

St. Joseph Church | 5050 St. Joseph's Road, Coopersburg, PA 18036 | 610.965.2877 | www.stjoescoopersburg.org

Parish Religious Education Program (P.R.E.P.)

Info Packet for Grades 1 through 7

Contents: Welcome & Information Letter; Arrival & Dismissal Information; Registration forms for NEW or RETURNING Students; "Circle of Grace" Letter & Opt-Out Form; 2023-2024 Calendar; Book Pickup and Teacher Meet & Greet Flyer

Welcome to the St. Joseph Church PREP Family! Our volunteer staff at St. Joseph Church looks forward to another year of sharing the teachings of Christ with the children of our Parish Family through our Parish Religious Education Program. Please read through this letter carefully for important information regarding the 2023-2024 school year. PREP Registration forms should be returned to the Rectory as soon as possible, no later than August 27th. This year, we are using two different registration forms – please be sure to utilize the appropriate form for your family.

We will once again be on a hybrid schedule for grades 1 through 7. Grade 8 will operate on their own schedule. All sessions will be held on Sunday mornings. Grades 1 through 7 will meet in person 1-2 times a month, and virtually over Zoom the remainder of the month. Grade 8 will meet in person every week. Please see the attached calendar for specific dates.

In-person classes will begin at 10:00 AM. Families may arrive at the Parish Center no earlier than 9:50 AM. Please read through the "Arrival & Dismissal" notice for additional information regarding in-person sessions.

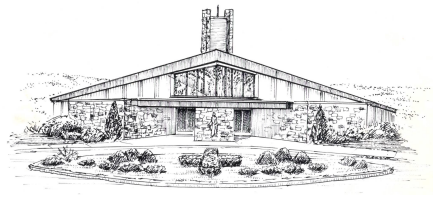
Zoom sessions will begin at 10:15AM, to give families time to transport 8th graders, where applicable. PREP teachers have the option of scheduling assignments in lieu of classes during virtual weeks, which means some students may have assignments to be completed on their own instead of a scheduled Zoom session. Grade-specific schedules will be provided by the teachers. In virtual weeks, students will need a device with a screen, speakers, and microphone, in addition to internet access. The teacher should be able to see and communicate with your child, and your child will need to be able to engage likewise. Your child will need a quiet place to work, free of distractions. If work needs to be submitted to the teacher, the teacher will give you directions on how to do so (typically via email). Teachers may also occasionally have students engage in online resources such as textbook websites, Google Docs or Forms, YouTube videos, religious and/or educational websites, etc.

Workbooks & supplemental books will be provided, and should accompany your child to each session - both in-person and virtual - along with any specific items requested by your child's teacher. When meeting in-person, we will provide writing utensils. Your child is welcome to bring a water bottle, clearly marked with his or her name. Please, no food or snacks due to potential allergies.

We are counting on the parents/guardians of our students to have a successful school year. A parent/guardian of children in grades 1-4 is strongly encouraged to be present during a Zoom session, to make sure the child is engaged and participating in the session, as well as for any troubleshooting issues with technology. A parent/guardian of students in grades 5-7 should be available to assist their student as needed, as well as make sure the child is properly engaged and participating in the Zoom session. Parents/guardians should also anticipate that they may be required to complete lessons or assignments along with their child, especially with our younger students.

Attendance will be taken both in person and in Zoom sessions, and/or via email or submission of work when a Zoom session is not held. Absences should be reported to your child's teacher prior to the scheduled session, and all homework should be submitted as requested/expected. Parents should work with their student(s) on any missed assignments.

The main source of communication between parents and teachers will be via email, as well as the class webpages located on our Parish website: <https://www.stjoescoopersburg.org/prep-news/> You will have the opportunity



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to meet your child(ren)'s teacher(s) at our Book Pickup and Teacher Meet & Greet on September 24th! See the enclosed flyer for further info.

We are aware that the schedule for PREP courses may require families to adjust their activity planning, and our PREP teachers will work with students & families to make accommodations wherever possible. However, regular PREP attendance is still required for your child(ren). Absences may result in students being held back and/or not receiving sacraments when expected. Students in sacramental preparation years must be in regular attendance at all PREP classes and keep up with assigned work in order to receive the anticipated sacrament this school year. If you are concerned this PREP schedule will not work for your family, you do have the option of searching for a PREP program within the Diocese of Allentown that would work better for your family. Please contact Mrs. O'Donnell for more information, if you wish to pursue this option. Please note that a "homeschool" curriculum is not an acceptable option.

Regular Mass attendance is also an essential part of your child(ren)'s PREP experience. We go to Mass not simply because it is an obligation, but rather because it is our loving response to the God Who has loved us first. It is an active choice of the will to give of our time, treasure, and talent – knowing full well it will never amount to the sacrifice endured by our Savior. We want the children of our Parish Family to know that they have ownership in the celebration of the Mass, whether they have been fully initiated or not, and will once again be hosting Masses throughout the school year. Each grade will have the opportunity to participate in the Mass, as well as sit together as a class. Your child(ren)'s teacher(s) will provide more information on these special events.

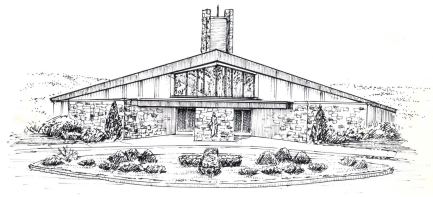
On behalf of Fr. Buckley, Deacon Paulus, our volunteer catechists, and all of our Parish Family, I wish you many blessings in these fleeting summer moments! May the new school year bring us many moments of laughter, love & learning.

Sincerely,

Janessa O'Donnell

PREP Administrator

janessa.odonnell@stjoescoopersburg.org



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Parish Religious Education Program (P.R.E.P.) ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR GRADES 1-7

In the continued interest of safety for our students and volunteers, we ask that you please look over the following information:

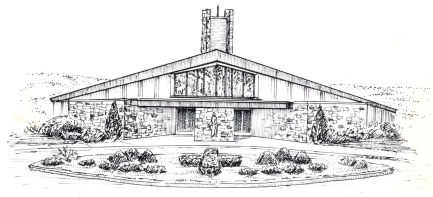
Arrival Info

- **We respectfully ask that the students be on time.** Grades 1-7 will begin at 10:00 AM. Families may arrive at the Parish Center no earlier than 9:50 AM.
- All students should be brought by their parent/guardian to the gym upon arrival. **Please do not allow your child(ren) to walk by themselves to the gym from the church.** We will have volunteers helping to direct traffic, but still need cooperation of the pedestrians in this matter due to the volume of cars leaving the 9AM Mass, as well as arriving for PREP at this time.
- Students are to sit/stand in their class lines according to their grade. Teachers will meet their students in the gym, and they will proceed to the classroom together. Latecomers will be escorted to class by a PREP volunteer.
- **Parents are not permitted to wait in the hallways during the PREP session.** The cafeteria will be open to all parents while the students are in class. Main entrance will be locked from approx. 10AM-10:40AM.

Dismissal Info

- PREP Dismissal for grades 1-7 is 10:50 AM, unless otherwise instructed.
- Students are not permitted to leave class early to go to the 11:00 AM Mass, unless prior arrangements have been made with your child's teacher.
- **Parents must wait in the Parish Center for their students.** The teacher or aide will accompany students to the Parish Center for dismissal.
- No student or parent may enter or exit the building from any area but the main Parish Center doors.
- **No child in Grades 1-3 will be allowed to exit the building unattended.**
- Students in all grades **are not permitted** to walk to the parking lot themselves. **Please do not allow your child(ren) to walk by themselves from the gym from the church.** We will have volunteers helping to direct traffic, but still need cooperation of the pedestrians in this matter due to the volume of cars arriving for the 11AM Mass, as well as leaving PREP at this time.
- If a child is to be dismissed early for some reason, they must have a note from the parent and the PREP office must be notified of the early dismissal.
- If a child is to be dismissed with anyone not listed on the emergency form submitted with your registration, you must provide a written note to the teacher at the beginning of class.

Additional Reminders: Please email Mrs. O'Donnell and your child's PREP teacher to report absences. Weather or other emergency cancellations of PREP will be announced on WFMZ. **Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our students safe! Questions/concerns should be addressed with Janessa O'Donnell - Rectory Phone: (610) 965-2877, or email: janessa.odonnell@stjoescoopersburg.org.**



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Parish Religious Education Program (P.R.E.P.) REGISTRATION FORM for the 2023-2024 School Year
RETURNING STUDENTS ONLY

Family Name _____ Preferred Email _____

Our information is the same as the 2022-2023 Year: [YES] [NO] If NO, please list changes on the reverse of this sheet.

Parent/Guardian 1 First and Last Name _____

Relationship to Student(s) _____

Parent/Guardian 2 First and Last Name _____

Relationship to Student(s) _____

If parents are separated or divorced, child/ren live(s) with: _____

- Child's Full Name _____ School grade in September 2023 _____
- Child's Full Name _____ School grade in September 2023 _____
- Child's Full Name _____ School grade in September 2023 _____
- Child's Full Name _____ School grade in September 2023 _____

Additional children can be listed on the reverse of this sheet. Please use this same format. First Grade & all other new students should be registered on a NEW STUDENT form, even if you have children returning to the program from last school year.

Do any of your children have special needs of which we should be aware? If so, please list the child and his/her need here (e.g., emergency medication*, vision/hearing loss, mobility impairment, etc.).

**If your child requires emergency medication, a parent/guardian must remain in the cafeteria with the medication for the duration of the PREP session.*

2023-2024 PREP FEES

Make checks payable to: St. Joseph Church

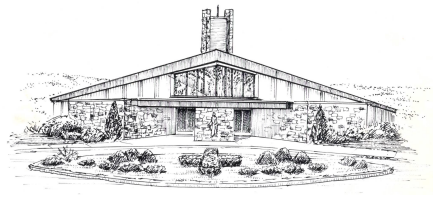
1 Child = \$100.00

2 Children = \$150.00

3 or More Children = \$185.00

PREP registration deadline: August 27, 2023

Please submit payment with registration. If financial assistance or a payment plan is needed, contact the Rectory at 610-965-2877, or janessa.odonnell@stjoescoopersburg.org. **Return form & payment via the collection basket at any Mass, or mail to: St. Joseph Church Rectory, 5050 St. Joseph's Road, Coopersburg, PA 18036**



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Parish Religious Education Program (P.R.E.P.) REGISTRATION FORM for the 2023-2024 School Year

NEW STUDENTS ONLY

Family Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Address City State Zip

Parent/Guardian 1 First and Last Name _____

Relationship to Student(s) _____ Phone _____ e-mail _____

Parent/Guardian 1 First and Last Name _____

Relationship to Student(s) _____ Phone _____ e-mail _____

If parents are separated or divorced, child/ren live(s) with: _____

• Child's Full Name _____ School grade in Sept. 2023 ____

DOB _____ Birth City & State _____

Baptism Date _____ Baptism Church, City & State _____

Sacraments Received (circle): Baptism Reconciliation Eucharist Confirmation

• Child's Full Name _____ School grade in Sept. 2023 ____

DOB _____ Birth City & State _____

Baptism Date _____ Baptism Church, City & State _____

Sacraments Received (circle): Baptism Reconciliation Eucharist Confirmation

Additional children can be listed on the reverse of this sheet. Please use this same format.

Do any of your children have special needs of which we should be aware? If so, please list the child and his/her need here (e.g., emergency medication*, vision/hearing loss, mobility impairment, etc.).

**If your child requires emergency medication, a parent/guardian must remain in the cafeteria with the medication for the duration of the PREP session.*

***** All First Grade Students AND New Registrants Must Submit a Copy of the Child's Baptismal Certificate, if they were not baptized at St. Joseph Church. Additionally, a sacramental record should be provided if your child(ren) have received First Reconciliation and/or First Eucharist. *****

2023-2024 PREP FEES

Make checks payable to: St. Joseph Church

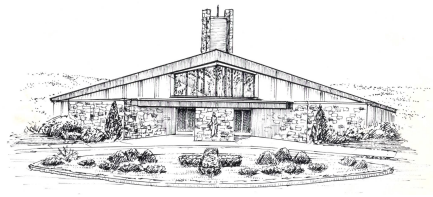
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Diocese of Allentown "Circle of Grace" Program – Grades 1-8 – 2023-2024 PREP School Year

August 1, 2023

Dear Families of St. Joseph Church PREP,

The Diocese of Allentown has once again directed all schools & parish religious education programs to present the "Circle of Grace Program". The program, developed by a team of educators and youth protection professionals in the Archdiocese of Omaha, is rooted in the Catholic faith and emphasizes dignity and respect for one's body, appropriate boundaries, and awareness of child protection topics, including online safety and grooming. Grade-appropriate modules are designed for K - 12 students and include information and resources for parents. If you wish to see what is covered in the modules, please feel free to reach out to me to be sent materials via email.

The PREP teachers will be reviewing the materials in a specified class no later than December 1, 2023. **If any parent does NOT want their child(ren) to participate in the grade-appropriate lesson, please sign and return the bottom of this form to the Rectory no later than August 27, 2023.** Your child's teacher will let you know when the lesson will be taught, and provide your child with an alternative assignment. Completed forms may be placed in the collection basket at any Mass (folded and marked PREP); emailed to the Rectory at the address above; or, PDF versions may be emailed to Mrs. O'Donnell at the email listed below (PDFs MUST contain a signature). The parent opt-out is required to be reported to the Diocese of Allentown.

We thank you for continuing to place your trust in us as we work with you and your child in partnership. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at the email listed below. You are also welcome to contact Kristin Osenbach: kosenbach@allentowndiocese.org (Parishes / PREP program) if you have any questions about the Circle of Grace program or child protection catechesis in the Diocese of Allentown. The safety of our students is always our priority, and we hope you will take advantage of and share the parental resources included with the curriculum.

God Bless,
Janessa O'Donnell
PREP Administrator, Parish Safe Environment Coordinator
janessa.odonnell@stjoescoopersburg.org

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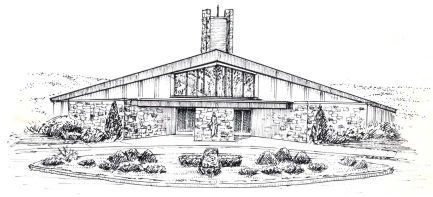
Only fill out & return this form if you do NOT want your child(ren) to participate in the Circle of Grace Program.

Name of Family: _____

Name of Child(ren) & Grade(s): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____



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Parish Religious Education Program (P.R.E.P)

Grades 1 through 8 Combined Schedules

Fall 2023 - Spring 2024

All classes will be held on Sunday mornings. Meeting times will vary between in-person and virtual class weeks.

Please note: ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

September 2023

- **17th - Gr. 8 ONLY** - Special Mass with Fr. Buckley under the Pavilion & Parent Meeting to follow - 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Dinner & fellowship included!
- **24th - Opening Children's Mass at 9:00AM AND Book Pick Up and Meet & Greet with the Teachers for GRADES 1-8.** Parents remain with the students. Doors to the Parish Center will open following the 9AM Mass; we should be finished between 10:30-11AM.

October 2023

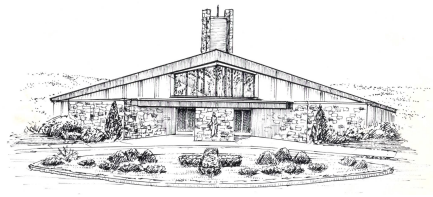
- **1st - Children's Mass at 9AM *Altar Server Investiture***
 - In-person Class - All Grades - 9:45AM-10:45AM
- 8th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- **15th - Confirmation Investiture Mass at 9AM** *Grade 8 will present this Mass & sit together as a class*
 - - In-person Class - All Grades - "*Living Rosary*" in the Parish Center
- 22nd - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 29th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
 - *ALL FAMILIES - Join us at Fr. Buckley's Fall Family Festival from 3PM-5PM!

November 2023

- **5th - Children's Mass at 9AM** *Grade 7 will present this Mass & sit together as a class.*
 - In-person Class - All Grades
- 12th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 19th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 26th - No Class - Thanksgiving Break

December 2023

- **3rd - Children's Mass at 9AM** *Grade 6 will present this Mass & sit together as a class.*
 - Advent Reflection - In-person Class - All Grades
- 10th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8



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December 2023 (continued)

- 17th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
 - **ALL FAMILIES - Join us for our Gaudete Sunday Parish Family Christmas Party - 12PM-2PM*
- 24th - No Class – Christmas Break
- 31st - No Class – Happy New Year!

January 2024

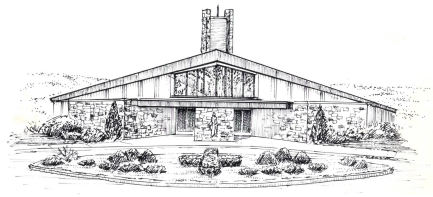
- **7th - Children's Mass at 9AM** **Grade 5 will present this Mass & sit together as a class.**
 - **In-person Class - All Grades**
- 14th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 21st - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 28th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8

February 2024

- **4th - Children's Mass at 9AM** **Grade 4 will present this Mass & sit together as a class.**
 - **In-person Class - All Grades**
- **11th - Mardi Gras Celebration 10AM-12PM** - All PREP families & the parish community are welcome! Drop-in anytime between 10AM-12PM. Parents/Guardians should remain with their students (no class).
- **14th - Ash Wednesday** - All Classes attend 7PM Mass
- 16th - Confessions (6PM) followed by Stations of the Cross (7PM) - Grades 4 through 7. *An online sign-up sheet will be provided to families to sign up for one Friday evening during Lent.*
- 18th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 23rd - Confessions (6PM) followed by Stations of the Cross (7PM) - Grades 4 through 7. *An online sign-up sheet will be provided to families to sign up for one Friday evening during Lent.*
- 25th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8

March 2024

- 1st - Confessions (6PM) followed by Stations of the Cross (7PM) - Grades 4 through 7. *An online sign-up sheet will be provided to families to sign up for one Friday evening during Lent.*
- 2nd - First Reconciliation 10:00AM (grade 2 only)
- **3rd - Children's Mass at 9AM** **Grade 2 will present this Mass and sit together as a class**
 - **In-person Class - All Grades - Stations of the Cross & Lenten Reflection**



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March 2024 (continued)

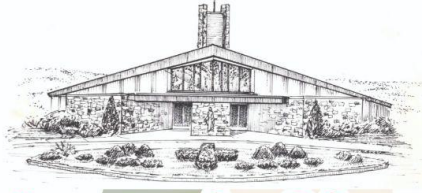
- **8th** - Confessions (6PM) followed by Stations of the Cross (7PM) - Grades 4 through 7. *An online sign-up sheet will be provided to families to sign up for one Friday evening during Lent.*
- 10th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 15th - Confessions (6PM) followed by Stations of the Cross (7PM) - Grades 4 through 7. *An online sign-up sheet will be provided to families to sign up for one Friday evening during Lent.*
- 17th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - In-person Class - Grade 8
- 22nd - Confessions (6PM) followed by Stations of the Cross (7PM) - Grades 4 through 7. *An online sign-up sheet will be provided to families to sign up for one Friday evening during Lent.*
- **23rd - ALL FAMILIES - Join us for Fr. Buckley's Annual Egg Hunt - 11AM - Rain or Shine!**
- 24th - Palm Sunday - No Class
- 31st - Easter Sunday - No Class

April 2024

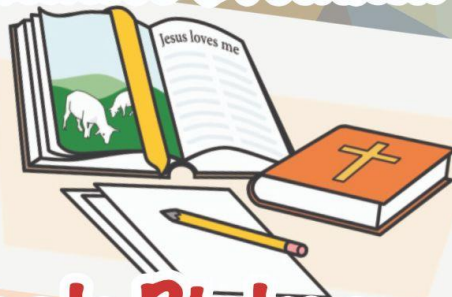
- **7th** - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
 - **Grade 8 ONLY - Confirmation Retreat 11AM-4PM**
- 11th - Confirmation - 4PM (grade 8 only)
- 14th - **Children's Mass at 9AM** *Grade 1 will present this Mass and sit together as a class*
 - **In-person Class - Grades 1-7**
- 21st - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7
- 27th - First Eucharist Retreat 9AM-12PM (3rd grade only)
- 28th - Virtual Class Week - Grades 1-7

May 2024

- 4th - First Eucharist 10:00AM (3rd grade only)
- **5th - Children's Mass at 9:00AM** - May Crowning & Honoring of First Communicants. **Grade 3 will present this Mass & sit together as a class.**
 - **End-of-Year Celebration to follow in the Parish Center for all grades!**



St. Joseph Church PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM



Book Pickup and Teacher Meet & Greet

Sunday, September 24, 2023

Join us for a Children's Mass at 9:00AM.

**We will gather in the Parish Center immediately following,
approximately 10:00AM.**

**We will be making a few brief announcements before introducing the teachers.
Students will then have the opportunity to say hello and pick up their supplies for
the new year!**

Parent/Guardian must accompany the student and remain for the duration of the event.

Questions? Email janessa.odonnell@stjoescoopersburg.org