



2026 – 2027

St. Agatha

PSR

Handbook

## **Welcome to St. Agatha Parish School of Religion!**

This handbook is designated to provide you and your family with a brief overview of:

- St. Agatha Parish School of Religion Program
- General procedures used to keep weekly catechetical classes running smoothly and safely, while providing sound Catholic Religious Education.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Parents are the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith. St. Agatha Religious Education classes are designed to support families in this mission. Our Parish School of Religion (PSR) is taught by volunteer teachers known as catechists, and aides. They utilize the Diocese of Columbus' six tasks of catechesis in their classrooms. These six tasks are: to promote knowledge of the faith, promote the meaning of the liturgy and sacraments, promote moral formation in Jesus Christ, teach children how to pray, prepare children to participate in the life and mission of the church, and promote a missionary spirit.

### **MASS ATTENDANCE**

One of the most important things parents can do for their children is take them to Mass on a regular basis. By offering the PSR classes between our two Sunday Masses, families should be able to plan their Sunday mornings as a time set aside to worship and learn more about our Catholic faith. Middle school students will actively participate in Sunday liturgies throughout the year. PSR classes last for 8 years, but your child's affiliation with the Catholic church lasts forever. Please be the example your children need to form a lifelong church going habit.

### **CLASS TIMES**

St. Agatha Parish School of Religion (PSR) classes meet each Sunday throughout the academic year from 9:30a.m. to 10:45a.m.

### **REGISTRATION**

Registration is required for students wishing to attend PSR classes at St. Agatha Church. All required forms can be found on the Parish Website.

Tuition Fees: Each student fee is \$245.00 for the school year; \$210 if registered before July 17 at 2pm. Catechist's children are tuition exempt and only need to pay for their child's textbook/s. Fees pay for:

1. Textbook for each student
2. Teacher manual for each catechist
3. Teacher resource books, journals, videos, etc.
4. ALL supplies including paper, pencils, arts & crafts materials, etc.
5. Teacher training, continuing education
6. Maintenance /cleaning following PSR sessions.

## **PRE-SCHOOL, KINDERGARTEN, FIRST (1) GRADE, SECOND GRADE (2) - CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a Montessori-based method of spiritual formation for children. Within a specifically prepared environment space for children called an atrium, this approach invites both children and adults to encounter Christ in Scripture and liturgy. For the 2026-27 school year, our 4 year old PSR preschool program will be utilizing the CGS method. A child must be 4 years old by September 30<sup>th</sup> and potty trained to attend.

*\*Kindergarten has the option of continuing with a second year of CGS Level 1 or joining a Traditional PSR Class that follows the "Spirit of Truth" series noted below.*

*\*First (1) and Second (2) grade have the option of being in CGS Level 2 or joining a Traditional PSR Class that follows the "Spirit of Truth" series noted below.*

*\*Second graders attending the CGS atrium will be prepared for the sacraments.*

## **KINDERGARTEN, ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Each grade level curriculum is comprised of age-appropriate, meaningful, formal and experimental learning opportunities. Formal catechetical teaching imparts knowledge of our faith tradition. Celebrating liturgies and sacraments together as well as the use of various other prayer forms, music, communal sharing and witness and service opportunities help to form and deepen our children's relationship to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Those involved in our program are committed to continually honor, prepare for, initiate and strengthen a young person's response to God's unconditional love. In saying "Yes" to God's call our students will become true disciples in the work of building God's Kingdom. The Spirit of Truth Series by Sophia Press is taught in grades K-7. Decision Point by Dynamic Catholic is taught in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade for Confirmation preparation.

## **ARRIVAL/ DISMISSAL**

All students must enter and exit from the **Andover Road parking lot**. Families will be notified prior to the first class which of the 3 doors to use. After arrival, all doors will be locked during the course of our classes for protection of our students and faculty. If a student needs to be picked up early from class, the parent must come to the Parish Hall doors leading into the school to check him/her out.

Parents of students in preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade must bring their children to the classroom, and pick them up there as well.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance at PSR class is expected. Each lesson, just as each year, builds upon the previous one. When a student is absent from class, he/she misses out on information, activities and discussions. Be aware that missing 3 PSR classes is equivalent to missing 22 days of a regular school year. If a student is absent for any scheduled class a parent or guardian must contact the teacher and advise them of the reason.

## **DISCIPLINE / DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Disrespect toward teachers, aides, other students, property or any inappropriate behavior or language will not be tolerated. Following classroom rules allows everyone to have an enjoyable PSR experience.

Breaking any one of them will result in:

1. A verbal warning
2. Dismissal from the classroom

If needed, a call will be made to the parent/legal guardian, who will then be requested to pick up the child immediately. If incidents persist, parents will be required to attend class with their student.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES / CELL PHONES**

Students bringing a cell phone or other electronic equipment with them to class must turn off the device and put it away until class is over. If a student is using one of these devices during class time or other specified activities, that item will be taken and returned to the student only after class is dismissed. Some classes may have all the students place their phones in a communal bin for the duration of class.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**

1. Behave in a Christian manner at all times by showing respect and being cooperative with adults and other students.
2. Actively participate in classroom activities and discussions.
3. Attend class regularly and complete any assignments or homework.
4. Follow directions at all times and obey classroom rules.
5. Avoid language that is rude, offensive or inappropriate.
6. Do not possess or be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or tobacco of any kind
7. Do not leave the building or premises without the permission of an authorized adult

## **EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS**

1. Ensure that your children attend classes regularly and on time.
2. Ensure that your children attend Mass on a regular basis.
3. Communicate any special needs or circumstances that may affect your child within the classroom.
4. Be an active part of your children's learning and be involved in the classroom at the Catechist's request.
5. Download the St. Agatha Parish App (MyParish App)

## **EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHERS**

1. Participate in the Diocesan Protecting God's Children's Program
2. Must be Fingerprinted
3. Weekly attendance in classroom with a completed lesson plan
4. Attend bi-monthly teacher meetings

## **EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS**

1. Participate in the Diocesan Protecting God's Children's Program (must pre-register)
2. Must be fingerprinted at Fast Finger Prints and have results go to **THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS**

## **PREPAREDNESS AND HOMEWORK**

All students are expected to come to class with their books and completed assignments. If homework is assigned, it is in order to review and reinforce the material presented during the brief formal class time.

## **SACRAMENTAL PARENT MEETINGS**

Parents of children are required to attend sacramental parent meetings when scheduled. The dates of these parent meetings can be found in the calendar. First Eucharist and Reconciliation are celebrated in the 2nd grade. Confirmation is celebrated in 8th grade.

## **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

First Communion Preparation takes place in the 2nd grade, and Confirmation Preparation takes place in the 8th grade. A child has to be enrolled and participating in a PSR Program for a minimum of the two (2) years preceding reception of a sacrament. For instance, in order for your child to receive his or her First Holy Communion at the normal time at the end of the 2nd grade, the child must have been in both the 1st and 2nd grade PSR classes. Likewise, in order for your child to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the normal time toward the end of the 8th grade, your son or daughter must have been in both the 7th and 8th grade PSR classes.

## **SAINT AGATHA APP**

Please download the St. Agatha App (MyParish App). This will be used for emergency updates, such as cancelation of classes due to weather etc...

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

At St. Agatha we strive to offer appropriate catechesis for all children and youth regardless of their abilities or needs. The U.S. Catholic Bishops stated in 1995, "By reason of their Baptism, all Catholics are equal in dignity in the sight of God and have the same divine calling." We work with families to best place their special needs child. Please indicate this on your student's registration.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

There may be opportunities throughout the year for parents to volunteer, such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade retreat, plays, or various classroom activities. All volunteers must complete the Diocesan program of "Protecting God's Children" and have a background check/be fingerprinted at **Fast Finger Prints** with results going to **THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS**. St. Agatha will offer this class on **August 20, 2026**. Watch the bulletin and social media for further details. Preregistration for this class is required.