

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES



**PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION  
HANDBOOK**

**2011-2012**

**Our Lady of Lourdes  
Parish School of Religion**

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**Pastor**

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**PROGRAM OF STUDIES**

**Grades 1-8**

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish School of Religion uses the *Faith and Life* religion series published by Ignatius Press . This comprehensive Catholic program is found to be in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and meets the requirements for the Diocesan Graded Course of Study as set forth by the Diocese of Columbus.

**CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS**

The Diocese of Columbus requires that all parish volunteers (age 18 or older) having direct contact with children, including catechists, classroom aides, office volunteers, childcare providers, scout leaders, and sacristans must take a Protecting God's Children Class and have a background check.

**PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN**

Volunteers must register for and complete a Protecting God's Children Class within six weeks of the beginning of service to the parish. Registration is online only at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). Please inquire at the office for more information and scheduled dates.

**BACKGROUND CHECK**

A criminal background check will be conducted at the beginning of service to the parish or for anyone currently serving the parish who has not received a criminal background check.

If a person begins employment or volunteers at another parish in the Diocese of Columbus, a new background check is not necessary as long as the time between the previous and new positions is less than ten months, and the original record is sent to the new parish by the prior parish. It is up to the volunteer to request that a copy be sent, and it must be sent directly from the previous parish.

Anyone who has had a criminal background check completed in the state of Ohio for an institution not connected to the Diocese within the past ten months, need not repeat the process. They will need to contact the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI&I) to have a copy of their background check sent to us.

All parishes are responsible for tracking and maintaining accurate records for employees and volunteers. All reports will be kept confidential.

**PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

**Nondiscrimination Policy**

Our Lady of Lourdes PSR program accepts students without regard to sex, race, or national origin.

**Program Registration**

Registration is completed through the parish office. Any student wishing to register must complete a registration form .

**Transfer Students**

Transfer students must submit a transfer form completed by the student's previous PSR program director or principal. If registering for a sacramental year, a copy of the student's Baptismal Certificate must be filed in the parish office.

## Grade 7 Enrollment

Any student who has not completed grade 6 in a religious education program, will be required to take an entrance exam before being placed in grade 7. Those students who cannot meet the Diocesan benchmarks for grade 6, will be given extra assignments to complete over the course of the year in order to meet these requirements. Failure to complete this work will result in the student repeating grade 7 the following year.

## Sacramental Preparation

Any child wishing to celebrate First Reconciliation, First Communion, and/or Confirmation **must** complete two years of PSR prior to the reception of the sacrament. First Reconciliation and First Communion are received in grade 2. Confirmation is received in grade 8. Any child in grades 2—8 who is new to the parish, and has not received any of the sacraments, will be enrolled in the RCIC program.

## Special Needs

At Our Lady of Lourdes we strive to offer appropriate catechesis for all children regardless of their abilities or needs. If your child has special needs, please call the office or indicate this on your registration form.

## Parental Involvement

The National Catechetical Directory states that parents are the primary catechists of their children, catechizing informally, but powerfully, by example and instruction. Their active involvement in the parish, their readiness to seek opportunities to serve others, and their practice of frequent and spontaneous prayer, all make meaningful their profession of belief. All parents are expected to:

- Be true to the promises they made at their child's baptism, making a commitment to nurture the religious dimension of their child's life.
- Attend Mass regularly on Sundays and Holy Days with their children from the early years on. We encourage them to do this as a family.
- Discuss with their children the lessons learned in class, and assist them with any work that is brought home.
- Communicate any questions or concerns to the catechist or director.

**All students are expected to attend Mass each weekend and on Holy Days of Obligation.** If you are unable to attend Mass here at Our Lady of Lourdes, please consult [masstimes.org](http://masstimes.org) to find a Mass at another parish.

We welcome and encourage all parents to be involved in the formal religious education of their children. Assistance is needed in all areas of PSR. Parents who wish to help should contact the parish office.

**Parents are always welcome to make arrangements for classroom visits.**

## PSR POLICIES

### Attendance

All students are expected to attend classes weekly. In accordance with the policies of the Diocese of Columbus, students are to attend approximately 40 hours of class time each year. **Classes may be missed only for grave reason.**

- Children are to arrive promptly and to be prepared for class.
- If a student is absent, a parent/guardian must contact the child's catechist with the date and reason for the absence.
- Sporting events, practices, and recreational activities are not acceptable reasons to miss class.
- If a student is absent, missing work, as well as any additional assignments, must be completed with the guidance of a parent/guardian and returned to the PSR catechist as soon as possible.
- If a student misses more than 3 classes a year, a notice will be mailed home.
- Any student grades 1, 2, 7 or 8 who misses more than 4 classes in any given year, may be subject to an interview with Fr. David and may be asked to repeat the grade the following year.
- Any student grades 3—6 who misses more than 4 classes in any given year may be asked to complete the school year in the Home School Program.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten students may contact the catechist to arrange for make-up work to be sent home the following Sunday.

## Behavior

Cooperation and courteous behavior is expected at all times.

- Minor discipline problems will be handled by the catechist or aide.
- Serious or consistent discipline problems will be referred to the Director of Religious Education. After a discussion about appropriate behavior, the student will return to the classroom.
- If a student is referred to the director a second time, parents will be consulted to discuss the student's behavior, and the student will return to the classroom.
- The third time a student is referred to the director, the student will not be permitted to return to the classroom without a parental escort.

## Cell Phones / Electronic Equipment

All cell phones, Ipods and other electronic equipment must be turned off during class time and other specified activities. Any device used during these times will be taken and returned to the student after class is dismissed.

## Dismissal

To insure the safety of all students, **all parents of students in grades 1—6 must come into the building to pick up their child.**

- Parents with students in grades Pre-K—2 will be given a name card. **This card will be needed to pick up your child.** Children will not be released to an unfamiliar person without this card.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten students will be dismissed in the gym, unless parents are instructed otherwise.
- Grades 1—4 will be dismissed from the classroom.

## PSR Mass

- No student will be permitted to leave the church once Mass has begun. Parents may pick students up only after the Recessional.
- All students will remain in their pews after Mass. Students will not be permitted to leave until a parent **comes to the pew to get them.**

## Early Dismissal

Any requests for an early dismissal need to be discussed with the Director of Religious Education. Students attending less than half a class will be marked absent. If extra curricular activities conflict with PSR attendance, students will be required to participate in the Home School Program. (Not available for grades 1, 2, 7, and 8)

## Cancellation

**Wednesday**—If Marysville Schools are closed because of weather, PSR is cancelled. **This does not apply to delay / cancellation because of fog.**

**Sunday**— A Level 3 Snow Emergency or lack of teachers will cancel class.

## Fees

### PSR Registration

1 child	\$ 50.00
2 children	\$ 80.00
3 or more children	\$100.00

### Sacramental Fee

Grades 2 & 8	\$ 20.00
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**Book Replacement** \$ 15.00

## Financial Difficulty

We wish all families of Our Lady of Lourdes who have children of PSR age to register their children for classes. If you have financial difficulties, alternative arrangements can be made. Please contact Fr. David or Andrea Hawley at the parish office.

## Food

Because of the growing number of serious food allergies, there will be **NO FOOD** permitted in the classrooms. Snacks will be permitted in the gym for Christmas parties and on the last day of classes only. Students may bring a water bottle to class.

## Medication/First Aid Treatment

All parents are required to complete an Emergency Medical Form as part of the registration process.

Prudent judgment will be used to determine the proper course of action in the event of an emergency, and every effort will be made to reach the student's emergency contact. Other than administering basic first aid (i.e. application of a Band-aid), further action or the dispensing of medication is prohibited by law. Students are prohibited from self-medicating. Special circumstances should be discussed with the director.

## Home School Program

A home school option is available for parents wishing to conduct their child's regular religious education classes at home. This program **is not available** to those preparing for the sacraments—grades 1, 2, 7 and 8. The Diocesan Graded Course of Study is to be implemented, and regular times must be set aside each week for classes in your home.

The Home School Program is offered in four sessions. Those wishing to participate must attend an entire session. Required work must be completed and submitted on a weekly basis. Students failing to submit assignments in a timely fashion will not be eligible to enroll in the following session. All work must be completed in order for students to receive credit for the completion of the 2011-2012 PSR year.

For more information regarding our Home School Program, please contact the Director of Religious Education.

## Sacramental Parent Meetings

Parents of those students preparing to receive the sacraments will be required to attend **all** scheduled sacramental preparation meetings. These meetings are necessary to discuss important dates, notify parents of deadlines, impart pertinent information, and to answer any questions that may arise. Dates for the sacramental preparation meetings are published on the PSR calendar and are available on the parish website.

## HARASSMENT POLICY 5140.05

1. Harassment can take many forms. Harassment can occur at any parish activity, and or can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, gymnasiums, or even at programs sponsored by the parish at other locations. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disability or other protected characteristics.
2. It is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus to maintain a spiritually enriching environment in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. No participant, volunteer adult leader, or parish staff member— male or female— should be subject to unlawful harassment in any form, especially to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.
3. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:
  - Offensive sexual flirtations, advances, propositions;
  - Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual or gender-based nature;
  - Explicit or degrading sexual or gender-based comments about another individual or his or her appearance;
  - The display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures or objects;
  - Any offensive or physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
  - Graffiti of a sexual nature;
  - Fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
  - Spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.

Sexual harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature. It also includes harassment that is based on gender. Gender-based harassment, which is also prohibited, is conduct that would not occur except for the sex of the person involved. An example would be referring to a woman as a female body part, or a demeaning sex based term, or treating people differently because of their gender. The same prohibitions apply with regard to inflammatory or offensive comments or behaviors which are based upon race,

## CODE OF CONDUCT

color, age, religion, disability, or national origin. In short, working relationships between employees and volunteers must be based on mutual respect.

Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take, any personal or other action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to welcome sexual activity will have any effect on the individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, development, program evaluation, participation in parish programs or activities, or any other condition of employment or achievement.

A sexually hostile environment can be created by a parish employee, volunteer, youth participant, or visitor to the parish activity.

Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature, (For Example, a coach hugging a student after an accomplishment, a youth minister consoling an adolescent with an injury or physical conduct during athletic events would not be considered sexual conduct.) However, peer-based sexual harassment is a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.

Any person who believes that he/she is subject to unlawful harassment or intimidation must contact the (a) program administrator, (b) pastor, or (c) diocesan director of religious education. A complaint must be filed in writing. In the event that an individual alleges harassment by a program administrator or a pastor, the individual may file the complaint with the diocesan director of religious education. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.

Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action against any program administrator, volunteer, or staff engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account the individuals and circumstances. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, disciplinary measures up to and including termination of services.

No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated. The Diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.

- Volunteers work collaboratively with the pastor and/or other supervisors and associates in ministry.
- Volunteers faithfully represent and practice the teachings of the Catholic Church with integrity in word and action.
- Volunteers are competent and receive education and training commensurate with their role(s) and responsibilities.
- Volunteers respect the diversity of spiritualities in the faith community and will not make their own personal form of spirituality normative.
- Volunteers recognize the dignity of each person and refrain from behaviors or words that are disrespectful of anyone or any group.
- Volunteers serve all people without regard to gender, creed, national origin, marital status, socioeconomic status, or political beliefs.
- Volunteers act to ensure all persons have access to the resources, services and opportunities they require with particular regard for persons with special needs or disabilities.
- Volunteers are accountable to the pastor or other duly appointed representative.
- Volunteers are called to serve the faith community, carrying out their ministry conscientiously, zealously, and diligently.
- Volunteers exercise responsible stewardship of resources while holding themselves to the highest standards of integrity regarding fiscal matters placed in their trust.
- Volunteers respect confidentiality.
- Volunteers adhere to civil and ecclesial law, policy and procedure concerning the reporting of neglect, suspected abuse or when physical harm could come to the person or to a third party.
- Volunteers support the rights and roles of parents while ministering to the needs and concerns of minors.
- Volunteers are aware they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial position. Therefore, they will sustain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power. Physical, sexual, or romantic relationships between an adult volunteer and a minor are unethical and are prohibited.
- Volunteers model healthy and positive behaviors with minors. Procuring, providing, using alcohol and/or controlled substances for or with minors is unethical and is prohibited.
- Volunteers are aware of the signs of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and neglect.
- Volunteers are aware of their limitations with respect to paraprofessional counseling and make appropriate referrals.
- Volunteers are aware of and comply with all applicable parish, organizational and/or diocesan policies with special attention to sexual misconduct, safety, transportation, parental permission, and medical emergency policies.