

Church of the Nativity

1061 FOLLY ROAD
Charleston, S.C. 29412
(843) 795-3821

Church of the Nativity website: www.nativitycharleston.org

Diocese of Charleston website: www.sccatholic.org

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00am–3:00pm

PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION

PARENT HANDBOOK



REV. D. ATHONY DROZE - PASTOR

Mary Smith - Director of Religious Education

DRE@nativitycharleston.org

Catherine Bowen – Office Manager

Courtney Reed- Music Ministry Director

Masses: Saturday 5:30 p.m. (vigil); Sunday 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

Weekday Masses at 11:30a.m. M-F

Parents will be notified of any change in procedures via Flocknote or parish e-blast. Please make sure you sign up on Flocknote to receive our e-blasts. You may sign up on the home page of our website.

Reconciliation: Saturday 4:15 – 5:00 & by appointment

God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength.

(CCC 1)

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” (Matthew 19:14)

Welcome to the Nativity Parish School of Religion, or PSR.

The PSR program is available to support parents, the first teachers of their children in the faith, in their mission of raising their children in the teachings of the Catholic faith. **It is open to all active, registered members of Nativity Church. Please see the Church bulletin for guidelines on Active Parishioner Status.**

Christian formation for children in grades 1 through 8 attending non-parochial schools meets on Sundays, 10:00 – 11:15 a.m. in the school building. Parents are also encouraged to sign up their K4/K5 students. A K4/K5 class will be formed if there are enough students signed up and there is the availability of a catechist for this grade level.

PSR Parent Guidelines

Registration:

A current registration form must be on file.

Forms contain emergency contact & sacramental information.

Parents must sign the handbook agreement statement located at the end of the PSR registration.

Arrival / Dismissal Safety

Parents/Guardians are responsible for supervising their children anywhere on Nativity property other than during the set time for PSR.

- Parents are to walk children ages 4 through 5th grade to the classroom and pick up children from classrooms at dismissal.
- If somebody other than the identified parent / guardian, or older sibling is picking up a child, the parent / guardian is to inform the catechist ahead of time. Please make sure your child's catechist knows who is allowed to pick up your child.
- At dismissal there is to be no loitering in halls, classrooms, or restrooms.

Fees & Books:

There is a \$60 fee per child for PSR. This includes textbook/materials for grade in which student is enrolling. Students will receive a bible that goes with their curriculum in the 2nd grade which they will carry through

the 5th Grade. Students will receive a bible and textbook in the 6th grade which they will carry through the 8th grade/Confirmation. Sacramental preparation fees are additional and due only the second year of the sacramental prep program.

First Communion & Reconciliation - \$40.00 per child

Confirmation - \$40.00 per child

Again, some books are used multiple years. Lost books must be replaced at the family's expense.

Attendance & Participation:

A calendar of the PSR year is provided with registration forms. Please refer to the calendar and sacramental prep info for dates of required meetings, retreats, etc. The calendar is also available on the parish website.

Due to the limited amount of time allotted for PSR, it is important that children arrive on time for class.

Should a child need to miss a class, parents are to contact the catechist and get the information that was covered in class. Parents are then responsible to do the lesson with their child in order that the child be prepared to fully participate in PSR upon returning to class. Children should bring textbooks to class with them.

Parents are to review weekly lessons with their children. Most children will not retain what is learned in class unless it is discussed and reviewed in the home. Additionally, all students are to attend Sunday Mass regularly, as the Eucharist is the "source and summit of the Christian life." (LG, no.11) The family, as the domestic church, helps the child to live out these lessons in daily life. **As parents, we give witness to the importance of catechesis through our own participation in life-long faith-formation and our participation in the life of the parish. Parents are encouraged to attend Mass weekly with their children and nurture their own faith lives through study and participation in church ministries. We bring our children to Jesus, literally, when we bring them to Mass. What a gift!**

Sacraments:

A two-year process is required in the sacramental preparation of Reconciliation/Eucharist and Confirmation. Parents and children are required to attend meetings and retreats throughout the year. There are **attendance requirements** for PSR youth in sacramental prep classes (1st and 2nd Grades; and 7th and 8th grades). Students may not miss more than 4 classes during each of sacramental prep years. **Regular Mass attendance is required and parents should be active, contributing members of the parish. Register and sign up for envelopes and/or My E-offering at www.nativitycharleston.org.**

Creating Safe Environments

The Teaching Touching Safety Program is a sexual abuse awareness/prevention program that all parishes are required to offer parish children K5 and older each year. This will again be taught during PSR class time; however any needed make up classes will be scheduled outside of regular PSR time. You must complete an **Opt-out form** which is attached to your registration form if you **do not** want your child/children to participate in this program. If you do not complete the opt-out form, your child will be included in the program.

Parents are invited, but not required to attend this class with their children. Various grade level class times are included on your PSR calendar. A website and information on how to access your child's grade level lesson plan for this year is printed on the Opt-out form included in your registration packet. There is an informative parent guide for Teaching Touching Safety. If you have not received a copy in the past, or you would like another copy, please contact Mary Smith at the church office. The parent guide is also available at [National Catholic \(virtus.org\)](http://NationalCatholic(virtus.org)).

Discipline:

No corporal punishment is allowed.

Catechists are volunteers sharing their faith with our children and are not necessarily teachers trained in classroom management. Should behavior of a student become disruptive to the class, parents will be asked to sit in on classes and manage their child's behavior to allow catechists to present a lesson. We appreciate full cooperation in this area.



Church of the Nativity

1061 Folly Road
Charleston, SC 29412

843-795-3821
www.nativitycharleston.org

July 1, 2026

Dear Parents,

Please find enclosed a registration form for the 2026/2027 PSR year. Please register and pay on line at <https://nativityfamily.flocknote.com/signup/265437> . **This is the first year we are offering online registration through our Parish Database system and payment via our new Flocknote platform. The hope is that, in the future, you will only need to update your previous registration form instead of completing a whole new form.**

Part of the hurdle for this year will be to make sure everyone is in the new database with accurate information. Not all information re-populated correctly in the transfer from platform to platform, so I encourage you to take a few minutes to check your family registration in Flocknote as parishioners can now manage and update that on their own.

There is additional information on our faith formation materials at the end of this letter. In this packet, you will find the calendar for the year. This calendar is also available on the parish website under the FORMATION tab. **Please also note the parent meeting times for the sacramental preparation programs if applicable. These meetings are for parents in the 2nd year of formation (typically 2nd grade and 8th grade PSR).**

There is a section in the handbook pertaining to the Creating Safe Environments Teaching Touching Safety Program for children. This applies to PSR children K5 and older. Please also read the attached *Teaching Touching Safety* “opt out” form even if you would like your child to participate in the program. This form has additional website information which includes a good parent guide for you to review in order to make an informed decision. Opt-out forms must be emailed to dre@nativitycharleston.org.

Registration deadline is Monday, July 27, in order that enough textbooks and supplies can be ordered. There is a \$20 late registration fee for registrations received after July 27.

PSR is currently in need of additional catechists. If you are an active, practicing Catholic and would like to share your faith with the youth of our parish, I would like to invite you to prayerfully consider becoming involved in this very important ministry. Please contact me with questions or to discuss this ministry further.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. I look forward to working with you and our wonderful catechists in the faith formation of our children.

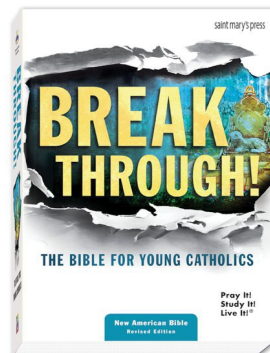
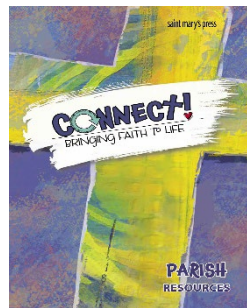
God bless,
Mary L. Smith, Director of Religious Education

If your child is a returning student, you may recall that we made a switch in the textbook series several years ago. Your child may be using some of the same books this year. So, for example, if they were in 2nd grade PSR last year, they should already have the Children's Bible and will not receive another unless it has been lost and you need to purchase another. If this is the case, please contact Mary Smith, DRE as I can probably get it at a lower cost than your trying to get in on your own. If you are new to Nativity PSR, the program will include the bible for your child. Every student will receive grade level text/worksheet packet (included in the regular fee. Feel free to call me if you have any questions about materials needed.

Our rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students will be using the St Mary's Press Series which is titled Connection! Bringing Faith to Life along with the Breakthrough! Bible for Young Catholics.

Returning 7th and 8th Graders should already have these books (if they attended PSR last year.) They will use these same books through the 8th grade.

6th graders and new 7th and 8th grade students will receive books which they will use through the 8th grade. Lost books will need to be replaced at parent expense.



Preschool and 1st Grade will continue to use the Gospel Weeklies, while 2-5th grades will continue in the *Discover! Finding Faith in Life* series and Sacramental series.



TO: Parents

FROM: Nativity Parish School of Religious Education (PSR)

SUBJECT: Prevention Education Notice / Opt-Out Form, *Teaching Touching Safety* (TTS) program

DATE: July 1, 2026

Nativity PSR will present a sexual abuse prevention program, the *Teaching Touching Safety* (TTS) program, to our students on the dates listed in the PSR calendar (dates vary by grade levels).

This program is provided to us by the Diocese of Charleston and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain safe environments for all children and youth in our care.

The scheduled lesson is being offered to all students in **Nativity Parish School of Religious Education**. As a parent, you have the right to choose whether your child participates. We encourage you to read the “overview” and “lesson plan” assigned to your child’s age group to understand exactly what your child will be taught. This year’s “lesson plans” can be accessed and reviewed by going online to [National Catholic \(virtus.org\)](http://NationalCatholic.org/virtus.org). Once you are on this site, scroll down the page to locate your child’s grade level and open **Lesson 5 – Being a Safe Friend**. This is the lesson which will be presented this year. The **Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide for Parents, Guardians and Other Caring Adults** is also available on this site. If you have questions about the program or the lesson, or if you would like to come by the office to review or receive a printed copy of this year’s lesson plan for your child’s grade level, please contact Mary Smith at 843-795-3821 ext. 104.

It is important to note, this is basic prevention education and is in no way to be considered sex education or education on private body parts. Neither of these components fall within our educational mandate. The goal of TTS is to provide your child with the information needed to help keep them safe from those who would do them harm.

If you determine that you DO NOT want your child to participate, please complete the “opt-out” form at the bottom of this page, and return it to Mary Smith, DRE when you register. You may opt your child out of the program at any time before their scheduled lesson presentation date (see PSR calendar).

2026-2027 Opt-out form for use with the Teaching Touching Safety program:

Nativity Parish School of Religious Education does not have my permission to present the *Touching Safety* program, to my child/children whose name(s) is/are 1. _____ Grade _____

2. _____ Grade _____ 3. _____ Grade _____

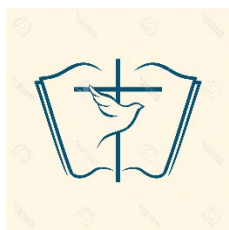
4. _____ Grade _____.

Parent’s name (printed): _____

Parent’s Signature: _____

Date: _____

Nativity Parish School of Religion



USCCB Theme
for the Catechetical Year:

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon
me... to bring good news to
the poor"*
Lk 4:18; cf. Is 61:1

2026 / 2027 Sundays 10:00 - 11:15

Jan 3 class
10 class
17 no class, MLK holiday
24 class
31 class

Feb 7 class
14 no class, President's Day holiday
21 class
28 class

Mar 7 class
14 class-daylight savings, clocks forward 1hr.
21 class
21 no class, Palm Sunday
28 no class, Easter break

Apr 4 class
11 class
18 class
24---→ ***** required *****
April 24, 1st Communion Retreat,
time 9:45AM to 1PM
25 class

May 1---→ Saturday, May 1, 1st Communion
10:00 a.m.
2 class, last day of PSR,
May Crowning

June 21-25
Vacation Bible School
(tentative dates for VBS)

Sep 13 PSR begins 10:00a.m.-parents &
children sign-in in classrooms

20 class

Sept. 20-----→ Catechetical Sunday, Blessing
of Catechists at the 9am Mass

27 class (Teaching touching Safety Program for
grades 6-8 during PSR)

Oct 4 class(Teaching touching Safety Program for
grades 3-5 during PSR)

11 class (Teaching touching Safety Program for
grades K5-2 during PSR)

18 class

25 class → Rite of Enrollment of
Confirmation

Nov 1 class- All Saints Day
(daylight savings ends, fall back 1hr.)

8 class

15 class

22 class *Christ the King*

29 no class, *Thanksgiving break*

Dec 5-----→ 1st Reconciliation – Saturday
10am

6 class, 2nd Sunday of Advent

13 class , breakfast w/ Santa

20 no class, *Christmas Break*

27 no class, *New Year's break*

The following are ***required* Parent Meetings** for Sacramental Preparation programs:
Confirmation: Parent Meeting on Wednesday, September 16, 2026 at 6:00pm, PLC

First Reconciliation/First Communion: 2 Parent Meetings required

1st Meeting – Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 6:00pm, Parish Life Center

And

2nd Meeting – Wednesday, January 6, 2027, at 6:00pm, Parish Life Center