up and turn in all missed work. Excessive absence may result in the delay of Sacrament Completion.**

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

Cancellation of classes due to weather or other necessity will be relayed from the coordinator's email address. Please make sure that psr@holyfamilyarnold.org is viewable. At times, people realize that this address has been going through their spam folder or junk mail. Please check your email frequently. School closings do not always follow Fox School District or nearby district closings.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS

We realize that for many students, cell phones are necessary for family communication. However, **students may not have his or her phone out during class time.** Phones will be placed on the teacher's desk for the duration of class. When class is dismissed, phones may be retrieved. Phones should be set to "do not disturb".

If you need to relay a message to your child or need to pick up your child for emergency reasons, please call our office. We will make certain that these messages are conveyed to your child. The same is true if your child needs to speak with you. We will allow your child to call you from our office phone or your child's

phone in the office (636-321-0002 ext. 123).

Wearing AirPods or similar products may not be worn during class.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, OR FAMILY SITUATION

Please notify the office as soon as possible if there is a change of address, telephone number, or any change that might affect the student's performance and/or personality.

COURTESY AND RESPECT

Courtesy and respect are expected from the students in all their interactions with other students and all PSR staff. This is an essential component of Catholic upbringing.

COMMUNICATIONS

Good communication between parents, teachers, and students is necessary for the spiritual growth of each individual involved in the program. Communication between parents and school includes:

Email Parents need to check their Email as all communications from the Religious Education Office come through email.

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 applies to respect for the teachers and staff, other students, and the property and environment of all facilities at Holy Family Parish.

It is hoped that students will respond to the usual methods of discipline.

However, if a student repeatedly shows a lack of respect or habitually disobeys, alternative methods of Religious Education will be discussed with the family.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress and present an appearance consistent with standards of good taste and appropriate for the parish school of religion. Clothing modeling modesty must be worn. Any dress or wearing of insignia that conveys the image of gang membership supports the beliefs of hate groups, makes sexual innuendos, or promotes drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is inappropriate for school, will not be allowed, and will warrant disciplinary action.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

An attitude of respect for one's body and a desire to preserve one's health is most important. A follower of Jesus thanks God for these gifts and strives to live per laws designed to uphold these values. The use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs pose a threat to the health of young people and create an obstacle to their full development as Christian persons.

Under present federal and state laws, the possession or use of certain nonprescription drugs, including narcotics, depressants, stimulants, marijuana, and hallucinogenic drugs are illegal. Therefore, the possession, use, or transfer of drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence on school premises, will not be tolerated. Smoking and vaping products are not permitted. Students violating this policy will be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from the parish school of religion. In addition, civil authorities may become involved.

FEES

Tuition should be paid at the time of registration in the spring.

FOOD AND GUM

Students should not bring food to the classrooms unless special occasions arise.

Food is welcome for Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the last night of school.

If students would like to bring in a small birthday treat for his or her birthday, this would be acceptable. Please note that parents must check with the teacher or the coordinator to see if there are any students with particular food allergies. Water bottles are encouraged to be brought each week. Water is the only drink allowed in water bottles.

Soda and other soft drinks are only permitted during class holiday parties. Chewing gum is not allowed in the school building, parish center or the chapel.

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 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

LITURGY

The students will attend liturgy and reconciliation services throughout the year.

MEDICATION

Oral medication, including aspirin, will not be administered to students. Students may not carry medication on their person, with the exception of metered-dose inhalers or Epi-Pen when properly registered with the Parish School of Religion. A doctor's note is needed for these medications.

PRAYERS

Please spend time as a family praying. Children often follow what they see. If children see their parents pray, they will too.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be sent home twice during the school year. The first report will be sent out at the end of December. The last report card will be given out on the last night of class. Individual Parents should feel free to contact the teacher concerning the progress of their child. Teachers may be contacted by leaving a message in the office for the teacher or by sending a note to your child.

SACRAMENTS

All baptized children will be eligible to receive their Sacraments of First Penance and First Communion. Typically, the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are received in the Second Grade. Confirmation is only received in the Eighth Grade.

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is an important component of Catholic upbringing. The students will be encouraged to participate in stewardship activities throughout the year.

TOBACCO

Smoking, vaping, and/or the use of any tobacco products are not allowed. Use of these products will result in disciplinary action.

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 that are essential to living the Catholic faith in a 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 people. The possession or use of firearms, other weapons, or explosive devices on school/parish premises are not permitted.

In all cases of violence involving or threatening bodily injury, and in cases of possession or use of a weapon, legal authorities may be called at the discretion of the school administration. 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 a future danger to themselves or others before returning to school.

This Parent/Student Handbook contains established policies and procedures for the Parish School of Religion of Holy Family Parish. Since it is not possible for a Handbook to address every situation that may arise during the school year, the school administration reserves the right to amend or revoke the policies and procedures in this handbook at any time as circumstances may require. When changes are made to the Handbook, parents and students will be informed of the change.

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