

Parent Handbook

2024-2025 School of Religion

Our Lady of the Presentation

17220 Tom Fox Avenue (Church Office)

P.O. Box 1

Poolesville, MD 20837-0428

www.ol-presentation-md.org



Parish Mission Statement: *We are a Roman Catholic Parish family united in the Eucharist, to love others, to grow and share our faith, and to welcome all.*

Philosophy of our School of Religion: The School of Religion (SOR) supports the mission of Our Lady of the Presentation (OLP) parish by striving to meet the catechetical needs of students and families whose children attend Public, Private or Home Schools. As catechists, we supplement the growth of faith that begins and is sustained by the family. We urge families to take an active part in the religious formation of their children through regular Mass attendance, weekly religious education assignments, and family prayer.

Registration Requirements

OLP Members: One registration form for the School of Religion should be submitted per family with a tuition check payment (we cannot accept credit cards) made out to Our Lady of the Presentation. Forms are available in the church vestibule, Rectory Office (301) 349-2045 or online at www.ol-presentation-md.org and should be mailed to OLP P.O. Box 1 Poolesville, MD 20837. Submit by Friday, September 6 to avoid a \$25/child late fee. To view tuition, Religious Education time and location, please see our parish registration form.

NEW Parish Members: If a family is enrolling in the School of Religion for the first time, a **copy** of your child's Baptismal certificate is required. Your child's permanent record is maintained at the church of Baptism, and we are required to notify that parish whenever a new sacrament is received.

New parish member registration may be submitted to Our Lady of the Presentation Church Office at the same time as your Religious Education application. Submit by Friday, September 6 to avoid a \$25/child late fee.

General Policies

Absence: Our Lady of the Presentation's School of Religion attendance policy defines a successfully completed year as six or fewer absences in any grade, per year. Please contact your child's teacher or the Director in advance if absences are foreseen; makeup work may be recommended. Parent meetings may be scheduled for any child approaching or at six **(6)** classes missed within the school year. These measures are to ensure the student has obtained competency in core learning and, if applicable, is fully prepared to receive sacraments with full knowledge and reverence.

Arrival and Dismissal: All Sunday School of Religion classes begin at 9:15am and conclude at 10:30am. For children in grades K-2, parents or guardians must escort their child to and from class. In certain cases, parents of second graders may prefer an older sibling pick up their child. The second grade teacher must be notified **in writing** before this can begin. At dismissal time, parents should line up their cars in the circle outside Poolesville Elementary School (PES) and wait for their child to come out.

Conduct: We try to promote a Christian model of kindness and respect for one another that is conducive to growth and learning. If a child is consistently disruptive in class, we will ask that the parent and child meet with the Director of the School of Religion and/or Pastor to discuss ways to improve behavior.

Catechists: Parishioners are encouraged to volunteer as a Catechist or Aide. If you are able to volunteer, please fill out our School of Religion Volunteer Interest form, or our SOR Registration form, both available on the parish website. Approved catechists and aides who have been assigned to a classroom this academic year will receive a tuition discount.

Mass Attendance: All children in the Religious Education Program are expected to attend Mass on Saturday or Sunday of each week as well as Holy Days of Obligation. Religion classes are not intended to be a substitute for Mass.

Snow Cancellations: We will follow Montgomery County Public Schools policy: Mon-Fri after 5:00 pm, Call 240-777-2710 or MC311, or www.AlertMCPS to sign up.

Students with Special Needs: Please inform the Director of any significant emotional, mental or physical conditions a student may have; we can work with parents to put into place accommodations to assist the student's success. Additionally, if your child has an IEP, please provide this to their teacher at the first class.

Supplies: Children in our traditional SOR receive a textbook for use at home and in class. The text is an important form of instructional material and is to be brought to class each week. Cost of the book is included in the registration fee. The cost of replacement books will be the responsibility of the family if the original is lost.

Visitors in PES Classrooms: In order to provide a safe environment for our SOR students, all visitors must check in at the PES entrance with our Coordinator for the School of Religion, Mr. Cosma Spassiani. Parents or guardians are welcome to visit their child's classroom but **ONLY** after making an appointment with the Catechist prior to the visit and only if the conditions are not disruptive. If visits are ongoing, parent must meet with the Pastor.

Sacramental Policies

Membership: Ordinarily, individuals receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation at the parish where they are registered and attend regularly. For those intending to receive a sacrament, we ask that they make sure that they are registered at Our Lady of the Presentation. Registration forms may be found in the church Gathering Space, Rectory Office at (301) 349-2045, or online at www.ol-presentation-md.org.

Sacramental Preparation: OLPs Sacramental preparation is a two-year program for all parish children (Public, Catholic and Home School). First Holy Communion preparation occurs in 1st and 2nd grade and is typically received in May of one's 2nd grade year. If your child was not in a Catholic Religious Education program last year, they will be placed in Year 1 of our parish First Holy Communion program and will be eligible to receive First Holy Communion in May of 2026. Confirmation preparation occurs in 7th and 8th grade and is typically received in May of one's 8th grade year. If your child was not in a Catholic Religious Education program last year and is registering for 8th grade, they will be placed in Year 1 of our parish Confirmation program and will be ready to receive the sacrament in May of 2026.

Children attending Public and Home School are required to enroll in our parish School of Religion classes for both years of our sacramental programs. Preparation for First Holy Communion happens in both 1st and 2nd grades. Preparation for Confirmation happens in 7th and 8th grades. Home School families wishing to teach their children at home for 1st and 7th grades only, may do so with Director approval of their curriculum. Please contact Jessica Anderson (dsor@ol-presentation-md.org) to set up a curriculum review appointment prior to the beginning of the school year.

Children attending local Catholic Schools are encouraged to attend the OLP 2nd or 8th Grade School of Religion classes. They are REQUIRED to attend the last six (6) weeks of our parish classes prior to receiving their First Eucharist or Confirmation. In this latter case, please fill out the registration form, paying only the Sacramental fee. Please see the calendar for when these six classes begin.

ALL 8th grade Confirmation students (Public, Home School or Catholic) are expected to attend the retreat offered in their year. This year, our 8th grade retreat will be on October 7th. A Confirmation retreat at another parish may serve as a substitute with prior agreement of pastors and catechetical leaders of both parishes. Students and parents must complete all paperwork and retreat expectations of the host parish.

Father Justin will schedule a Confirmation Interview with each of the 8th Grade Confirmandi in April 2026.

Any unusual circumstances may be specially requested before the beginning of the school year. Exceptions to the requirements may be granted by the Pastor on a case by case basis.

Service Hours for 7th & 8th Grade Students:

Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time and always start with the person nearest you - St. Teresa of Calcutta

Service is both an *attitude* and an *action* which flows naturally from one's Baptismal call as a grateful response to God's gifts. Our vocation as Christians is to let the love of God take root in our physical words and actions. "...so it is with the faith that does nothing in practice. It is thoroughly lifeless." James 2:12-17

With this in mind, Our Lady of the Presentation expects its Confirmation-prep students to choose three or more service projects over the course of their 7th-8th grade years. *One project should emphasize a ministry in Parish Life. The second project should be a group project, perhaps with peers. The third project should include involvement in a parish event with family.* Below are some examples to choose from. More ideas can be found on our parish website and will be announced throughout the year.

- **Parish Life:** serving at Mass (choir, lectors, ushers, leading the Stations of the Cross), in-parish ministries (providing First Holy Communion and Confirmation receptions) and assisting in parish catechesis.
- **A Group Project:** planned and executed by the group under an agreed 'contract', format and supervision. Examples could include the March for Life, Parish Picnic, writing cards to retired religious during retreat.
- **Community-Based Service:** hospitals, nursing homes, shelters, soup kitchens
- **Immersion Experiences:** Missionaries of Charity

Service hours will no longer be tracked; however, reflection on ongoing service throughout the Confirmation process will be incorporated into class reflection time, Confirmation Retreats and/or the Confirmation Interview.

Parental Requirements for Sacramental Years: Parents of students enrolled in our sacramental classes are required to attend the class orientation at the beginning of the academic year. Please see the calendar for the date.

Please review the calendar of the upcoming SOR year and sacramental dates noted below.

**Our Lady of the Presentation Catholic Church
School of Religion/ Schedule of Classes and Events
2024-2025**

Dates Subject to Change

Areas highlighted in **red** are sacramental year events.
Areas highlighted in **green** are Archdiocese of Washington
(ADW) requirements.

Areas highlighted in **purple** are SOR holidays.



September 2024

22 Orientation for PARENTS and

STUDENTS in 8th Grade

TIME: 9:15-10:30am

LOCATION: Rectory Chapel.

29 First Day of Sunday SOR for Grades K

-8

TIME: 9:15-10:30am.

LOCATION: Poolesville Elementary School

29 Orientation for PARENTS and

STUDENTS in 2nd Grade

TIME: 9:15-10:30AM

LOCATION: PES

October 2024

6 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

7 8th Grade Retreat with NET Ministries

TIME: 2:00-8:00pm

LOCATION: Visitation Church

13 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

20 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

27 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

November 2024

3 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8)

(Daylight Savings Time Ends: turn clocks back)

Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

10 Archdiocesan Circle of Grace Lesson

17 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

24 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

December 2024

1 No Sunday SOR Class for Grades K-8 (Thanksgiving)

8 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

8 Confessions for Grades 3-8 During Sunday SOR

TIME: 9:20am start

LOCATION: PES

15 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

15 Confessions for Grades 3-8 During Sunday SOR

TIME: 9:20 am start

LOCATION: PES

22 Sunday SOR Class for Grades K-8

29 No Sunday SOR Class for Grades K-8 (Christmas Break)

January 2025

5 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

12 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

19 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

26 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

February 2025

2 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

9 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

16 No Sunday SOR Class for Grades K-8 (President's Day Weekend)

22 First Reconciliation Date

TIME: 9:30am

LOCATION: Church

23 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

March 2025

2 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

5 Ash Wednesday–Beginning of Lent

7 2nd Grade Stations of the Cross/Confession

9 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8

9 Archdiocese Spring Assessment

14 8th Grade Stations of the Cross/Confession

- 16 Sunday SOR Classes Meet for Grades K-8
- 16 Catholic School Children in 2nd and 8th Grade
Sacramental Years Begin Attending School of Religion Classes.
- 16 Tentative: Rite of Inscription for 8th Grade
TIME: 10:45am Mass
- 21 7th Grade SOR Stations of the Cross

April 2025

- 4 5th and 6th Grade SOR Stations of the Cross
- 6 Sunday SOR Class for Grades K-8
- 11 3rd and 4th Grade SOR Stations of the Cross
- 13 No Sunday SOR Class for Grades K-8 (Palm Sunday)
- 20 No Sunday SOR Class for Grades K-8 (Easter Sunday)
- 26 Second Grade Retreat
Time: 9:30-11:30am
Location: Church
- 27 Sunday SOR Classes for Grades K-8

May 2025

- 2 FHC Rehearsal
TIME: 6:00-7:15pm
LOCATION: Church
- 3 First Holy Communion
TIME: 10:00am
LOCATION: Church
- 4 Last Class for Sunday SOR, Grades K-8
- 4 2nd Grade LAST CLASS and MAY CROWNING
Time: 10:45am
Location: Church

*Confirmation date is TBD but will be one of the following dates:

- Wednesday May 7th (evening)
- Saturday May 10th
- Saturday May 17

Please keep these dates open while we await final selection by the Diocese. Confirmation rehearsals will be set once this information is received as well.



Contact Information

Director of School of Religion:
Jessica Anderson
olpdsor@olpresentationmd.org

Administrative Support for School of Religion:
Currently vacant; if interested, contact Director.

Coordinator for School of Religion:
Cosma Spassini
cspassiani@gmail.com

Parish mailing address:
Our Lady of the Presentation
P.O. Box 428
Poolesville, MD 20837