



SAINT PETER

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Dear St. Peter Families,

We are so excited to welcome you into our school family! Whether your family has deep Catholic roots, is exploring faith, or simply looking for a values-based education, we're truly glad you're here.

At St. Peter Catholic School, we believe every child is a gift from God, and it's our joy to help them grow—in wisdom, in faith, and in love.

We know that Catholic school life might feel unfamiliar at first, especially if you're not from a Catholic background. That's okay! You are not alone, and we're here to help every step of the way. This is a friendly introduction to what your child will experience at school and the "why" behind many of our traditions.

What If My Family Is Not Catholic?

We love having families from many faith traditions! Here's what to know:

- All students are included in every part of school life with gentleness and respect.
- Religion class is taught in a way that is informative.
- Students are never told that their non-Catholic traditions are wrong. In fact, if a student shares something from their own faith tradition, it is welcomed as a contribution—not discouraged or dismissed.
- Questions are always welcome! If you're ever unsure about something your child shares or experiences, please ask. We're happy to explain and walk with you.

What Is the Catholic Mass?

The Mass is the central form of Catholic worship. During Mass, we:

- Gather in prayer as a community
- Listen to readings from the Bible
- Reflect on a short sermon (called a homily)
- Receive Holy Communion (also called the Eucharist)

At school, students attend Mass regularly, usually once a week. It's a reverent, joyful part of our faith life.

What to Expect at School Mass:

- Students are assigned a *prayer partner* at the beginning of the year. They sit with them during Mass and participate together.
- Children will participate in singing, listening, standing, sitting, and kneeling.
- During Communion, Catholics who are prepared to receive the Eucharist will go up for Communion. Non-Catholic students can come forward with arms crossed across their chest for a blessing.
- Students and teachers will genuflect before entering their pew before Mass and after leaving their pew when Mass is over. [Video about genuflecting.](#)

What Parents Should Expect at School Mass:

- Parents are welcome to join us for School Mass, typically held on Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m.
- We recommend arriving by 8:25 a.m. Mass usually ends around 9:15 a.m.
- Please do not bring drinks (such as coffee or water bottles) or food into the church. Parents of toddlers or babies may bring a bottle or small snack, as needed.
- Students sit with their prayer partners in assigned pews. Parents typically sit in designated rows toward the back. Please note that parents will not sit with their student during Mass.
- We encourage parents to participate in singing, listening, standing, sitting, and kneeling. Don't worry if you're not sure when to do what—just follow those around you. Remember, we're just so glad you're here!
- During Communion, non-Catholic adults may also come forward for a blessing by crossing their arms over their chest.



- Grades 1–8 will take turns leading Mass throughout the year. Your child may be asked to be a lector, greeter, gift bearer, or usher. Teachers will notify parents in advance if their child is assigned one of these roles.

What Is a Feast Day?

A feast day in the Catholic Church honors Jesus, Mary, a saint, or an important event in Church history.

Examples include:

- **All Saints Day (Nov. 1)** – Celebrating all the saints in heaven
- **Feast of St. Peter** – Our school’s patron saint
- **Holy Days of Obligation** – Special days like Christmas or the Feast of the Immaculate Conception when Catholics attend Mass

Feast day activities might include:

- A special school Mass
- Lessons about the saint or event
- Themed activities, art, or classroom celebrations

What Is Religious Instruction Like?

All students receive daily Religion instruction. These classes:

- Teach about Scripture, the life of Jesus, virtues, and Catholic traditions
- Emphasize kindness, prayer, and service
- Include activities like storytelling, journaling, artwork, and sometimes small service projects

Our goal is to help children grow in faith, character, and understanding, no matter their background.

What Does Prayer Look Like at School?

Prayer is a natural part of each school day. You might hear your child mention:

- Morning prayer
- Prayer before and after lunch
- [Rosary](#) or the [Stations of the Cross](#)

Catholics begin and end prayer by making the Sign of the Cross. Anyone can make the sign of the cross if they so choose, with the understanding that the Sign of the Cross is a prayer within itself, acknowledging the great mystery that we believe in one God that is three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. [Video about the Sign of the Cross](#)

We invite every child to take part in prayer in a way that feels natural to them. Our hope is to create a peaceful, welcoming space where each student feels supported in their own journey of faith and wonder.

What is the role of Mary in the Catholic Church?

When Catholics call Mary their mother, it may seem like they are taking away some of the respect due to Jesus and giving it to Mary. On the contrary, calling Mary our mother can improve our relationship with Christ, and strengthen our faith life.

- Loving the people Jesus loves helps you love him more. The more you love Mary the more you love God.
- Jesus gave Mary to us as our Mother on the Cross.

[This video](#) may help explain.

Term	Meaning
Homily	A reflection given by the priest after the Scripture readings at Mass
Crucifix	A cross that includes the figure of Jesus; a reminder of His sacrifice and love
Genuflect	Before entering the pew briefly bend on one knee as a sign of reverence, facing the tabernacle
Vestments	Special garments worn by the priest during Mass, often in liturgical colors
Altar	The table in the sanctuary where the Eucharist is consecrated during Mass
Benediction	A special prayer service involving the Eucharist, often including a blessing
Adoration	A quiet time of prayer before the Eucharist, often exposed in a vessel called a monstrance
Monstrance	A vessel used to display the consecrated Host during Adoration
Stations of the Cross	A Lenten devotion that follows Jesus' journey to the cross, usually represented with images or plaques around the church
Liturgical Year	The Church's calendar of seasons and celebrations (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.)

We're So Glad You're Here

St. Peter Catholic School is more than a school—it's a faith-filled community where students are known, loved, and encouraged to grow. Whether your family is Catholic or not, we're grateful to walk alongside you in this journey.

Please never hesitate to ask questions or reach out. We are honored to have you as part of our St. Peter family!

With joy and blessings,

The St. Peter Catholic School Faculty & Staff

"Be it known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school."

Additional Resources

- <https://www.usccb.org>
- <https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church>
- <https://saintpetercatholicchurch.org>
- <https://media.ascensionpress.com>