

**St. Peter Chanel Catholic Church  
Parish School of Religion (PSR)  
Parent Handbook  
2016—2017  
Preschool through 8th Grade**



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Welcome to a new year of religious education at St. Peter Chanel. We have such an exciting year ahead of us!

We want you to know that our clergy, staff and wonderful group of volunteers are looking forward to teaming with you in helping your children grow in their faith and realize the fullness of God's love.

We encourage you to take a few moments to read through our handbook which provides you with important information regarding our weekly programs as well as our exciting family events that we will be offering throughout the year. We invite you to come and be a part of it all!

We also recognize that your family life is filled with wonderful activities, and you have a strong desire to include events and activities that help your child explore and realize the faith in their everyday life. In order to help keep all of you informed of our programs and events, we encourage you to visit our website on a regular basis and to take advantage of our various social media outlets, such as Facebook and Twitter, to keep you in the know of PSR happenings. Please make sure to read the "Communications" section in this handbook for all the ways we can help you stay up-to-date with all we have to offer this year.

We thank you for sharing your children with us and for making your children's faith formation a priority. Please know that we are always here to support you and your children as we journey together in faith.

Blessings,  
Rosemary Potts

## STAFF

### Office of Religious Education—(PSR) PSR Administration

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### PSR Sacrament Coordinators

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### PSR Program Coordinators

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### Religion Website:

<http://stpeterchanel.org/faith-formation-education/psr>

## COMMUNICATION

In addition to our [website](#), the Parish School of Religion (PSR) utilizes a variety of social media outlets to help keep you informed of PSR news and events. We invite you to take advantage of the those that work best for you and your family. Click on the links or icons below to be redirected to that site:

- Like us on [Facebook](#) at St. Peter Chanel PSR
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) at @SPCPSR
- Visit our [YouTube Channel](#) at StPeterChanelPSR
- Subscribe to our [PSR Family Blog](#) on WordPress
- Join our [PSR Mailing List](#) on Constant Contact\*



*\*Constant Contact is our primary means of communication with our PSR families. If you previously unsubscribed from our emails, you will not receive our communications. Please click the [PSR Mailing List](#) link and enter your email address to subscribe. Please also [contact our registrar](#) if your email address has changed, so we can update our records.*

## PSR CLASSES

Parish School of Religion classes are held at the following times and Locations:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Location</u>
<b>PreK 3's and 4's (Sun)</b> ..... 9:00am to 10:15am or 10:45am to 12:00am	SPC Preschool Classrooms
<b>Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (Sun)</b> ..... 8:45am—10:15am (L1, L2, L3) or 10:30am—12:00pm (L1 only)	SPC Classrooms
<b>Kindergarten—5th Grade (Sun)</b> ..... 9:00am to 10:15am or 10:45am to 12:00am	Blessed Trinity High School
<b>SHINE—(Sun)</b> ..... 10:45am—12:00pm	SPC Classrooms
<b>Kindergarten—Grade 5 (Wed)</b> ..... 4:30pm—5:45pm	SPC Classrooms
<b>6th—8th Grade (Sun)</b> ..... 10:30am—12:00pm or 6:30pm—8:00pm	BT—AM Session / SPC—PM Session

For details on our variety of programs, please visit the [website](#). For information on the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation see the later pages of this handbook as well as the parish website.

## SAFETY

### Drop-off and Pick-up

At St. Peter Chanel, the safety of all children is important to us. Help us keep our children safe by observing the following guidelines concerning dropping off and picking up your child:

- **Preschool**—There is no drop-off or pick-up carpool for our preschoolers. Parents must accompany the children to and from their classrooms.
- **Sunday Elementary**—There is a monitored drop-off for our elementary students in the back parking lot at BT. There is NO carpool pick-up. We ask that parents pick up their children at their classrooms. We are aware that you may have children in different buildings and we ask that you use the following system:
  - *Drop-off* your children from oldest to youngest
  - *Pick-up* your children from youngest to oldest.
- **Wednesday Elementary**—There is a monitored drop-off for our elementary students under the porte-cochere in front of the church. There is NO carpool pick-up. We ask that parents pick up their children at their classrooms. Please begin your pick-up with your youngest children.
- **Sunday Middle School** - Middle school students can both enter and leave Blessed Trinity or St. Peter Chanel under their own recognizance. We strongly suggest that you discuss a pick-up location with your child to facilitate this process. Please understand that middle schoolers may meet their parents at a younger sibling's classroom; however, they may NOT pick up the younger siblings in lieu of the parent.
- We understand that there are times when parents rely on relatives or friends to assist with transporting your children. Please understand that **advance written notification is necessary** when anyone other than the parent or guardian will be responsible for this task. Please provide a note to the catechist, or send an email to the PSR staff, informing them of these instances that includes the name of the individual and relationship to you.

## FAMILY CUSTODIAL ISSUES

St. Peter Chanel abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In cases of a divorce decree involving clear custody by one parent, the Director of Religious Education must be informed. A copy of the first page of the decree bearing the case number, the pages referring to custody and the relationship with the school and the final page bearing the judge's signature are to be on file with us. Unless the decree indicates otherwise, all communications are sent to the parent with physical custody. It is the custodial parent's responsibility to inform the Director of Religious Education of any issues relating to release of a child to a non-custodial parent. Non-custodial parents have the right to attend all parent meetings, sacrament celebrations and PSR events unless otherwise indicated by a court order.

## CALENDAR

Various PSR calendars can be accessed via the sidebar on the PSR pages of the website. Please understand that we make every effort to adhere to the published calendar; however, there may be times when the calendar may change. We strongly recommend that you watch the [Programs & Events page](#) on the website, our social media or the bulletin on a regular basis to stay informed of all of our programs and for last-minute changes.

## CANCELLED CLASSES

In the event that that classes need to be cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency, we will contact families through multiple means of communication including news outlets (in the case of inclement weather or national emergency), our [Constant Contact](#) email service, as well as social media and remind.com. We encourage you to follow us on Social Media in order to have the most up-to-date information.

## ATTENDANCE

Consistent weekly and annual attendance in the PSR program is very important. To credit your child with a full year of religious education, only 5 absences per student per PSR year will be allowed. In cases of extended absence due to illness or injury, please contact the PSR office so that alternative arrangements can be made to ensure that your child is provided the opportunity to keep current in their faith formation. **It is our understanding that sports coaches and directors of extra-curricular events are willing to work with parents when they are provided with the schedule of religion classes and events as early as possible and understand the parents' commitment to their child's faith development. We strongly encourage you to share our faith formation calendar of events with those adults who will be working with your child in this regard—especially during the years of**

## ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL

- All students should arrive no more than 10 minutes before their scheduled class time.
- Please understand that our catechists are parents as well and despite their best efforts may be running late. If you arrive at your child's classroom and the catechist is not there we ask that you assist us by staying with your child until the catechist arrives. Children need to be promptly picked-up at the designated dismissal time.
- Our sessions are designed for the entire time allowed. Out of respect for the catechists and to minimize distractions, please make every effort to avoid picking up your child early. For safety, the classroom doors remain shut and locked while we are in session. When the catechists open the doors you are free to pick up your child.
- If early dismissal is unavoidable, please give this information to the catechist prior to the start of the session so as to cause the least amount of distraction.

## DISCIPLINE

Life as a Christian is a commitment to live by the example of Jesus Christ. This commitment includes student acknowledgement and acceptance of their responsibility for conduct and actions both on church and school property and in the classroom.

Normal class discipline problems will be handled by the catechist. If a problem becomes persistent, the student will be referred to the Session Coordinator. The Coordinator will contact the parent to have a conversation about the behavior and to exchange ideas on how best to encourage positive behavior. In some situations, a child with a persistent discipline problem may only remain in the class if one of the parents attends class with the child. If issues remain unresolved, the parent(s) will be provided the resources to home school their child. Disciplinary problems include but are not limited to the following: disrespect to a catechist or other student; abusive language; fighting; vandalism; stealing, inappropriate physical contact; leaving the school building or site of the activity.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with special needs are welcome to register and participate in any of our offered religious education programs. We ask that parents who have children with allergies, chronic illnesses, learning difficulties, or physical handicaps, please notify the Religious Education Office and submit an Emergency Action Plan (can be downloaded from the Documents sidebar on our [General Information page](#)), so that we can ensure the best possible environment for your child. Every attempt will be made to form a plan to meet your child's needs.

## VIRTUS

### Protecting God's Children

The Archdiocese of Atlanta requires all parishes to present the "VIRTUS—Teaching Touching Safety" Safe Environment Training to children in Kindergarten through 12th Grade. Children are taught that God is a loving, listening, caring presence in their daily lives and that they should feel secure and safe in sharing information about problems or people that worry them with a trusted adult.

This program is provided to us by the Archdiocese of Atlanta and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain a safe environment for children and to protect all children from sexual abuse. Participation in these presentations require written consent from the parents or guardians. For more information on the VIRTUS program you may visit [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org). An overview of the children's training, parent guide and lesson plans are also available on the [Archdiocesan website](#).

We are happy to partner with you in **working to keep your children safe.**

## CURRICULUM

St. Peter Chanel Catholic Church Religious Education uses curricula that meets the conformity standards of the Archdiocese of Atlanta. The following information is provided to support and encourage family participation outside the classroom.

### Preschool through 5th grade:

*Pflaum Gospel Weeklies Lectionary-based Curriculum*

<http://www.pflaumweeklies.com>

- Preschool Series: *Seeds*
- Kindergarten & First Grade Series: *Promise*
- Third Grade Series: *Good News*
- Fourth and Fifth Grade Series: *Venture*

### Grades 6 through 8:

*EDGE® Middle School Ministry*

<http://lifeteen.com/cym/resources/edge-timeline/>

## SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

Throughout the year, the entire parish community is invited to come together to learn and celebrate our faith traditions as well as build community. Students do not report to the classrooms for these events but go directly to the location of the event with their families. While attendance is not recorded, we strongly encourage all families to embrace these opportunities to develop their relationships in our community and their appreciation for our faith and its traditions.

**2016-17 Events**—see the website and bulletin for dates, times and details:

- Saturday, September 24th—Parish Fall Festival
- Sunday, November 20th—Parish Advent Event
- Thursday, December 24th—Children’s Christmas Eve Masses with Gospel Drama
- Sunday, January 8th—PSR Family Event
- Sunday, April 9th—Family Centered Palm Sunday Masses

Events may be subject to change. Please watch the bulletin and your monthly PSR newsletters for updates.

## REGISTRATION

Registration for the upcoming PSR year typically opens in late March. Registration fees are discounted during the months of March through June. Please check the website and bulletin for registration information in the Spring of 2017.

*A Note Regarding Fees: We believe no family should be excluded from receiving Catholic religious education because of difficulty in paying fees. Please feel free to contact the Religious Education Office concerning assistance in this area. Confidentiality will be strictly observed.*

## VOLUNTEERS

Parents, other adults, student volunteers and the parish community are a vital link to the Religious Education Ministry and its success in educating and developing the faith of the many children we have in our parish. **We welcome your participation!** Parents who volunteer on a weekly basis as part of a catechist team receive deeply discounted tuition.

## SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

Formation and celebration of the sacraments involve a commitment of time and participation by students and their families. Specific requirements for sacramental preparation programs at St. Peter Chanel are:

### Baptism

All parents seeking baptism for their child are to attend a baptism class prior to the celebration of the sacrament. These classes are typically held on the second Sunday of the month from 10:45am-Noon but are subject to change. For information and/or to schedule a Baptism, please contact [Cindy Czajkoski](#) at 678-832-1230.

### First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion

- First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion are typically celebrated in the Second Grade year.
- A child needs to be 6 years old AND enrolled in First grade by September 1st to be eligible to begin the two-year preparation process set forth by the Archdiocese.
- Students who attend an Archdiocesan Catholic school celebrate the Sacraments in the parish where they are registered as parishioners. These students DO NOT need to attend weekly PSR classes.
- During the Second Grade year, all students and parents are to attend Sacrament workshops that provide the specific formation for these sacraments.
- All parents, regardless of where their children receive their weekly religious instruction, are required to attend the scheduled parent meetings.
- A copy of the child’s Baptismal certificate is required to be on file with the Parish.
- Please consult the [First Reconciliation & First Communion Calendar page](#) on the website for dates and times for this year’s workshops, meetings, and sacrament celebrations.
- Please understand that two year of foundation is the minimum and those students beginning their faith formation in 2nd grade will celebrate these sacraments in their 3rd grade year.

### Confirmation

- Confirmation is typically celebrated in the Fall of the 10th Grade year.
- Participation in 8th and 9th Grade religious formation in the PSR program OR in an Archdiocesan Catholic school is necessary prior to being eligible to participate in the specific sacrament formation sessions held in the summer during the 9th and 10th Grade years.
- Please consult the [Confirmation page](#) on the website for detailed information regarding the preparation and celebration of this sacrament.

## OLDER CHILDREN REQUESTING SACRAMENTS

Students often enter our PSR program in the older grades in need of First Reconciliation/First Eucharist. Each of these situations will be handled in a pastoral manner. Each case will be considered on an individual basis, with two years of foundational instruction and sacrament preparation as the minimum; and there may be times that the preparation will require more than this standard two-year period. If you have a child in this situation, please contact [Rosemary Potts](#) at 678-832-1229 for an appointment.

## MASS & RECONCILIATION SCHEDULES

### Sunday

Vigil, Saturday 4:30 pm  
Sunday at 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:45 am, and 12:15 pm  
Sunday Evening at 5:00 pm (Teen Mass)

### Weekday Mass Schedule

6:45 am Monday—Friday    Noon Friday    8:30 am Monday-Saturday

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Wednesday 7:15 am  
Saturday 9:00 am-10:00 am and 2:30 pm-3:30 pm  
or by appointment

*Attendance at Sunday Mass is an essential part of our Catholic Faith.  
Even our youngest children are encouraged to attend Mass with their Family. Although  
some preschool-aged children are unable to sit through Mass, all students in Kindergarten  
and above should be attending Mass weekly.*



## Family Commitment Prayer

God, our Father, through the holy Sacrament of Marriage  
you have blessed us and bestowed on us the gift of families  
in different shapes and sizes.

You created the family to be the image of the love and unity revealed  
to us in the Blessed Trinity.

We commit ourselves to model that love and unity in our daily lives  
and in all our relationships.

Guide us on our journey as we read  
and reflect on your holy Word.

By your Word we are transformed so that, by our witness,  
we may become leaven for the transformation of the world.

May the Holy Spirit,  
who dwells within us through our Baptism,  
shine through our interactions within our family  
and through our encounters with others.  
May all families within our parish  
become hearers and followers of the Word,  
so that our parish family might mirror the love and unity  
of you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever, and ever.

**Amen.**