

Parish **S**chool of **R**eligion

Handbook

2011-2012



**St. Clare of Assisi
Roman Catholic
Church**

Parish School of Religion

Philosophy & Purpose

Members of the Catholic Church are continually challenged to live following the example of Christ. One way in which we can do this is to teach as Jesus taught the early Christians, young and old. The Parish School of Religion, in particular, hopes to teach the words of Jesus to our children. By sharing faith, celebrating sacraments, and providing a religious education program, the St. Clare Church Community participates in the continuing faith formation of our children. In this way, we share responsibility for continuing the mission of Jesus.

The ministries of St. Clare Church offer several programs, including the Parish School of Religion (PSR.) The parish staff strives to promote and provide active leadership in this program because it is so vital for the ongoing faith formation of our parish children.

The primary purpose of the St. Clare Parish School of Religion is to provide assistance and support to parents of our parish children attending schools other than those already sponsored by this parish. This parish school hopes to support parents in the area of catechesis, religious instruction, faith formation, prayer, and sacramental celebration. During the rite of Baptism for Children, the celebrant addresses the parents:

“You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so, you are accepting the responsibility of training them 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.”

While the parents have the primary responsibility for the faith formation of their children, our Catechists gracefully volunteer to share their own experience of faith and strive to make Christ visible to their students through this religious education program. We hope that this faith formation will result in young adults who will themselves proclaim the Lord in word and deed.

Parish School of Religion

Rights & Responsibilities

Family Rights

Every family, by participating in the St. Clare Parish School of Religion, can expect these benefits from our program:

- We will provide a respectful environment to protect children from physical, emotional, and spiritual harm.
- Children will be taught authentic Catholic Faith at a developmentally appropriate level.
- Catechists will communicate class content to parents.
- We will not undermine the authority of parents in order to respect their right to be the primary faith educators of their children.
- Catechists will be honest and open to directly answer any parent concerns. If they are unable to satisfy parent questions, the Director of Family Faith Formation, Jane Dotson, will be responsive to your needs.
- Every St. Clare catechist has completed or will be working on apprentice level catechist certification. All catechists will be working on the next level of certification. One of our catechists has a master's degree in a field related to religious education.

Student Responsibilities

Each student is expected to participate in Mass every Sunday with their family.

Each child is expected to attend all of the scheduled PSR classes and events listed on the calendar. If a student must be absent, notify the Parish Office in advance (632-3562). Attendance will be monitored.

Any homework assigned is to be completed on time.

Students are expected to act respectfully toward all those participating in PSR, especially fellow students and Catechists.

Students are to treat the school building, desks and property of St. Clare students and teachers with respect and must not touch items in or on desks, bookshelves or walls.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are to bring their children to Mass every weekend. For PSR families, this DOES NOT include the 10:30 a.m. Mass. Parents are not to bring their children to PSR and attend Mass without them. (If you have failed to get to Mass before PSR, please TAKE YOUR CHILD TO MASS.) Parents are responsible to see that their children are at all PSR classes.

Parish School of Religion

Rights & Responsibilities

Parent Responsibilities (continued)

Homework is sometimes given in PSR. It has the specific purpose of providing parents with the opportunity to share their own faith lives with their children. Parents are strongly encouraged to help their children with homework assignments.

Parents are the primary teachers of faith to their children. It's amazing how children can pick up their parent's habits through simple observation and imitation. Please remember that YOUR example will teach your children what it means to live as a Catholic Christian.

Discipline

While the Catechist will handle ordinary discipline problems, the Director of Family Faith Formation may assist the Catechist. Parents will be contacted to assist with ongoing problems. Parents are encouraged to maintain contact with the Catechist until problems are resolved. The parish reserves the right to require parents to attend class if their child's discipline issues become disruptive to the class. In extreme situations, home schooling may be an option.

Student Pick-Up

Parents are expected to come inside the school to the classroom or a designated area to pick up their children after class. For safety purposes, we will not allow students to exit the building without an adult escort.

If you have a need to take your child from class early, please visit the Hall Monitor on duty to be escorted to the classroom.

Junior high students are not considered adults under our pick-up policy. If this is an inconvenience, waiver forms are available to excuse students from this rule. Please contact Jane Dotson at janeadotson@yahoo.com if you would like your child exempted from this policy.

Snow Days

They are rare, but sometimes we need to cancel PSR due to winter weather. You will receive an automated telephone call to your home phone number to announce a cancelation of PSR. You also may watch KMOV Channel 4 or go to www.kmov.com/weather/school_closings.html and look for "St. Clare of Assisi PSR, O'Fallon."

Parish School of Religion

Emergency Policies

Upon recommendation by the Belleville Diocese Office of Education, we have implemented Crisis Response Plans for our Parish School of Religion. Although instructions are given to each Catechist, they are available to parents upon request. Some helpful notes for parents are included here:

Natural Disaster (Tornado, Earthquake)

In the event of a tornado or earthquake, the Catechists will direct the students to take the appropriate preventative safety measures according to our Crisis Response Plan.

Lockdown (Hostile Intruder)

The school building is normally kept unlocked. However, each classroom door handle is locked during class. In the event of a hostile intruder, we will initiate lockdown procedures to summon the police and prevent any child abductions.

Evacuation (Fire, Bomb Threat)

In the event that we need to evacuate the building, **our designated evacuation area will be the northwest corner of the school parking lot (near the playground)**. Parents will be called as quickly as we are able.

Other Staff

Director of Family Faith Formation
632-3562
304-0757

Jane Dotson
janeadotson@yahoo.com

Hall Monitor
Soup Kitchen Project Coordinator

Missy Schmidtke
Emily Yost

Parish School of Religion

Catechists & Classrooms

Kindergarten A Amy Short Nicole Findley (aide)	Room #3 (Main Level) 628-0026
Kindergarten B Lana Bruno Mary Schottel (aide)	Room #4 (Main Level) 589-3314
Grade 1 Gwen Hites Kim Gibson (aide)	Room #1 (Main Level) 628-1767
Grade 2 Julie Hicks Sarah Klostermann (aide)	Room #7 (Main Level) 632-9115
Grade 3 Mary Vrieswyk Kat Vrieswyk (aide)	Room #5 (Main Level) 624-2418
Grade 4 A Robert Cherry	Room #15 (Lower Level) 628-1619
Grade 4 B Vonda Walker Lynette McAnulty (aide)	Room #15 (Lower Level) 406-7820
Grade 5 Lesley Coleman Sarah Dorsey (aide)	Room #17 (Lower Level) 580-4432
Grade 6 Mat Vaccaro	Room #13 (Top Floor) 816-589-5864
Grade 7 Simone Wheeler	Room #14 (Top Floor) 954-9366
Grade 8 Jim Calandro	Room #13 (Top Floor) 257-8643

Parish School of Religion

Textbooks

The series of textbook used for Grades K-1 and 3-6 is called *Faith First Legacy Edition*, published by RCL Benzinger Inc. It is a solid textual resource approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, complete with lessons on doctrine, worship, morality, prayer, scriptures, and liturgical seasons. In addition, RCL Benzinger has established a website for families to visit. This is recommended for any family reviewing homework and is a great medium to share your faith with your children. The website is www.FaithFirst.com.

As the second grade prepares to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist for the first time, they will use the *First Eucharist* and *First Reconciliation* textbooks in the Sadlier (Publishing) Sacramental Program, also approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The seventh grade textbooks are two modules from *Understanding the Catechism: "Morality" and "Liturgy & Sacraments."* Both are published by RCL Benzinger Inc.

As the eighth grade prepares to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, they will use *The Spirit Sets Us Free* textbook in the Sadlier Sacramental Program, approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and required by the Diocese of Belleville.

In addition, all students will have a comprehensive moral catechesis through the *Family Life* curriculum, as recommended by the Diocese of Belleville. This series, with age-appropriate lessons, is used in other Parish School of Religion programs and Catholic schools throughout the diocese to help children, their parents and catechists build strong Catholic families, share Catholic values, live Christian virtues and promote child safety. Each parent also receives a book for use at home. Supplemental books on human reproduction will be given to parents of fifth- and sixth-grade students for the parents' use at home, at the appropriate time. The website for parents and catechists is www.RCLBFamilyLife.com.

Other Resources

Child Protection Policy of the Belleville Diocese

Sowing the Seeds of Faith – the faith development standards of the Belleville Diocese

Partners in Faith – newsletter for PSR families

St. Clare Parish Bulletin – please check the Faith Formation Page for PSR News

The Eye Opener – our parish newsletter

www.stclarechurch.org – our parish website; click on the PSR or sacraments tab!

Parish School of Religion

Prayers & Facts to Know

Students in each grade should know not only their current requirements, but also all the required knowledge from every preceding grade level. Please make sure to review the facts and prayers of each grade level EVERY YEAR.

Kindergarten

Sign of the Cross
Prayers Before and After Meals
Bedtime Prayers

Grade 1

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory Be

Grade 2

Act of Contrition
Ten Commandments
The Seven Sacraments
Prayers of the Mass

Grade 3

Apostle's Creed
How to Pray the Rosary
Mysteries of the Rosary (Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious, & Luminous)
Hail, Holy Queen

Grade 4

Corporal & Spiritual Works of Mercy
The Beatitudes
Order of the Mass

Grade 5

Nicene Creed
The Liturgical Year
Precepts of the Church

Grade 6

Holy Days of Obligation
Facts about Sacred Scripture

Grade 8

Fruits of the Holy Spirit
Gifts of the Holy Spirit

PSR CALENDAR 2011-12

10:30-11:40 a.m. at St. Clare School

Sept. 11	Open House/meet the teachers	10:30-11 a.m.
	First PSR Class	11-11:40 a.m.
	Parent meeting in cafeteria	11-11:40 a.m.
Sept. 18	PSR Class	10:30-11:40 a.m.
Sept. 25	PSR Class	
	Second grade soup kitchen activity	
Sept. 27	Seventh-grade parents meeting	7 p.m. Fellowship Hall
Oct. 2	PSR Class	
	Eighth grade soup kitchen activity	
Oct. 9	No PSR	Columbus Day Weekend
Oct. 16	PSR Class	
Oct. 17	First Sacraments Parent meeting	7 p.m. in church
Oct. 20	Confirmation parents meeting	7 p.m. in church
Oct. 23	PSR Class	
Oct. 25	Confirmation sponsors meeting	7 p.m. Fellowship Hall
Oct. 30	PSR Class	
Nov. 6	PSR Class	
	First grade soup kitchen activity	
Nov.13	PSR Class (except gr. 2)	
Nov. 13	First Reconciliation luncheon	12-3 p.m. (Gr. 2)
Nov. 20	PSR Class	
Nov. 27	No PSR	Thanksgiving Weekend
Nov. 30	First Reconciliation REAP Retreat	6:30-8 p.m. (Gr. 2)
Dec. 4	PSR Class	
	Kindergarten Christmas collection for charity	
Dec. 10	First Reconciliation in school chapel	10 a.m. (Gr. 2)
Dec. 11	PSR Class	
	Third grade soup kitchen activity	
Dec. 18	PSR Class	
Dec. 25	No PSR	Christmas Break

NOTE: Each grade level will do a charitable project during a class time this year, as noted on the calendar. Most of the activities will be preparing sandwiches or soup for the soup kitchen. The projects, lead by Emily Yost, will include Scripture, a lesson on social justice, discussion and prayer. You will receive information on the activity in advance and will be asked to consider donating to the project in some way. Please do not feel obligated to donate if you cannot do so at the time.

PSR CALENDAR 2011-12

10:30-11:40 a.m. at St. Clare School

Jan. 1	No PSR	Christmas Break
Jan. 8	PSR Class	CPP Training (all)
Jan. 13-15	Luke 18 Retreat	School (Gr. 8)
Jan. 15	No PSR	Martin Luther King Day
Jan. 22	PSR Class	
Jan. 29	PSR Class (except gr. 8)	
	Fourth grade soup kitchen activity	
Jan. 29	Confirmation Prep Mass and Pizza lunch 10:30-2:30 (gr. 8)	
Feb. 5	PSR Class	
Feb. 12	PSR Class	
	Fifth grade soup kitchen activity	
Feb. 19	No PSR	President's Day Weekend
Feb. 22	Ash Wednesday	
Feb. 26	PSR Class	
Feb.28	Knowing and Loving the Eucharist 6:30-8:30 p.m.	
	Grade 2 parents; all adults welcome	
March 4	PSR Class	
March 11	Blessing Cup Retreat	1-4 p.m
March 11	PSR Class (except grade 2)	
March 18	PSR Class	
	Sixth grade soup kitchen activity	
March 18	Confirmation REAP Retreat	1-5 p.m.
March 25	PSR Class /Stations of the Cross	
April 1	PSR Class	
	Seventh grade soup kitchen activity	
April 5	Holy Thursday Mass	7 p.m.
April 6	Good Friday Service	7 p.m.
April 7	Easter Vigil	8 p.m.
April 8	Easter Sunday No PSR Class	
April 14	First Communion Practice	9:30 a.m.
April 15	First Communion Mass	10:30 a.m.
April 15	No PSR Class	
April 22	PSR Class	
April 29	Confirmation Activity Night	6-8 p.m. Fellowship Hall
April 29	Last PSR Class	
Date TBD	Confirmation	