



Mary Queen of the Apostles Parish School of Religion

2014-2015 Parent Student Handbook



Welcome to Mary Queen of the Apostles PSR Program. Parents and guardians are the first and foremost religious educators of their children. The purpose of our PSR program is to assist you in the ongoing effort of preparing children for their role as Catholic Christians. It is our desire to help your child grow in their knowledge and relationship with God and to foster Christian values in their lives.

Children learn by example and by seeing the faith lived out in the home. As parents and guardians, you have the awesome responsibility of creating within your home an atmosphere where your children will grow and become active members of their Church community. It is our objective to encourage that example of Catholic family life through an atmosphere filled with the love of God, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Know that we are praying for you and your families.

Guidelines and Procedures

PSR Attendance: Faith formation is a lifelong experience. The lesson plans build upon one another; it is important that your child attends each class. In case of illness, we ask that you phone the PSR office at 216.433.1440 x21 to notify us of your child’s absence. **If your child is a candidate for First Holy Communion or Confirmation and is absent four or more times from class, reception of the sacrament may not occur.**

Mass Attendance: The PSR program is intended to supplement the essential role of the family in the faith development of your child(ren). It is vital in raising your child(ren) in the Catholic faith that you attend Mass weekly and pray together regularly.

Attire: Appropriate clothing is requested. Shorts of reasonable length are acceptable. Inappropriate messages on shirts will not be allowed. When there is a special event in church, please see that your child(ren) dress respectfully. The clothes we choose to wear to church reveals our respect for what is happening there. God deserves our best!

Discipline: It is expected that the students will conduct themselves in a respectful and non-disruptive manner during PSR class. PSR staff deserves respect and cooperation from students at all times. Discipline in class is the responsibility of the catechist. If it becomes necessary to send a student to the office due to unacceptable behavior, the parent/guardian may be called in for a conference. **Removal of the student from the program is a possible solution if the behavior problem persists and cannot be resolved.**

Electronic Devices in Class: Students should not bring any electronic devices to class (i.e.: cell phones, I-pods, Gameboys, etc.). If brought to class, they **must be turned off and put away.** Cell phones are not permitted to be used during class for calls or text messaging. If this does occur, the cell phone or other electronic device will be taken by the catechist and returned to the student at dismissal time.

Destruction of property and inappropriate language will not be tolerated. The parent or guardian will be notified and the student may be removed immediately from the program.

Parking Lot/Classroom Safety: For your child's safety, security has been hired to assist students in the parking lot at Incarnate Word Academy during PSR. Please use caution by following the one-way traffic flow pattern while driving through the parking lots, as children often run to their cars without looking. **For the safety of the children, please drive slowly (10MPH or less).**

Early Dismissal: A **written request from the parent/guardian is to be sent to the office** in the event that your child needs to leave before the end of a class session. For the safety of your child, a parent/guardian must come into the building **before** the child will be released.

Snow Days: When Incarnate Word Academy or Berea City Schools are closed due to severe weather conditions, PSR classes will be cancelled. In the event of poor weather conditions developing through the day, watch Channel 3 News, News Channel 5, Fox 8, listen to the radio, or call the church office to check on PSR cancellation. **Cancellations will be listed under Mary Queen of the Apostles. The decision to cancel classes will typically not be made until 5pm.**

Hallways: The hallways are monitored by adult volunteers for the safety of your child. All visitors will be directed to the PSR office.

Parental Help: Catechists, assistants and substitutes are needed each year. Parents are asked to consider volunteering in the PSR program. Experience is not required. Contact Trish Solon at 216.433.1440 x21 for additional information.

Fingerprinting of Volunteers: In compliance with guidelines from the Diocese of Cleveland, the PSR program requires that all staff and volunteers submit fingerprints for processing with the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. If it is found that any staff or volunteer have a background of criminal activity that would endanger a child, that person would not be permitted to participate in the PSR program.

Mary Queen of the Apostles PSR program follows the proposed policies of the Diocese of Cleveland. Complete copies of these policies are on file in the parish office. These policies prohibit the use, possession and sale of any alcohol, drugs, weapons, or explosive devices on parish grounds. Violations of these policies will warrant immediate notification to the police. It also may warrant immediate suspension and/or exclusion from the PSR program or signing by parents and student of a probation contract that includes all the conditions of the retention in the program.

Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Policy: We are firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the PSR program. For this reason, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, Mary Queen of the Apostles PSR program expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence. This policy re-emphasizes the personal dignity of the individual and fosters positive sexual attitudes and respect for others.

Allegations of sexual harassment are to be reported to the teacher and to the appropriate program director. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The parents of both the offender and the victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation.

If the allegations are substantiated, disciplinary actions will be taken. These will depend on the nature, frequency, and severity of the action, the ages of the offender and victim, the history of similar actions by this individual, and the circumstances in which the harassment occurred.

Sexual violence is handled separately because of its potentially criminal nature. If an incident occurs, the Pastor, Deacon or program personnel are required under state law to report the incident. The Diocesan Legal Office will be contacted immediately in these situations.

All classes are held at Incarnate Word Academy 6620 Pearl Road, Parma Heights
Monday 7:00 - 8:15 PM (September – May)

Important: **Please do not drop your child(ren) off earlier than 6:50 PM as students will NOT be permitted to go to their classroom before then.**