



SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS PARISH

608 Sobieski Street; Lemont, IL 60439

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SSCM Parish website: www.stcyril.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM PARENT HANDBOOK



MISSION OF SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The mission of our parish Religious Education Program is one that entails more than merely knowing about Jesus Christ and the Church. It also recognizes the need for students to reflect on the experience of Jesus in their own lives, to speak the faith they share, and to relate to one another so that the Word of God becomes present when they gather in Christ's name. Thus, we provide for our students a Religious Education Program that is:

CHRIST - centered
FAMILY - centered
SCRIPTURE - centered

The GOALS of our parish Religious Education Program are:

1. To teach the message of the gospel
2. To help students establish a personal, loving relationship with Jesus and the Father.
3. To foster participation in the sacramental and liturgical life of the Parish.

Together with the knowledge of basic Church teachings, the students are guided and encouraged toward an on-going appreciation of prayer, Scripture, liturgy, the 10 Commandments, and the Sacraments. With these basic fundamentals, and the living example of both parents and catechists, we strive to teach Catholic Christianity as a way of life.



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following are policies of the SS. Cyril and Methodius Religious Education Program that we ask you to abide by each catechetical year:

DISCRIMINATION POLICY

SS. Cyril and Methodius Parish does not discriminate based on sex, race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its policies, supplementary programs or any other program-based function.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Religious Education classes meet a **minimum** of 30 hours annually.

SSCM offers 3 sessions:

- Monday (English) session: 5:30PM – 7:00PM
- Wednesday (English) session: 6:00PM - 7:30PM
- Friday Bilingual session (Polish/English): 5:00PM - 6:00PM

The Friday sessions is led primarily in Polish with some translation into the English language. BL program students need to be able to speak, understand, read, and write (to their grade level) in Polish in order to be able to attend the bilingual program.

All religious education classes meet in the parish school. Students are expected to cooperate with the catechist and be respectful to the catechist and SSCM staff while attending the sessions. Because the program is sequential, *every year* of religious education is very important and necessary for the total development of your child's faith.

***We encourage everyone to register for the best session that suits their child's/family's schedule. We understand that change happens, however if you wish to change your child's session AFTER having registered there will be a \$50 processing fee.**

ARRIVAL TO AND DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL

1. Religious Education classes begin **PROMPTLY** at:

5:30 PM on Monday

6:00 PM on Wednesday

5:00 PM on Friday

Taking into consideration that our program only meets for one hour and thirty minutes (English program) a week or one hour (bilingual program) a week, **KINDLY BRING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL ON TIME!! Supervision for the children begins 15 minutes prior to classes starting no sooner.**

2. Religious Education classes end at:

7:00 PM on Monday

7:30 PM on Wednesday

*6:00 PM on Friday **

Please refer to our “Arrival and dismissal” guidelines that are in your welcome letter. **If you are consistently late in picking up your child, we will charge a late fee of a \$1.00 per minute per child. This will be strictly enforced.**

**Bilingual program only: If your child is registered for St John Paul II Polish School, they will go to their class immediately after RE.*

3. Crossing guards will be stationed outside of the school building during all sessions, at the beginning and end of class. **Please give them your respect and obey their directions that they are giving during arrival and pickup from RE classes.** A parking procedure is in place and you must obey the directions of all crossing guards.

4. Under no circumstances should a person driving, be on his/her cell phone. It is an Illinois state law that forbids cell phone use in a school zone. Please make sure you follow this law and keep our children safe. **ANY use of a cell phone while picking up your child/children is distracting and should never be done for the safety of all.**

5. If someone other than a parent will be picking up child/children from RE, a parent/guardian **MUST** call or email our office to inform us of WHO will be picking up their child/children.

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS IN CLASSES

Each year of religious education students are placed in classes by the director and with input from the catechists. We will not accept requests from parents to place their child in a class with friends before the program begins or after classes get underway. Special requests for placement of a student in a specific class will be handled by the director of religious education with the parent.

ATTENDANCE *VERY IMPORTANT*****

Regular attendance at Religious Education classes is MANDATORY!! If a child misses more than **five (5)** class days of instruction *during the catechetical year* without a serious reason, he will be expelled from the program without a refund of the tuition paid, and will have to repeat the grade over again the following year.

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO SWITCHING OF DAYS DURING THE YEAR AFTER THE START OF CLASSES FOR ANY REASON. STUDENTS ATTENDING THE BILINGUAL SESSION CANNOT SWITCH BETWEEN FRIDAY AND SATURDAY CLASSES. THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDING THE SESSION THAT THEY REGISTERED FOR. PLEASE TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION WINTER OR SPRING SPORTS WHEN SIGNING UP YOUR CHILD FOR A SPECIFIC DAY IN THE FALL!!

Consistently missing class due to an extra-curricular activity will NOT be allowed. In years past this has become a problem and we will no longer allow your child to miss classes for any activities such as sports, dance, music etc. on a regular basis.

ABSENTEEISM

1. If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent on her/his day of RE class, please call and leave a message with the Religious Education Office at (630)257-9314 sometime during the week prior to the day that will be missed.
2. If your child becomes ill and cannot attend class, please call the religious education office at (630)257-9314 to report your child's absence. An answering machine is available for you to leave a message.
3. If your child is not in school, and the absence has not been previously reported, for your child's protection we will place a phone call to your cell or home phone.

CLASS MATERIALS

Each child is asked to bring the following materials to class every week:

1. A folder for schoolwork and for notes going home. Please check all the notes weekly!!
2. Religion textbook /workbook
3. Notebook paper
4. A pen / pencil
5. Composition Notebook (No spiral Notebooks)
6. Supplies (*as listed in our "Supply List"*)

TREATS FOR CLASSES

The school has a policy which calls for no food in any of the classrooms and the Religious Education Program must adhere to that policy. We are asking for your cooperation in this matter and if you would like to send a treat to your child's class that you send an individually wrapped treat for the children to take home. No home baked goods are allowed, only store bought individually wrapped goods are allowed.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Progress Reports charting the progress of each child will be given out twice annually – in **February** and in **June**. Children who do not complete the assignments and pass the grade requirement at a satisfactory level each year **WILL NOT** advance to the next grade the following year. Children need to have adequate background and preparation at each level before advancing to the next. Parents should not presume that children will **automatically** pass each grade level.

You may contact your child's catechist at any time during the catechetical year by using their SSCM email account or if you wish to contact them by phone or meet in person, please call the RE Office at (630)257-9314 and we will arrange the time and date.

PHOTO / VIDEO RELEASE:

On occasion students are photographed or videotaped throughout the Catechetical year. These photos/videos can be used on our Religious Education Facebook page, parish website and/or bulletin, newspaper, or displayed at the parish school. No photos/videos will be used for commercial purposes. By accepting these terms and conditions you give SS Cyril & Methodius parish RE Program permission to use images of your child (ren) for the purposes stated above.

Only authorized SSCM staff members are permitted to take photos of your children.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

It is expected that each family become actively involved in the SS. Cyril and Methodius Religious Education Program and Parish to model a living, conscious and active Christian faith and to reinforce the values and attitudes for living that faith. The family and their children also agree to act in accordance with these values and attitudes. Failure of a family member to act in a truly Christian manner or cooperate fully with the SS. Cyril and Methodius parish may lead to the removal or non-registration of the family member attending the religious education program. The SSCM Religious Education staff organizes special events throughout the catechetical year such as: family masses, confessions, devotions, other events. As a family of faith, we encourage you to take part in these events to the best of your ability.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS / STUDENTS

1. Each child is required to have on file in the Religious Education Office a copy of his/her Baptismal Certificate (if not baptized at SSCM), and when applicable, a copy of the Reconciliation and Communion certificates.
2. Transfer students must provide transcripts of prior religious education classes completed.
3. Two consecutive years of Religious Education (first and second grade) are required for the child to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. If your child is registered in the English program, they will make their First Holy Communion in English. If they are registered in the bilingual program, they will make their First Holy Communion in Polish/English. In order for a child to make their First Holy Communion at a bilingual mass they must attend first grade and second grade in the bilingual program. Preparation for First Holy Communion begins in first grade.
4. The Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in the eighth grade. In order to receive the sacrament, a child must have attended Religious Education classes from third grade until the eighth grade, inclusively. Preparation for Confirmation begins in seventh grade.
5. Children are required to learn by heart certain prayers before advancing to the next grade level. A list of these prayers will be provided to your child at the beginning of each catechetical year. Kindly help your child learn these prayers encourage them to say them on a regular basis.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS / PARENTS

All parents are required to review the “SSCM Parent Handbook” as well as the “Welcome Letter” at the beginning of each catechetical year. If your child is in the second or eighth grade sacramental program, you will be required to attend the parent meetings, if scheduled, or review emailed information containing details regarding the sacraments. **All Sacrament related documents and instructions will be emailed on an as needed basis. It is the parent responsibility to review them carefully and call our office with questions or concerns.**

If you are not able to attend all required meeting/event, you will be asked to set up a private meeting with a SSCM staff member.

New / Returning Families: At any time, parents are welcome to call our office at (630)257-9314 to set up a private in-person meeting with the SSCM Religious Education Administrator or a RE office staff member to ask any questions, view the school building or review our curriculum. During the month of October parents will be invited to a “Meet and Greet Evening” to meet our wonderful staff and your child’s Catechist.

CURRICULUM, EMAIL, & GOOGLE CLASSROOM

In the 2023-24 Catechetical Year our students will be using the following curriculum:

- Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 will be using The Christ in Us Series by Sadlier Religion. Each student will be receiving their textbook along with their workbook on the first day of class.
- Grade 8 will be using the Chosen Series by Chris Stefanick and Ron Bolster from Ascension Press / Journey toward Confirmation. All 8th grade students will be receiving their textbook on the first day of class.
- Grades 6, 7, 8 will be using YOUCAT / Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Holy Bibles will be available to all grades during class time
- Additional resources are kept in the RE workroom and are available for use during class time
- All catechists and students have an RE email (@re.stcyiril.org) provided by the SS Cyril & Methodius Religious Education Program. Set up and login instructions can be found in the Welcome Letter you received at the beginning of the catechetical year.
- Each class will have a Google Classroom set up where announcements and assignments can be posted weekly. Older students are responsible for checking their Google Classroom on a weekly basis. Parents along with their younger students will need to check the Google Classroom weekly for any class updates/assignments.

It is the parent's responsibility to check on their child's work on a regular basis. You are your child's primary educator, and our catechists cannot do their job without your help. Please make sure they have done any homework that has been assigned to them. Please help them study for any tests that are given and to learn by heart the prayers that are required for each grade level.

STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Proper behavior and respect is expected at all times! All of our catechists and assistants are wonderful **volunteers**, who are devoting their time and effort to share their faith with your children. Any concerns should be directed to the RE office.

The religious education program will only be using email to communicate with parents: The following platforms will be used:

MAILCHIMP - Group Email correspondence (please save/mark as “safe” our email stcyrilre@sscmlemont.org)

It is very important that we have your correct email address and preferred cell phone number on file in the religious education office. It is parent’s responsibility to check all RE Program emails systematically to be aware of what is happening in our Program. Please keep in mind that our weekly Newsletter is being sent on Fridays. Additional emails might be sent separately as needed.

If your email address or phone number has changed, please notify our office immediately by emailing: stcyrilre@sscmlemont.org or by calling the RE Office (630)257-9314 so we can update your information in our system.

DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY

We ask that you please impress upon your child the fact that we must share the school, classrooms, desks, etc. with the children who attend SS. Cyril and Methodius Catholic School during the day. Therefore, it is important that they be respectful and mindful of where they are, and considerate of others and their belongings. Please discuss this with your child. If a Religious Education student mars, destroys, or loses by intent or through carelessness, any school property, or any property belonging to that of another child, the student will be fined according to the expense entailed, and a deficiency report will be sent home.

CUSTODY ISSUES

If parents are divorced or separated, the religious education program presumes that both parents have access to the children unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right. If there are other custody arrangements a copy of such agreement must be on file in the parish religious education office. The religious education program presumes that both parents have access to the children’s records unless one parent can provide evidence that he or she has the sole right. The parent that registers child/children for religious education will be considered the primary contact/decision maker. Any changes need to be made through this primary contact and agreed upon by both parents before any changes are executed by the religious education staff. As a Catholic family of faith, we value the importance of family. If a

child is receiving a sacrament it is expected that **BOTH** parents be present in support of their child and the Catholic faith.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS

Students attending the religious education program are expected to be on their best behavior when attending classes. Religious Education classes are for a very short amount of time and when we have students that are consistently disrupting the class or being disrespectful to the catechist everyone suffers. Students will be explained the rules and policies (Code of Conduct for students) of our RE program at the beginning of each year and they will be asked to sign their name on a Code of Conduct Contract that states they will abide by these rules and policies. The catechist will also sign this contract and will keep it with them for the year. If necessary, the catechist will refer back to this contract when dealing with a situation. If a student is continually a discipline problem a phone call home will be made to the parents. If the problem continues a meeting will be requested with parents, student, catechist, SSCM staff member, and our pastor. If this does not work and they continue to be a problem they will be asked to leave the program for the year and will have to repeat that grade level the next year.

SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event that classes are cancelled due to inclement weather or a building emergency, you will receive a text and email notifying you of the situation. In the event of closing due to weather it will also be posted on the emergency closing system and you can call (847)238-1234 or you can go online to www.EmergencyClosings.com to search for SS. Cyril and Methodius Religious Education or watch your local TV station for school closings.

TUITION

Tuition for the catechetical year covers books and other supplies. Tuition fees are established to meet the necessary financial needs of the program. If a family finds itself unable to meet the cost of tuition due to financial difficulties, please contact the Religious Education Office at (630)257-9314 to arrange a meeting to determine how SSCM can assist you. Tuition is subject to change year to year. Religious Education tuition is to be paid in full at time of registration.

SS. CYRIL & METHODIUS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TUITION POLICY

The following policy will help define the supporting parishioner status at SS. Cyril & Methodius. Tuition is based on an active supporting parishioner status. Tuition rates for active supporting parishioners are lower due to the parish's subsidy to the religious education program. The parish subsidy to the religious education program helps to defray the actual cost of tuition for each student. As an active supporting parishioner, it is expected that you attend Mass and contribute to the parish by the use of your weekly envelopes. The following guidelines will be used in assessing the parishioner status.

An analysis by the parish will determine if supporting parishioner status is maintained. The schedule is as follows:

- Parish reviews contributions from September through January
- If no contributions, then in mid-February a notice will be sent to family explaining that they are now considered a non-contributing family and will be charged a higher tuition rate for the current catechetical year. Non-parishioner payment will be due by May 1st, unless they begin to use their envelopes on a regular basis.
- A family does not need to be registered members of our parish, however there is an additional fee applied to each year's tuition for non-SSCM parishioners of \$180.

2021/22 CATECHETICAL YEAR COVID-19 UPDATES

- The 2021/22 Catechetical year will return to onsite instruction.
- As per current State of Illinois and Archdiocesan guidelines, masks are required to be worn indoors by everyone regardless of vaccination status.
- If your child is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms (fever- temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea) please do not send them to RE class. Notify the RE office immediately.
- Any individuals who are sick with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home regardless of vaccination status to minimize the chance of spreading COVID-19 or other germs and viruses. If symptoms last longer than 24 hours, an individual must receive a negative COVID-19 test or alternative medical diagnosis prior to returning to RE classes. Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the earlier of the symptom onset date (for symptomatic cases) or the date of a positive test result (for asymptomatic cases), regardless of vaccination status. In addition, they must be fever-free for at least 24

hours with a 75 percent decrease in COVID-like symptoms before returning to RE classes.

- As the guidelines pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic are ever changing, we cannot guarantee that our entire catechetical year will be held in-person. In the event of a local or statewide shutdown we will necessarily move to online instruction.

2020 COVID-19 AMMENDMENT

Due to the pandemic that affected all of us in the spring of 2020, the 2020/21 catechetical year will be done remotely. As the Archdiocese of Chicago updates rules and regulations, SSCM RE staff will notify parents of such/any changes as they pertain to religious education.

A calendar with lesson plan/schedule will be provided for each student's grade level. Students are responsible, with the help of their parents to complete all assigned work in the time given. If for whatever reason an assignment is missed a student will need to complete that missed work by the end of the following week along with that current week's work.

As the primary educators of their child (ren), parents are responsible to help their child (ren) with assigned work completion as well as homework and any other assignments throughout the catechetical year.

Students will receive progress reports in February and June of 2021.

Due to the current situation sacramental prep may be done virtually. The religious education office will notify you with details and instructions regarding anything pertaining to your child's sacrament.

*RE Program – Religious Education Program

*SSCM – Saint Cyril and Methodius Parish

*PLB Building – Parish Life Building

*BL RE – Bilingual Religious Education Program

Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The religious education program will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as practical; however, some changes might be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.

Together we are...



Family centered



Christ centered



Scripture centered