

## PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION (PSR)

All classes meet on Sunday morning from  
September through early May.

PRE-SCHOOL - ages 3, 4 and 5

Time: During the 10:00 am Mass

Location: Classrooms under the Church

GRADES 1 - 8

Time: 8:30 – 9:45 am

Grades 1- 3 held under the Church

Grades 4 - 8 held in Fr. Heider Hall

Because time for PSR classes is very limited,  
classes begin promptly at 8:30 am.

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance is tracked and  
expected to be regular. Please call 513-688-  
3626 if your child will miss class. We contact  
parents for excessive absences.

In case of accident or sickness, students are  
sent to the faith formation office and a parent  
is called. Please verify we have the best  
number to reach you on Sunday mornings!

Please pick up your child promptly at 9:45 am  
for catechists to attend 10:00 am Mass.

For safety reasons, students can only be  
dismissed early with a parent's written  
request and permission from the CRE.

**DISCIPLINE:** The children consistently  
exceed our expectation, which is appreciated!  
Issues that might arise will be addressed on  
an individual basis with dialogue including  
the catechist, CRE, and parents.

**RELIGIOUS FORMATION DEVELOPS  
BEST** when it occurs with and beyond  
classroom training and sacramental  
preparation. Our children's dedication to  
their faith is directly related to how  
authentically we Catholic parents live the  
faith. Developing a relationship with Christ  
and understanding all of God's gifts and His  
Will for us is a life-long journey of learning  
and requires we be role models for them.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Sacraments are essential to our lives! Their  
Divine gifts and effects are greater than any  
imagined magic! In choosing to receive them  
we express our faith, praising God. Through  
them, we build up the Body of Christ and His  
Church, and God sanctifies us.

To most fully receive and benefit from the  
supernatural gifts granted through the  
Sacraments, one must have a true  
understanding of their meaning and purpose.  
Preparation is required to ensure we are  
properly disposed and committed to the  
responsibilities and way of life presupposed  
by the Sacrament. Thus, children in grades 2,  
7 and 8 **MUST** receive religious education,  
although all ages should as well.

### PROCESS

Sacramental Preparation is formation, not a  
class, and thus occurs outside the classrooms  
and with parent participation.

First Reconciliation and Eucharist  
preparation occur during 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

Confirmation preparation begins the second  
half of 7<sup>th</sup> grade and continues into the spring  
of 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**ATTENDING PSR IN NON-SACRAMENTAL  
YEARS** is necessary for children to most fully  
understand God's Love and Plan for us - the  
meaning of life! They engage more willingly  
and fully with their faith, in new ways at each  
level of personal development.

1<sup>st</sup> Grade: The teachings, prayers and  
formation in first grade are foundations for a  
basic understanding of Jesus, His Love for us,  
and our friendship with Him – before we  
approach Him in the Sacraments of  
Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist next year.

3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Continued religious  
formation is **ESSENTIAL** for a child's faith to  
mature intellectually and emotionally. Their  
awareness of the world outside themselves  
grows, along with a deepened understanding  
of the meaning and import of God, their faith,  
and its Sacraments.

### BEGINNING LATER

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and Higher youths who have not  
received the Sacraments of First  
Reconciliation and First Eucharist enter the  
RCIA program for youth, called RCIY.

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade youths who wish to receive the  
Sacrament of Confirmation but have not  
regularly attended religious formation require  
special preparation. The CRE, Pastor, and  
parents collaborate for the youth's best plan.

## VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteers are the foundation of the St.  
Thomas More PSR program, but parental  
involvement significantly strengthens.  
Because parents are each child's primary  
educator, there are numerous opportunities  
for you to participate! This can be as a full or  
part-time aid or lead catechist, or in assisting  
with administrative tasks or special events.

Please let us know if you can help! Contact  
us with questions or to offer at help :

Deacon Bob Brazier, CRE  
[bbrazier@sttm.org](mailto:bbrazier@sttm.org) or 513-688-3626



## St. Thomas More Parish RELIGIOUS FORMATION PROGRAM

Fr. Tim Ralston, Pastor  
Deacon Bob Brazier, CRE

Dear Parents,

This pamphlet presents the vision of St. Thomas More’s Religious Formation Program for our students, families and parish community. Its intent: To support our efforts to live as Catholic Christians.

Our philosophy is to support parents in building a strong foundation for each child’s Catholic faith. Parents are the primary source of that foundation, with the religious formation program as their vital support.

God strengthens us in our lives as Catholics through weekly reception of the Eucharist and frequent reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Religious formation highlights ones’ relationship with Christ, fostering an understanding of our faith and practices for both children and parents. Knowing Him leads to loving Him. Loving Him leads us to wanting to know His Will, faith and Church more.

Keep this pamphlet handy for easy reference throughout the year and don’t hesitate to contact us with questions!

May God bless you and your family as we journey together, always learning from each other and practicing ever more the truths of our faith.

Sincerely,

*Deacon Bob Brazier*

Deacon Bob Brazier  
CRE  
[bbrazier@sttm.org](mailto:bbrazier@sttm.org)

## MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More’s religious formation program at strives first to help all students develop a personal relationship with God that becomes vital to them in their life and then to help them authentically share the Gospel Truth in a spirit of faith, hope and love.

Through their own study of the Catholic faith, catechists help prepare students to celebrate God’s love, proclaim His message, and live in accord with His Divine Loving Will. Learning, reflection, and discussion nurture a positive sense of one’s innate dignity as a human person and fosters a sense of personal mission and responsible use of freedom (vs. license), promoting a deepening awareness of service to God through serving His people.

## CURRICULUM

Our religious formation curriculum conforms to the guidelines and policies established by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for early childhood education.

Pre-School (ages 3, 4, & 5) classes use a combination of programs based on years of teaching experience, which lays the foundation for a meaningful and loving relationship with God. Children learn how God shows his love for them in creation and through people. In group activities and prayers, children learn how we Catholics celebrate our faith in, and love for, God through Christian Community.

Grades 1 – 5 The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the definitive teaching from the collective wisdom of Christ, Tradition, and the Magisterium. Applying this wisdom to today’s world, we learn how to live in the world, but remain not “of” the world so that we can elevate hearts and minds to Christ, for their own joy. Loyola Press’ Christ Our Life series

offers engaging lessons to lead young disciples to higher levels of moral thinking and a deeper initiation into a life of prayer. They are challenged to follow Jesus, learning and practicing skills needed for active disciples. Our goal is to form religiously literate children who come to know, love and live their faith.

Junior High students rotate through mini-courses on a three-year cycle, highlighting those faith themes that resonate with adolescents and their faith needs. Using a youth ministry approach, girls in 6th, 7th and 8<sup>th</sup> grade form one class and the boys of those grades form another. An added focus on the liturgical year, scripture study, and reflective reading occurs using the Sunday’s readings.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are sent home twice a year in January and May. The attendance record is noted at this time.

## CHILD PROTECTION

In order to maintain safety guidelines, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati mandates that all Volunteers, who work with children, must have registered with SafeParish™, complete a Child Awareness training session, received an acceptable background check, and be approved by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati before they can have contact with children. Volunteers are expected to keep current with all SafeParish™ continuing education sessions. Anyone who does not complete their quarterly continuing education session may not have any further contact with children. Information on SafeParish™ can be found on our website under organizations.

## ADMISSION

Our church is universal. There is no discrimination, including on the basis of race, sex, national origin or handicap conditions. Parents of our precious gifts who have special education needs should contact the DRE to ensure we have the proper resources in place to best catechize these precious children.

## REGISTRATION

Because children should grow in their home religious community, their home parish, families wishing to enroll in a PSR Program should be registered members of St. Thomas More Parish. Exceptions to this must be discussed with the CRE and pastor. Registration for PSR begins in the spring for the next school year.

At [www.sttm.org](http://www.sttm.org), find Parish School of Religion Registration under the Faith Formation tab, just below the words St. Thomas More, on the Home Page. From the drop down box click on the Parish School of Religion and scroll down to Important Links. There you will find the PSR registration forms.

## TUITION

Tuition fees are adjusted annually. Call the Faith Formation Office or check the St. Thomas More website for current fees.

Fees are normally due at the time of registration to offset expenses incurred in preparing for the new program year. Make checks payable to St. Thomas More Parish.

No one is refused admission to the program due to financial hardship. If you have difficulty or are unable to pay the fees, please call the CRE.