

St. John the Baptist Parish

Over 150 Years of Catholic Education



Parish School of Religion

2023-2024

Location: St. John the Baptist Catholic School

Address: 519 Hazel Street Red Bud, Illinois 62278



Dear Family,

Welcome to the Catholic Faith Formation ministry at St John the Baptist Parish. Jesus said “*Let the little children come to me...*” (*Matthew 19:14*) Our goal is to have your children come to know, love, and live the rich heritage of the faith we are proud to profess in Christ Jesus.

May God guide all of our families, volunteers and staff. We are looking forward to a great year of prayer, learning and celebration!



Your Parish School of Religion Staff

Reverend Msgr. Dennis Schaefer
Pastor of St. John the Baptist

David Hollinshead
Director of Faith Formation

Robin Hentis
Parish School of Religion Coordinator

St. John the Baptist Parish Office
Address: 515 Locust St. Red Bud, Illinois 62278

Program Philosophy

The Religious Education Program of St. John the Baptist exists for the purpose of supporting and assisting families in the faith formation of their children. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is divided into four pillars:




- **The Creed:** A summary of the faith and Church's baptismal promises. This is the faith handed down from Christ to the Apostles and to the entire Church.
- **Sacraments:** The seven Sacraments are outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace. Active participation in the sacramental life of the Church is important, such as attending Mass prayerfully and faithfully.
- **The Moral Life:** It provides boundaries that define the Catholic identity and allow for proper love of God and neighbor.
- **Prayer:** Prayer unites a person with God and should be encouraged and put into practice from early childhood.

Enrollment Policies

- Registration for new students (grades one through eight) is in the fall before classes begin. Currently registered families are given the opportunity to pre-register each spring before classes dismiss for summer. A new registration form should be completed each year. Tuition must accompany the registration form.
- A financial concern should not prevent you from registering your child. Tuition may be made in installments.
- Tuition covers the cost of textbook(s), catechetical workshops, and stipends of the PSR.

- New students will need to submit a copy of their baptismal certificate if baptized outside of the SJB Parish.
- The families involved in the PSR program must be registered in a parish.

Textbooks

- Grades 1-7 use the *Word of Life* textbook series by Augustine Institute and Ignatius Press. Grade 8 uses the *Chosen, Your Journey to Confirmation* textbook series by Ascension Press. Most classes will need to bring a Bible, preferably The New American Bible, to use in their faith formation. 
- Students are responsible for maintaining their textbooks in good order. Lost textbooks can be replaced/re-ordered at current cost and shipping.
- Since faith formation is presented in a development sequence, children may not arbitrarily skip grade levels. If a child registers with no previous faith formation or has had previous faith formation but discontinued, they will be placed at a grade level appropriate to their faith knowledge. This matter will be taken into consideration or advised with the parish priest and faith formation coordinator.

Sacraments

- The first sacrament of initiation is **Baptism**. In order to receive the Sacrament of first Communion, Baptism and first reconciliation have to be completed.
- In our parish, the sacraments of **First Reconciliation** and **First Communion** are celebrated in the 2nd Grade.

The sacrament of First Reconciliation is celebrated prior to the sacrament of First Communion. First Communion is usually celebrated the first Sunday following Easter. The 2nd grade student must have completed the 1st grade faith formation curriculum before preparing for the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion in the 2nd Grade.

▪ **The Sacrament of Confirmation**

- ❖ Confirmation is celebrated in the spring of the 8th grade year.
- ❖ Although classroom preparation for this sacrament begins in the 7th grade, preparation for this sacrament actually begins early in the child's faith formation. The ongoing faith formation of the child is necessary and should be consistent following the sacrament of first communion. Therefore, grades 3-7 are prerequisites to receiving the sacrament of Confirmation.
- ❖ The eighth-grade class is encouraged to attend the triduum Masses. They will attend a Confirmation retreat prior to being confirmed.
- ❖ The bishop asks that the student prepare a typed letter to him discussing their request to be confirmed.
- ❖ The confirmand participates in a family service project and a family worship project.
- ❖ The student needs to choose a Saint name and be prepared to discuss the life of the chosen Saint.
- ❖ The student should participate fully and positively in the classroom instruction and attend a weekend Mass regularly plus all Holy Days.
- ❖ The student is to choose a sponsor that is at least 16 years of age. He or she must be a confirmed Catholic and be living according to the Catholic faith. It is the



responsibility of the sponsor to give assurance of his or her qualifications. Documentation will be given to the sponsor for his or her priest to complete to verify the sponsor's qualifications.

Faith and Family

- Parents/Guardians, and at times sponsors, need to share in the preparation of students for sacraments. This includes attending preparation meetings, attending sacramental practices, and participating in prayer, faith sharing and discussion dialogues with the student.



Attendance

Each child is expected to attend the scheduled classes listed on the PSR calendar. Parents/Guardians must notify the mentor or PSR coordinator prior to the class when a child will be absent. The PSR voice mailbox is call 282-3215, ext. 15. This mailbox is only monitored the evening of the class, so it is best to discuss absences for known events with the mentor well in advance when possible.

- When a child misses a class, the parent/guardian should supervise the completion of the missed lesson as designated by the mentor. Missed lessons can be completed on line or written and brought to the next class.
- While it is recognized students may need to be absent because of a family event, school event, or sporting event, we ask these occurrences be limited. Please make every effort to give your child's faith formation the priority it deserves. An absent for any of the above still

requires the work be accomplished as described in the preceding bullet point.

- Students having frequent absences and missed assignments may be required to repeat their current faith formation class the following year.
- Mentors will work with families to cover missed subjects when students are absent for illness, death in the family and family emergencies.

Drop off and Pick up

- School doors will be open between 6:30 and 6:45 p.m.
- After the doors are locked at 6:45 p.m., students must use the door buzzer to be allowed entry.
- Students must not be dropped off prior to 6:30 p.m. as the school doors will be locked.
- Pickup time will be between 8:00 p.m. and 8:10 p.m.

Program Policies

- All adults (18 and older) working with children and youth in our PSR program must meet diocesan requirements for the Child Protection Policy. Volunteers and staff are mandated by the Diocese of Belleville to attend initial Child protection training, consent to a criminal background check and fingerprinting and attend Child Protection Refresher course annually.
- The diocese of Belleville also requires that each parish provide age-appropriate abuse prevention education programs for children and youth attending our PSR School. Safe and Sacred program is utilized and offered



during one class session yearly. Parents/Guardians reserve the right to have their children not participate with written notice.

- The PSR program is mandated by the Diocese to offer curriculum in education on human sexuality. The following themes reflect the insights of the National Directory of Catechists and other relevant documents of our Catholic Church:
 - ✓ God's gift of family – Students will learn to respect the family, its sacramental foundations, and its mission of teaching and transmitting values.
 - ✓ God's gift of Self – Students will begin to understand their own physical, emotional, and spiritual development, as well as that of others.
 - ✓ God's gift of Love – Students will begin to appreciate the sacredness of life and their own potential for love, service, and selflessness.
 - ✓ God's gift of Community – Young people will learn about the need to relate to others outside the family with compassion and justice and acquire the necessary skills to take their responsible place in society.

Altar Servers

Any Student who is a member of SJB parish and is in the fifth through eighth grade is encouraged to participate in Saturday or Sunday Mass as an altar server. This is a way that the young members of our parish can participate in the Liturgy. Training will be provided prior to this duty.



Children's Choir

Students in grades two through eight in the PSR program may participate in the Children's Choir which sings on the designated third Sunday.

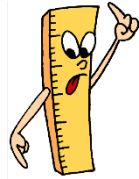
Behavioral Expectations

Our parish property belongs to all of us. We are responsible for good stewardship. A student who purposely damages SJB School or a student's property is expected to pay the cost of repair or replacement of the damaged property.

Students are expected to behave in a respectful and considerate manner towards mentors, aides and fellow students at ALL times.

Discipline Policy

Rude behavior, rowdiness, or foul language will not be tolerated. Students are always expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and proper manner when in the school and in the Church building.



Occasionally there may be situations where disciplinary actions must be taken. These situations include but are not limited to:

- Disruptive or inappropriate behavior in class.
- Unforeseen personality conflicts with the mentor or another student.

Steps to resolve conflict:

- First, the mentor discusses the situation and possible solutions with the student(s), and the PSR coordinator/s if needed.
- Second, if the problem persists, the mentor or the PSR coordinator/s will contact the parents/guardians.

- Third, if the problem continues, the PSR coordinator/s will meet with the parents/guardians and the student to discuss other means for the student to receive faith formation.
- Finally, the student may be suspended for a length of time to be determined by the PSR coordinator/s.

Beverages & Snacks

- Students may not bring candy, soda, or food to class.
- Students will be allowed a water bottle.

Cell Phone Policy

The use of cell phones during class time is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized use of phones during class time will result in confiscation of the phone and parents/guardians will be notified to pick them up after dismissal.

Off Site Management

In parish programs, community service and other off-site activities are essential teaching moments to illustrate the importance of applying the Gospel message in our daily lives.



- Retreats for First Communion and Confirmation will be announced when dates are set.
- There may be opportunities for some students/classes to take part in field trips. A permission form will be sent home with the student should he/she attend a field trip or event outside of the SJB parish grounds.

Crisis Management

- No student will be dismissed from school unless a parent/guardian or the responsible adult as designated by the parent/guardian comes for the child.
- No child will be allowed to leave with another person, even a relative or babysitter, unless the parent/guardian gives written permission to that effect or that particular person is listed on the emergency form in the office.
- The PSR program will follow the Crisis management Plan of SJB School in the event of disasters such as fires, tornadoes or earthquakes.
- If a parent/guardian is not able to reach the school, their child will be cared for on the school/parish grounds until a parent/guardian arrives. The staff will be in communication with local emergency services

Emergency Closing

- If inclement weather closes the area schools, the PSR classes will also be canceled.
- If the weather becomes dangerous after the close of area schools, we will make every attempt to contact the parent/guardian at home, by phone, text or email no later than 6 pm to verify cancellation of class.
- Parents/Guardians should always use their own discretion as to bringing their child to class when the weather is bad. Weather may be worse in some areas than in others surrounding the Red Bud area.
- Closings and any other notices will be communicated through Flocknote texts.



