

Introduction

The Parish Religion Program (PRP) exists to help families of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, whose children do not attend the parish school, educate their children in the faith of the Catholic Church. **The parents are the first and foremost educator of their children in the faith**, but the parish is pleased to partner with them in any way we can, and provide resources to help complete the task. This handbook is offered to you to help communicate the vision and boundaries of the parish program. We hope you will find it helpful.

Sunday Mass Attendance

It is an expectation that all PRP students are attending Sunday Mass in addition to PRP classes each week.

Admissions

The PRP program is in place to meet the needs of registered parishioners. If you are new to the area and would like to participate in the program, please visit the parish office and register. Once registered in the parish, you will be given the proper forms to register your child in PRP classes. We ask that you complete those forms and turn them in prior to attending a class. Space in our school is limited and sometimes classes fill up. You are encouraged to register early to avoid being placed on a waiting list. We make every effort to provide for all of our children.

Financial Requirements

Each registered family pays a fee proportionate to the number of children in the family attending the program. We try to keep the fees low so they are not a hardship to our families. If you need help meeting this obligation you are welcome to apply for financial aide or a payment plan. Full time volunteer catechists (teachers) receive a tuition waiver for their children in the program.

Attendance

The PRP program begins on the Sunday after Labor Day weekend in September and runs through the middle of May. The calendar provides thirty Sunday sessions. It is expected that these classes would take priority over all other Sunday morning activities except Mass. It is our expectation that the children in the program **will attend Mass each week as well as their religion class**. If it is necessary for a child to miss a session, due to illness or another important conflict, they will be expected to make up the work missed before the next class. Students should provide their teacher with a note prior to or upon return to class. Excessive absence will be noted and you will receive an inquiry by phone.

Hours

The program's hours of operation are as follows:

Preschool Program 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Elementary Program 9:00 am – 10:15 am

Preschool parents are required to sign their children in and out each Sunday. Elementary children in grades one and two are to be dropped off and picked up at the classroom door each Sunday by a parent. **We ask that parents be responsible with drop off and pick up** time as many of our teachers have children in the program that need to be picked up as well. Children should not arrive before 8:50 am. **No child should be left** in a classroom where there is not a teacher present. If you arrive early, please remain in the room with your child until a teacher arrives. If you arrive before the end of class, please wait for your child in a location **out of sight** and that doesn't disrupt their class.

Dress Code

All children are expected to dress appropriately for PRP class. Sunday attire is recommended. No tee shirts with inappropriate writing or hats will be allowed in the classroom. Students should come prepared to learn each week. In addition to proper attire they also should bring their books and a pen or pencil to complete their

assignments. A folder or book bag to travel to and from with is also recommended.

Accountability

Report cards are issued twice a year, once in January and again in May, at the end of the school year. They are meant to be a communication tool for dialogue between the classroom and home and reflect the student's progress in understanding the material presented and growth in faith. Feel free to discuss your child's progress with a teacher at any point in the year.

We ask that students remember that the teachers in our program are volunteers, generously giving of their time and energy to pass on the faith. Our expectation is that students will pay attention in class and show respect for their teachers and classmates.

The A.C.R.E. assessment is given in January each year to the fifth and eighth grade students. This is a tool we use to evaluate our progress and make improvements to the program so that we provide a sound, effective learning environment for the children of the parish. We appreciate the students help in this.

Recognition

Each year the Knights of Columbus recognize students in the sixth, seventh and eighth grade who display an understanding and willingness to live their Catholic faith in an exemplary way. Class attendance and Christian character are taken into consideration for this. Two students, one boy and one girl are selected from each of the above-mentioned grades each March and are honored at an evening ceremony along with SASEAS and St. Andrew PREP students.

Attendance Awards are issued twice a year to deserving students (2 or less absences per semester).



All PRP students are expected to attend Sunday Mass in addition to attending PRP class.

Education Policies

The journey of faith is an ongoing one for children as well as for adults. Our program is designed in a way that each year builds on the one before it. While sacraments are received in the second and ninth grade, **all are expected to attend PRP classes each year** in order to receive proper preparation and education in the Catholic faith.

Children should begin taking religion classes by the **first grade year to be admitted into the second grade** sacramental process. A copy of their baptismal certificate is required to participate in the sacramental process unless the child was baptized at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.

For baptized students wishing to be confirmed in their ninth grade year, **attendance in 7th and 8th grade** or their equivalent is required. A student lacking this general Catholic education will be required to do remedial work prior to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

RCIA with Children

Children of catechetical age (7 - 14 years of age) who have not been baptized are welcome to come to faith through the RCIA with Children process. Weekly classes are offered with the children attending 9:00 am Mass and being dismissed after the Liturgy of the Word to learn more about the faith. Parents are an integral part of this preparation.

Children seven years old or older, baptized, but not catechized are also candidates for this program. They prepare for receiving First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Interested families should contact the CRE or DRE for more information. These classes are multi age and generally small in number. A sense of community is fostered in the group. After completing their Initiation in the Catholic Church these children continue growing in their faith by enrolling in and attending the Parish Religion Program (PRP).

The Role of the Parent

“The parent is the first and most influential teacher of the faith. They teach primarily by the witness of their Christian lives and by their love of the faith. Participation in the life of the Parish, above all the Sunday Eucharist, their willingness to evangelize and serve others, and their dedication to daily prayer demonstrates and models a life of faith for their children.” (From the National Directory for Catechesis)

The PRP program is in place to help you carry out the promise you made on the day of your child’s baptism, “to accept the responsibility to bring up your child in the faith, and to see to it that the divine life that God gives them is kept safe from sin, to grow always stronger in their hearts.”
(Rite of Baptism)

It is our joy and privilege to assist you in this!

PRP Mass

Four times a year the children in the PRP program have an opportunity to participate in a special way in the Sunday Liturgy. Called “PRP Masses,” the children can volunteer by even or odd grade levels to assume a ministry role at the 10:30 am mass on a designated Sunday. We have a person who coordinates this, but we also depend on the cooperation of the parents to support and help prepare these children for this activity of faith.

Wednesday Evening Classes in Church

Again this year, two sessions of the elementary PRP program will meet on a Wednesday night in Church. The November class will be on the Roman Missal, 3rd Edition. The April class will be a Reconciliation Service. These are **family events** and **all are expected to attend**.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish

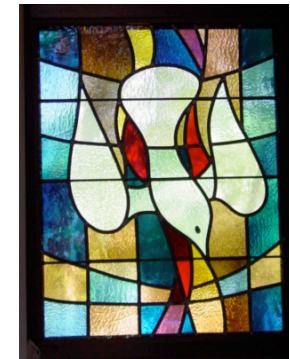
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For more information contact:

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