



ST. ALOYSIUS  
CATHOLIC CHURCH

# **Parish School of Religion Handbook Grades 1–6**

2025–2026

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# ST. ALOYSIUS

## CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome to the St. Aloysius Catholic Church Parish School of Religion (PSR)! We are so grateful that you've entrusted us with an important part of your child's faith journey. Our goal is to partner with you in helping your child grow in love and knowledge of Jesus Christ and His Church.

At St. Aloysius, we believe that parents are the first and most important teachers of the faith. Our PSR program is here to support you in that sacred role by offering catechesis rooted in Scripture, Tradition, and joyful encounters with our Catholic faith.

Throughout the year, your child will learn about the sacraments, prayer, the life of Jesus, and what it means to live as a disciple. Our dedicated catechists and volunteers strive to create a welcoming and engaging environment where every child feels loved, valued, and encouraged to grow in faith.

This handbook includes important information about our program—policies, expectations, procedures, and opportunities for involvement. Please take a few moments to review it so that we can work together to ensure a smooth and meaningful year.

We are looking forward to a year filled with grace, learning, and joyful faith experiences. Thank you for being part of our PSR family!

In Christ,

Leslie Doyle

Director of Children's Formation

St. Aloysius Catholic Church

[ldoyle@staloyusparish.com](mailto:ldoyle@staloyusparish.com)

## Program Overview

The Parish School of Religion (PSR) at St. Aloysius Catholic Church is designed for children in Grades 1–6 who attend public or non-Catholic private schools. The program meets 12 times during the school year and provides catechetical instruction to help children grow in their relationship with Jesus and their understanding of the Catholic faith.

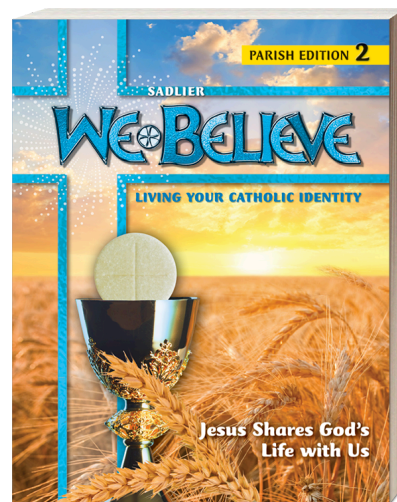
### Class Schedule:

PSR classes are held on designated Sunday mornings from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. A detailed calendar with holidays, special events, and sacramental preparation dates will be provided at the start of the year.

### Curriculum:

We use *We Believe: Living Your Catholic Identity, Parish Edition* by Sadlier Religion, which is aligned and correlated with the New Directory for Catechesis and NCEA ACRE Domains, Key Concepts, and Literacy Terms and is one of the recommended religious education curricula of the Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge.

For more information, visit the [curriculum website](#) and the *We Believe, Living Your Catholic Identity, Scope and Sequence*.



### Sacramental Preparation:

Children preparing for First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation will have additional requirements and parent meetings. More details are provided in the Sacramental Preparation section of this handbook.

We ask that parents actively participate by reinforcing what is taught in class, praying together as a family, and attending Mass regularly. Together, we can help form strong, joyful, and faithful young Catholics.

## **Calendar Overview**

PSR for grades 1–6 will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the classrooms surrounding the St. Aloysius Catholic School cafeteria. There will be a parent meeting on Sunday, September 7 at 8:30 a.m., prior to the first class, in the St. Aloysius Cafeteria. Please see PSR meeting dates below.

### **PSR Meeting Dates**

- September 7
- September 21
- October 5
- October 26
- November 2
- November 16
- December 7
- December 14
- January 11
- February 8
- March 8
- March 22

### **Sacramental Dates**

- January 11, First Reconciliation Afternoon of Reflection
- January 14, First Reconciliation Celebration
- March 1, First Eucharist Afternoon of Reflection
- March 10, First Eucharist Celebration (Group 1)
- March 12, First Eucharist Celebration (Group 2)

Please check your email regularly for updates, reminders, or any schedule changes due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. You can also visit our [parish website](#) and parish bulletin for information and upcoming events.

## Communication & Contact Information

Clear and consistent communication is essential to keeping families informed and engaged throughout the PSR year. We do our best to provide timely updates, reminders, and resources to support your child's faith formation.

### How We Communicate

- **Email:** Our primary method of communication. Please make sure we have an up-to-date email address on file and check it regularly.
- **Remind Text Alerts:** We use the Remind app for quick notifications, reminders, and emergency updates. You can join our Remind group by texting @8kk9gak to the number 81010.
- **Parish Website:** Visit <https://www.aloysius.org/psr> for the PSR calendar, announcements, and forms.
- **Parish Bulletins:** Parish information and diocesan programs are shared each week. Bulletins are available online, at the church or emailed weekly to parishioners.
- **Printed Handouts:** Occasionally, students will bring home important papers or event information. Please check PSR sacks regularly.

### Who to Contact

Leslie Doyle  
Director of Children's Formation  
[ldoyle@stalloysiusparish.com](mailto:ldoyle@stalloysiusparish.com)  
(225) 343-6657

Feel free to reach out with any questions, concerns, or updates regarding your child. We're here to partner with you every step of the way!

## Attendance Policy

Because our PSR program meets only once a week, regular attendance is essential to your child's faith formation. Each lesson builds upon the last, and consistent participation helps your child grow spiritually and stay connected to their peers and catechist.

### Absences

If your child will miss a class, please notify the Director of Children's Formation by emailing Leslie Doyle at [ldoyle@staloysiusparish.com](mailto:ldoyle@staloysiusparish.com).

To receive credit for a missed class, students are expected to complete any make-up work provided by their catechist and return it the following week.

### Excessive Absences

If a student misses **two consecutive classes** without communication from a parent, we will reach out to check in and offer support.

If a student accumulates **four unexcused absences** (without making up the missed assignments), the child is at risk of being withdrawn from PSR. We understand that family schedules can change or unexpected challenges may arise. If regular attendance becomes difficult, we offer a HomeSchool PSR option. Please contact our office if you'd like to discuss this alternative.

## Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

The safety of every child entrusted to our program is a top priority. Please follow these procedures carefully to ensure a smooth and secure start and end to each PSR session.

### Arrival

- Please arrive on time. Classes begin promptly at 9:00 a.m.
- Children should be walked into the building and signed in by a parent or guardian.
- Catechists and staff will be present to greet students upon arrival.

### Dismissal

- Students will be dismissed from their classrooms at 10:30 a.m.
- Please ensure that you pick up your children on time. If you are delayed, contact Leslie Doyle at [ldoyle@staloysiusparish.com](mailto:ldoyle@staloysiusparish.com) as soon as possible.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep all students safe and accounted for during arrival and dismissal.

## Behavior Expectations & Discipline Policy

At St. Aloysius PSR, we strive to create a Christ-centered environment where every child feels safe, respected, and ready to grow in their faith. In order to maintain a positive and productive classroom setting, students are expected to demonstrate behavior that reflects the values of our Catholic faith.

### Student Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Show kindness and respect to catechists, classmates, and themselves.
- Listen attentively and follow directions the first time they are given.
- Participate in class activities with a positive and cooperative attitude.
- Respect parish property and classroom materials.
- Refrain from disruptive or inappropriate behavior.

### Discipline Process

When behavior concerns arise, we will address them with care and consistency:

1. **Verbal Warning:** The catechist will address the behavior with a gentle reminder.
2. **Second Warning:** Continued disruption may result in a brief separation from the group or a private conversation.
3. **Referral to the PSR Director:** If the behavior persists or is serious in nature, the student will be referred to the Director of Children's Formation.
4. **Parent Contact:** Parents will be contacted if the issue continues or if immediate intervention is needed.
5. **Further Action:** In cases of repeated or serious behavior issues, a meeting with the family may be required. Continued disruptive or disrespectful behavior may result in temporary or permanent removal from the program.

We believe that discipline is most effective when rooted in mutual respect and a shared goal of helping children grow in both faith and character. Our goal is always to guide, not punish, and to partner with families to ensure a positive experience for every student.



## **Safe Environment/Circle of Grace**

The safety and well-being of every child in our PSR program is of utmost importance. We are committed to providing a secure and nurturing environment where all children can grow in faith with confidence and peace of mind.

### **Safe Environment Compliance (Volunteers)**

St. Aloysius Catholic Church complies fully with the Diocese of Baton Rouge Child and Youth Protection Policy. All catechists, aides, and volunteers who work directly with children are required to:

- Complete Safe Environment training
- Undergo a background check
- Agree to follow all diocesan guidelines for working with minors

### **Circle of Grace**

The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* requires that all children enrolled in Catholic Schools and Parish Schools of Religion receive Safe Environment training. Circle of Grace lesson plans for your child's grade level may be reviewed at the following link: <https://diobr.org/child-youth-protection>. Scroll down and click on the link titled "Circle of Grace Log In." The password is CareSafeChurch.

The Circle of Grace lesson(s) for your child's grade level is scheduled on **Sunday, February 8, 2025**. Information will be provided at a later date for parents choosing to opt their children out of receiving safe environment training.

## Sacramental Preparation

The sacraments are sacred milestones in your child's journey of faith. Our parish is honored to walk with families in preparing children to receive **First Reconciliation**, **First Holy Communion**, and **Confirmation**. These sacraments require special preparation in addition to regular PSR attendance.

### First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion

- Typically celebrated in **2nd Grade**, but available for older students as well.
- In adherence to the policies of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, sacramental preparation requires **two years of catechesis** prior to receiving these sacraments.
- Parents are required to attend informational meetings and help their child complete home-based preparation materials.
- Student and parent attendance at both First Reconciliation and First Eucharist preparation parent meetings and retreats are required during the preparation year

### Confirmation

- In December of 2024, Bishop Duca announced that each Church Parish in the Diocese of Baton Rouge would begin a transition plan in our Confirmation programs that will eventually lower the age of Confirmation to the seventh grade.
- For more information on St. Aloysius' plan to adhere to the Diocese's new requirements, please visit the [Confirmation page](#) on our church website.

### Older Children in Need of Sacraments

The **Order of Christian Initiation for Children (OCIC)** is intended for children, not baptized as infants or who are baptized but have not received any formal catechesis, who have attained the use of reason (age 7 +) and are of catechetical age. It is also for children who are baptized in the Catholic faith but were never prepared for Reconciliation, Eucharist, or Confirmation.

If you have any questions about your child's sacramental eligibility or the process, please contact Leslie Doyle at [ldoyle@stalloysiusparish.com](mailto:ldoyle@stalloysiusparish.com).

## Volunteer Opportunities

Our Parish School of Religion thrives thanks to the generosity and dedication of volunteers who share their time, talents, and love for the faith. There are many ways to get involved, and we welcome your support!

### Ways to Serve:

- **Catechist:** Lead a class of students each week using provided lesson plans and materials. Training and support are provided.
- **Classroom Aide:** Assist the catechist with classroom activities, attendance, and supervision.
- **Substitute Catechist:** Fill in when a regular catechist is unavailable.
- **Retreat Helper:** Assist with planning or staffing sacramental retreats for First Communion or Confirmation.
- **Special Events Volunteer:** Help with family nights, prayer services, or seasonal celebrations.

All volunteers working with children must complete the Safe Environment training and a background check in accordance with diocesan policy.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the church office or indicate your interest on the registration form. Your presence makes a real difference in the lives of our children—and it's a wonderful way to grow in your own faith as well!

## **Homeschool PSR Option**

We understand that family schedules and unique circumstances may make it difficult to attend weekly in-person PSR sessions. For those situations, St. Aloysius offers a HomeSchool PSR option to ensure that all children have access to faith formation.

### **Who Can Participate**

- Families with scheduling conflicts
- Children with special learning needs
- Families seeking to teach faith lessons in a home-based setting

### **How It Works**

- The PSR office will provide approved curriculum materials and a suggested pacing calendar outlining topics to be covered throughout the year.
- Parents serve as the primary catechists at home, committing to regular instruction and completion of lessons.
- Families must meet with the Director of Children's Formation prior to beginning home school instruction.
- Periodic check-ins and completed work may be required to ensure adequate formation and progress.
- Home school students preparing for sacraments must also participate in all required sacramental preparation, including sacramental retreats and parent meetings.

We are happy to support families who choose this path and will provide the tools needed to make it a fruitful and enriching experience.

If you're interested in the homeschool option or would like more information, please contact Leslie Doyle at [ldoyle@stalloysiusparish.com](mailto:ldoyle@stalloysiusparish.com).

**PSR Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

**St. Aloysius Catholic Church – Parish School of Religion (PSR)  
2025–2026 School Year**

We have received and reviewed the St. Aloysius PSR Handbook. We understand and agree to follow the policies and expectations outlined, including attendance, behavior, safety, sacramental preparation, and parent responsibilities.

We recognize that this handbook is intended to foster a cooperative and faith-filled learning environment and to support our child’s spiritual development in partnership with the parish.

Please complete and return this form by September 21.

Child’s Name	Grade

**Parent/Guardian Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_