



# SAINT MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

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## Parish School of Religion

2020 - 2021

25 August 2020

Dear parish families,

I hope this message finds your family well. I pray that by the grace of your daily prayer lives, you all remain at peace in the Lord even with the pandemic, the beginning of another different academic year for your children, and the employment – childcare challenges you may be facing. As you know, I choose to delay the start of our PSR program until mid-September to allow us extra time to watch the area public school district's reopening plans and to hear guidance from the Diocese of Columbus before making any plans for the religious education programs for our young people.

### 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

For the coming spiritual year, we're offering two ways forward for our PSR program to assist and support parents in the religious education of their children. We're also transitioning to a new religious education series by Sophia Institute called "Spirit of Truth" that has a teacher & parent portal and a student portal to access the lesson plans for each session and the reinforcement activities via the student app/website, respectively. There are strengths and weaknesses to each option below, but we wanted to offer several options during the pandemic and allow parents to decide which is best for their family at this time.

**Plan A: Religious education sessions for children facilitated by parents in the home and virtually on Sunday by PSR teachers, on alternating weeks.** Google Classroom will be the "home base" of sorts where parents, teachers, and children can communicate week to week. From the PSR Classroom page, teachers will share a video link for the children to join their virtual class just about **every other Sunday from 10.10 am – 10.50 am**. Student's education in the faith will be done via the virtual lesson with teacher and their peers and thru a student activity portal with the *Spirit of Truth* series. Within a few days after the virtual PSR lesson, teachers will post on their Classroom page the next lesson for parents to facilitate with their children over the next week and a half before the next virtual PSR lesson. So, in this model, parents and teachers will alternate facilitating lessons moving thru the course of study.

**Plan B: Religious education in the home, facilitated by parents, with educational materials provided by the parish.** We will provide a suggested lesson guide for parents to facilitate lessons this year with their child via access to the parent and child portals for *Spirit of Truth*. The parents will utilize the teacher portal to access lesson plans and children will have access to the activities to reinforce each lesson all thru the digital *Spirit of Truth* series. I am available to guide and support families as needed with this model.

*The Lord has chosen her, His loved one from the beginning. He has taken her to live with Him.*

Regardless of which option you select for your children, emails will be forthcoming from me with more information based upon the plan you've selected via the **online registration form**. I ask your patience with the teachers and myself as we navigate this new way of offering religious education and all that it entails. Our teachers are all volunteer and our program doesn't have the resources and training offerings schools do, but we all have the desire to make the best of this situation before us to

assist you in handing on the catholic faith to your children of St. Mary of the Assumption. There will also be some initial setup time involved for Google Classroom and the Spirit of Truth digital access for parents. Thank you for your patience and support as we all grow and learn to aid your children.

### **PSR Calendar for 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

#### **PSR Virtual Sundays**

Sept: 13 and 27  
Oct: 11 and 25  
Nov: 8 and 22  
Dec: 6 and 20  
Jan: 10 and 24  
Feb: 7 and 21  
Mar: 7 and 21  
Apr: 11 and 18  
May: 2 and 16

#### **PSR Parent-Facilitated Lessons**

Sept: 20  
Oct: 4 and 18  
Nov: 1, 15 and 29  
Dec: 13  
Jan: 17 and 31  
Feb: 14 and 28  
Mar: 14 and 28  
Apr: 25  
May: 9

#### **High School PSR - Update**

I'm happy to announce Sheri Sheridan who had been teaching our high school section of PSR had a baby girl – Zeda – earlier this Summer. Congratulations Mike and Sheri! Sheri will be stepping away from regular teaching in our PSR in this season of her family life. I'm happy to welcome Linda Sheridan, who just happens to be Sheri's mother-in-law, to teach our high school students this year. Although there haven't been as many fully Initiated Catholic's in our high school section of PSR as we'd like to see, we remain convinced in our desire to offer this support to parents and the young people of our parish so they can discover for themselves as adults the adventure, freedom and beauty of the Catholic life and be supported in a group of their peers to live the Christian life in a world that moves further and further from a Christian worldview. Mrs. Sheridan will initially begin gathering virtually with our high school group via the High School Google Classroom page on Sunday, 13 September from 10.10-10.50 am; she and the students will chart a course together for their gatherings from there.

Thank you for trusting us to assist you in raising your children in the practice of the faith. Let us continue to pray for our parish families and look for the Lord who comes to meet us in all things.

In Jesus thru Mary,

Brian McCauley