St. Brigid Parish

School of Religion
Education Handbook

312 Fairgrounds Road
Xenia, OH 45385

(937) 372-3222

PSR Faculty and Staff

Pastor
Rev. Andrew Cordonnier

Coordinator
Janell Klippel

Office Assistants

Classroom Aides
Olivia Bartlett, Victoria Bartlett, Ashley Galpin, Megan Lewis

Kindergarten
Stephanie Monnin
Angela Peterson

First Grade
Angela Hinkle
Heather Mangan

Second Grade
Maggie Wagner
Beth Brown

Third Grade
Lisa Galpin

Fourth Grade
Nicole Murphy

Fifth Grade
Marian Grammer
Pat Keefe

Sixth Grade
Sue Jenkins
Kathy Prinz

Junior High
Mary Williams

Religious Education Policies

The Department of Educational Services, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, approves the policies within this document.

Catechist

Church Status

Teachers of religion, by nature of their designation, are to be people who practice their faith and are in full communion with the Catholic Church.

Catechist Certification

Teachers of religion, whether full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, in parish religious education programs, Catholic elementary schools or the RCIA, are to comply with the "Process of Becoming Certified as a Catechist."

Child Protection

Recognizing and Reporting Abuse

All persons who have regular, significant relationships with children must comply with the policies, procedures, and recommendations of the archdiocese as found in the *Archdiocesan Decree on Child Protection*.

Curriculum

Guidelines

All catechetical efforts in the archdiocese must comply with the archdiocesan curriculum guidelines.

Religion Textbooks/Program Series

All textbooks and audiovisual program series used in children's religious education programs are chosen from the *Preferred Religion Textbook/Program* list.

Preschool/Kindergarten: *I Am Special, Our Sunday Visitor*
First – Sixth Grade: *Christ Our Life*, Loyola Press

Respect Life Programs

All catechetical teaching incorporates a respect life component that includes the Catholic perspective on sexuality called Theology of the Body.

Christian Service

All catechetical efforts should encourage and provide various opportunities for children and youth to serve others.

St. Brigid PSR has supported this effort in the past. Our service has included collection of food for the FISH pantry, and toiletry donations to the Women's Recovery Center.

Participation in Religious Education Programs

Persons with disabilities

People with disabilities are provided opportunities to participate in the parish religious education program to the fullest extent appropriate.

Time Allotments

Parish Religious Education Programs

St. Brigid meets the required time allotment of 30 hours per year.

Family Involvement

Parent/Guardian

All parish and school religious education programs should provide opportunities for parents/guardians to become acquainted with and involved in the religion program.

Home-based Religious Education

Families who choose home-based religious education should follow the archdiocesan guidelines for catechesis and sacramental preparation.

Parent Conference

St. Brigid PSR provides opportunities for parents to meet with catechists and exchange information pertinent to the student's progress in religious education.

Sacraments

Guidelines for Preparation

All preparation for the reception of sacraments should follow the archdiocesan guidelines.

Students Seeking Entrance into the Church

When children of catechetical age are not baptized, or are baptized in another denomination, catechists should follow the process for sacramental preparation found in RCIA.

Baptized But Uncatechized Catholic Children

In cases of children of catechetical age, baptized Catholic, but uncatechetized, catechists should follow the process for sacramental preparation found in *RCIA, National Statutes #18, 19, 30, and 31.*

Evaluation

NCEA ACRE Inventories

The NCEA ACRE Assessment must be administered in every parish and school annually. St. Brigid PSR administers to the fifth grade class each year.

Reports to Parents/Record of Student Progress

A written report of a student's progress is provided at the end of each semester. The reports reflect the growth of the student in his/her ability to understand and to express the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Philosophy

- To work with parents by reinforcing their efforts to communicate Catholic values.
- To work with parents in their efforts to hand on cherished Catholic heritage and to promote the importance of faith and prayer in the children's everyday lives
- To work toward a better appreciation of our educational task which is to "transmit the message, build community which leads to service, and fosters a faith that is living, conscious, and active".
- To work toward the implementation of religious education standards and policies of the Cincinnati Archdiocese.

Catechist Appreciation

In support of catechists, St. Brigid PSR will provide:

- A caring staff able and willing to server catechists needs
- Ongoing recruitment and training of catechists
- An annual Parish Catechist commissioning service at weekend parish liturgies in September in conjunction with the national celebration of Catechetical Sunday
- Regular communication
- Payment for catechist certification courses
- Free subscription to catechetical resource materials
- Access to the parish resource library
- Reimbursement for approved out-of-pocket expenses
- All necessary support materials for effective catechesis

Special thanks to our religious education staff and dedicated volunteers who contribute many hours to provide the best possible program for the students.

Admission Policy

There is no discrimination of the basis of race, sex, national origin or handicapped conditions. The family must be a registered member of a Catholic Church in order to attend classes.

St. Brigid PSR needs to be informed by the custodial parents of the rights of the non-custodial parent.

Child Protection Decree

Program administrators are required to report suspected or actual child abuse or neglect to proper authorities. All guidelines are in strict adherence to the Ohio Revised Code (2151.421) and the Archdiocesan Decree on Child Protection, code 2005.01.

Failure to do so is a misdemeanor and can result in prosecution. Any other good citizen may report such behavior to the authorities. In either case, a person participation in good faith in making such a report is immune to both civil and criminal liability.

All volunteers and staff receive annual training regarding the Archdiocesan child abuse policies. All employees and staff must be fingerprinted, submit to criminal background check, and view the required video issued by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Decree on Child Protection.

A copy of the Decree on Child Protection will be made available to every catechist.

Code of Conduct

Every student enrolled in St. Brigid PSR program has the right to a quality education. This can only be accomplished in an environment where students and catechists respect each other's rights. Disruptive behavior on the part of the student in the classroom, or before or after classes will not be tolerated. If a situation develops where we feel the need for parental involvement, you will be contacted.

Our emphasis will always remain on the positive behavior of our students as we work together to learn and live our Faith.

Students are expected to:
- Be in their classroom by 8:30 A.M.
- Bring text and any homework
- Show respect for others
- Handle parish property with care
- Participate fully in class

Safety Procedures

- ***Emergency Medical Information***
  There is an Archdiocese of Cincinnati Permission, Releases, and Medical Power of Attorney on file for each student.

- ***Fire and Tornado Drills***
  Fire and tornado drills will be conducted each year.

- ***Early Dismissal/Late Arrival***
  Students who need to leave class before dismissal must bring a note from their parent/guardian indicating the time they will be picked up, the reason for early dismissal, and who will be picking them up if it is a person other than parent/guardian. The responsible adult will meet the student in the classroom at the designated time to sign the student out. No student will be released from the class at any time, unless he/she is accompanied by an adult.

  Arriving late and/or leaving early are very disruptive to the learning process. If another activity requires a student to consistently arrive late or leave early, home schooling for the duration of the activity is suggested.

- ***Dismissal***
  Grades K-8 will be dismissed in front of the Parish Activity Center. **Due to increased enrollment and for the safety of your children, parents are asked to form a single line with their cars in front of the Parish Activity Center.** The children will be escorted to the cars. If you have parked your car, you must walk over to the Parish Activity Center to pick up your child(ren). If parents are late, the children will be waiting in the front lobby of school, and parents are asked to come into the building to get their children

- ***Search and Seizure Policy***
  If a young person is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his or her possession, the coordinator will have to search the student in order to maintain order and safety. An adult staff member or volunteer will witness the search. The decision to search will involve some suspicion of wrongdoing on a young person's part. That individual will be asked to cooperate. That the person refuses, the parents will be contacted to come to the program site and assist in the search. If the parents do not cooperate, the director may impose a penalty, even exclusion from the program.

The Search and Seizure policy complies with Chapter 2 of *A Primer on Law for DRE's and Youth Ministers.*

Attendance

Just as each year of religious education builds upon the past years, each class builds upon the preceding classes, regular attendance is very important. Please call the Religious Education Office at 372-3222 x22 on Sunday or email jklippel@stbrigidxenia.org in advance if your child must be absent.

Fees

These fees are to be paid during the first month of classes. Arrangements may be made for an alternative payment plan.

1 child	$50
2 children	$70
3 or more children	$90

Awards

At the last class meeting, an 8th grade student is awarded the K. of C. Exemplar of Faith Award. This is based upon the student's attendance, behavior, and participation in class during the year.

Class Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather or any other reason, we will use One call to contact parents by phone.

Prayer Services

Students will participate in various forms of prayer services during each class meeting; during Lent and Advent, there will be special prayer services.

At the last class meeting, the entire student body will participate in an end-of-year prayer service.

Visitors

Students who wish to bring a friend to class are asked to notify the teacher or director ahead of time. Parents are always welcome to visit any class.

Home Study Program

We offer a way for you to teach your child at home. With registration, you receive a student text, a Parent Guide, and other resource help. The Director of Religious Education and the Youth Minister are available for help or questions. The home study program follows the Archdiocese of Cincinnati guidelines.

- *Growing Together: Ministry to Children, the Graded Course of study for Early Childhood and Elementary Catechetical Programs, and Growing Together: Adolescent Religious Education, a Manual for Parish and School Program* have been approved by the Archdiocesan Commission on Education and promulgated by Archbishop Pilarczyk as the official content to be followed for all early childhood, elementary, and high school catechesis. Anyone assuming the role of catechist for youth is expected to follow the content outlined in these documents.
- Parents are invited to use the Archdiocesan Media Centers and their own parish resource libraries to supplement their educational efforts.
- Parents and their children are welcome and encouraged to participate in parish liturgies and/or events prepared specifically for children and their families.
- The pastor/ and or his delegate should invite the parents to participate in the catechist certification program of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati as outlined in *The Ministry of the Catechist.* (Canons 779-780)

- Parents are encouraged to meet with the pastor and/or his delegate periodically to review the progress of their catechetical efforts.

Inclusive Education and Ministry

Our Religious Education classes are open to all children with special needs and disabilities. By their Baptism they are a part of our community. We endeavor to serve their needs through integration into the classroom where they can share their gifts with us. If a challenge or disability arises in the family, there are several resources available to you.

- At your local Children's Hospital there is usually a developmental specialist who assesses a child's problem and helps with diagnosis or referral to a specialist.
- Many clinics offer special services for different disabilities, such as parent support groups.
- Contact your local United Way or Health Department.
- Contact the Director of Special Education at your child's school and ask how services are provided.
- Cheers Inc. addresses the social and spiritual needs of young adults ages sixteen and above with developmental disabilities. This group was formed at St. Francis in 1996. For more information call 848-4862.

Parental Involvement

- **Parent Sunday:** Students and parents will attend the 10:00am A.M. Mass. Family oriented activities take place in the school before Mass.
- Parents are welcome to wait in the teachers' lounge.
- Teachers may invite the parents of the students into the classroom to participate in class activities. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in any aspect of the class, such as story telling, crafts, music, or games. The teacher must coordinate the details. By the parent's active involvement, students benefit from the variety of faith examples; parents enjoy seeing what their children are learning; and teachers appreciate the support of the parents.

Sacrament Preparation

Normally, formal preparation for the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist are taught during the second grade, and Confirmation preparation during seventh and eight grades.

St. Brigid PSR follows the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Sacramental guidelines as stated in *Sacraments for Young People.* This document implements the *National Directory for Catechists* and *The General Directory for Catechists.*

Amendment Policy

Parents will be notified in writing when polices are added or amended.