

St. Joseph Catholic School

Grades 5-8 Handbook



Revised 8/2024

WELCOME!

Welcome to St. Joseph Catholic School's grades 5-8 program. All of us here at St. Joseph's are looking forward to another exciting and challenging school year. Our hope is that you grow in those values Jesus witnessed in his life - respect for himself and others, genuine concern, especially for outcasts, and an enthusiasm for all that is good and beautiful. We challenge each student to give his/her personal best.

The teachers and staff are here to help you in any way they can. Parents and students are encouraged to ask questions and share concerns with the teachers and staff. Please ask for help, as you need it, teachers are always happy to assist you in your learning. All students are to be active learners and participants in all that we do here at St. Joseph's.

Please take time to go over this handbook carefully and keep it handy for a quick reference as needed.

Disciple of Christ

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your heavenly father. " Matthew 5:16

Caught Practicing Virtue cards will be given when students exemplify virtues. These cards will list the virtue a student has modeled with a brief explanation. This will promote continued virtues, students as role models, and also give praise to our Lord Jesus Christ.

A Christian Witness certificate will be awarded to students who practice consistent virtues. These may be given to students from the Principal, Teachers, Teacher aids, Lunch Ladies, and other school staff members.

Discipline

Classroom discipline will be based on the Education in Virtue program that we have been utilizing for the past few years with our Virtue of the Week. The Education in Virtue program was created by the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist.

The policies are based on the following premise: Discipline always starts with teaching, prompting, and acknowledging positive behavior.

The Virtues program will:

- Increase consistency across classrooms
- Make school a predictable, consistent, positive environment for students
- Have positive school-wide implications
- Allow students to develop Christian attitudes

Negative consequences will be used to achieve the following

- Prevent problem behavior from being rewarded
- Prevent problem behavior from escalating
- Prevent problem behavior from disrupting instruction from others
- Provide teaching opportunities

Conduct and Effort grades will be shown in FACTS so that parents can track changes over the course of the quarter. Conduct and effort grades are part of the Archdiocese of Detroit report card and are counted towards honor roll status. As we strive to mold young Christians, we are tasked with shaping and developing the whole child. Think sheets are designed to help students reflect on their choices and consider ways to make better choices in the future. All detentions (and more serious consequences) will be processed through the main office.

Behavior rubrics and think sheets are pictured below. Students will also receive a paper copy.



St. Joseph Catholic School Behavior Rubrics

Effort Rubric

Student Action	Virtues to be Cultivated	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Preparedness for class (bringing textbooks, folders, writing utensils, homework, etc.)	Responsibility, Industriousness, Orderliness, Perseverance	Warning	Email to parent	Think Sheet with parent signature required	Detention
Academic Responsibility: homework and assignments completed	Responsibility, Industriousness, Orderliness, Perseverance	Proceed to step 2	10% Reduction	20% Total Reduction	30% Total Reduction 0% on day 4
Cheating/Academic Dishonesty (copying, plagiarism, forgery)	Self-control, Respect, Obedience, Responsibility, Industriousness, Honesty	Proceed to step 2	0% credit on work, Think Sheet with parent signature required	0% credit on work, Detention, parent-teacher conference	0% credit on work, Detention, parent, teacher, and principal conference

- Teachers reserve the right to first address student effort concerns by giving reminders/warnings and talk through the situation with the student. Based on the severity of the infraction, teachers will proceed to step 1.

St. Joseph Catholic School is a Catholic community that helps all persons grow to the fullness of their potential in faith and knowledge.

Daily Conduct Rubric

Student Action	Virtues to be Cultivated	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Non-Christian Behaviors (including but not limited to: name calling, put-downs, insults, teasing, sarcasm, harmful or inappropriate words/actions, inappropriate church behavior)	Kindness, Self-Control, Respect, Courtesy, Obedience, Orderliness, Perseverance, Humility, Prayerfulness, Patience	Verbal Warning	Think Sheet, parent signature required	Before school detention	After school detention with principal
Disrespect to Adults or Property (talking back, arguing, ignoring requests from adults, refusal)	Kindness, Respect, Courtesy, Obedience, Good Judgment, Meekness, Self-Control, Humility, Moderation, Gratitude	Verbal Warning	Think Sheet, parent signature required	Before school detention	After school detention with principal
Cell phone use during the day without permission	Courtesy, Obedience, Self-Control, Respect, Self-Control,	Cell phone is confiscated and taken to office, a parent must come and pick up	Cell phone is confiscated and taken to office, a parent must come and pick up, Think Sheet, parent signature required	Cell phone is confiscated and taken to office, a parent must come and pick up, Before school detention	Cell phone is confiscated and taken to office, a parent must come and pick up, after school detention with principal

- Teachers reserve the right to first address student behavioral concerns by giving reminders/warnings and talk through the situation with the student. Based on the severity of the infraction, teachers will proceed to step 1.
- Serious offenses will be handled as outlined in the St. Joseph School Handbook by the principal.

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St. Joseph Catholic School
5th-8th Grade
Think Sheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

The inappropriate behavior I displayed was:

Why did I feel the need to act this way?

What virtue do I need to cultivate?

How will I use this virtue in the future to avoid similar situations?

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

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DRESS CODE

The school uniform is a symbol of a student's pride in him/herself and the school. By enrolling in St. Joseph Catholic School, parents and students have entered into an implied contract with the school. The school will educate the enrolled students so long as the students and parents abide by the school's standards and policies. Students are to be in full uniform unless they have a signed, dated note from their parents (which will apply for that day only) stating the reason for being out of uniform. A note will only be accepted by the school as an excuse for being out of dress code for one item at a time, and for no longer than one week (5 days) for the entire school year.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Students who do not comply with the dress code policy will be given Dress Code Violation Slips.

Dress code violations:

1. Written warning.
2. Parents called to bring correct clothing; \$1.00 fine that will be given to the Missions.
3. Parents called to bring correct clothing; Student may not participate in the next Jean Day.
4. Parents called to bring correct clothing; conference with principal; in-school suspension the rest of the day.

The student and parent/guardian must sign the Dress Code Violation Slips. The written warnings will be returned to school and kept on file. Subsequent violations will result in a conference between the student, parents and principal as to the commitment of the family to the school.

Please see the full dress code policy on the school website stjosepherie.com.



DISCIPLE of CHRIST
EDUCATION IN VIRTUE™

DISCIPLE OF CHRIST VIRTUES

IN BAPTISM WE ARE GRAFTED ONTO CHRIST THE VINE; He enters us and remains in us as long as we desire His presence. By freely choosing to live as one with Christ, we permit Him to transform us from within. This life in Christ is rooted in the virtues and gifts received at Baptism (CCC, 1266).

"If faith is like the root, charity is like the sap that nourishes the trunk and rises into the branches, the network of virtues, to produce the delicious fruit of good works." (Servais Pinckaers, O.P., *Morality: The Catholic View*, South Bend, St. Augustine Press, 2001)

Disciple of Christ Virtues guides educators, parents, and students in identifying virtues which need to be cultivated. Each corresponding "Opposing Trait" highlights a pattern of behavior which needs change in order for one to mature in virtue.

Human virtues acquired by education, by deliberate acts, and by perseverance ever-renewed in repeated efforts are purified and elevated by divine grace. With God's help, they forge character and give facility in the practice of the good. The virtuous man is happy to practice them (CCC, 1810).

"GOD GIVES THE GROWTH"
(1 COR. 3:7)

VIRTUE	MEANING	OPPOSING TRAIT	WAYS TO CULTIVATE
JUSTICE (Fairness)	Enables one to give to each, beginning with God, what is due him	Failing to see what is owed to each by virtue of his dignity	Recognize what is due to God first and then to others
AFFABILITY	Being easy to approach and easy to talk to - friendly	Being mean, unkind, cruel, or unflattering	Smile; acknowledge the presence of other people and take time to listen to them
COURTESY	Treating other people with respect, recognizing that all are made in God's image and likeness	Not recognizing the inherent dignity of others made in God's image and likeness	Be aware of others' feelings and expressions; be polite, well-mannered
GENEROSITY	Giving of oneself in a willing and cheerful manner for the good of others	Giving without a spirit of cheer, with a begrudging manner	Be self-giving; focus on one act of charity/kindness each day; share
GRATITUDE	Thankful disposition of mind and heart	Not expressing appreciation; taking other people and things for granted	Count the good things (blessings) in one's life; express gratitude even when it is difficult
KINDNESS	Expressing genuine concern about the well-being of others; anticipating their needs	Not regarding the well-being of others, being cruel in looks, words, and actions	Practice speaking, thinking, and acting kindly
LOYALTY	Accepting the bonds implicit in relationships and defending the virtues upheld by Church, family, and country	Breaking bonds of trust with Church, family, country, friends, and school	Seek to do one's best to help others; follow rules; fulfill responsibilities; be faithful to commitments
OBEDIENCE	Assenting to rightful authority without hesitation or resistance	Resisting the directives of rightful authority	Listen to rightful authority; follow directions; give a prompt response
PATRIOTISM	Paying due honor and respect to one's country, with a willingness to serve	Lacking regard or respect for one's country and national symbols	Show respect for your country's flag; speak respectfully about government officials; recite the Pledge
PRAYERFULNESS	Being still, listening, and being willing to talk to God as a friend	Entertaining distractions during prayers and Mass	Cultivate a spirit of prayer and recollection; maintain the proper posture (kneeling, sitting still, etc.)
RESPECT	Speaking and acting according to our own and others' rights, status, and circumstances	Resisting the directives of rightful authority	Be respectful in words and actions (body language); allow others to go first
RESPONSIBILITY	Fulfilling one's just duties; accepting the consequences of one's words and actions, intentional and unintentional	Failing to accept responsibility for one's words and/or actions; being unreliable	Be accountable for one's personal actions and decisions at home, at school, and in personal relationships
SINCERITY	Trustfulness in words and actions; honesty and enthusiasm towards others	Speaking or acting in a manner only to make oneself look good; being insincere	Tell the whole truth; build trust by words and actions; state what one is sorry for
TRUSTWORTHINESS	Acting in a way that inspires confidence and trust; being reliable	Being devious or deceptive	Perform actions that restore and maintain trust; act with fidelity in small matters

VIRTUE	MEANING	OPPOSING TRAIT	WAYS TO CULTIVATE
PRUDENCE Sound Judgment	Enables one to reason and to act rightly in any given situation – "right reason in action"	Being hasty or rash in one's words or actions	Pray for guidance; Seek sound advice; Think about the situation; Act upon the decision
PARTS OF A PRUDENTIAL ACT			
GOOD COUNSEL Ask and listen	Seeking advice from a reasonable person	Seeking advice from those who agree with you; asking moral advice from people who do not share your moral values	Seek advice from trustworthy people
GOOD JUDGMENT Think	Thinking rightly about a decision	Acting without thinking	Carefully consider all the circumstances and ask "What am I to do now?"
COMMAND Act	Directly acting upon a sound decision	Failing to act upon a sound decision	Take action after thoughtful deliberation
VIRTUES			
CIRCUMSPECTION	Careful consideration of circumstances and consequences	Considering only oneself when acting	Seek advice; silently reflect upon the circumstances and consequences of one's actions (memory)
DOCILITY	Willingness to be taught	Being stubborn, inflexible, and proudly set in one's ways	Listen to others and be willing to follow directions; thank others for rightful corrections
FORESIGHT	Consideration of the consequences of one's actions, thinking ahead	Failing to consider later consequences	Pray, think, act; learn how to gather information to make a decision; plan out long-term and short-term goals

VIRTUE	MEANING	OPPOSING TRAIT	WAYS TO CULTIVATE
FORTITUDE (Courage)	Enables one to endure difficulties and pain for the sake of what is good	Choosing the easiest task; being cowardly; being insensible to fear	Withstand difficulties; complete hard tasks
INDUSTRIOUSNESS	Diligence, especially in work that leads to natural and supernatural maturity	Giving in to a lack of motivation to complete one's responsibilities; being lazy	Diligently complete a task; set small goals along the way
MAGNANIMITY	Seeking with confidence to do great things in God; literally "having a large soul"	Seeking to do great things for self-promotion; not seeking to do the good that is possible – pusillanimity (weak, spineless)	Acknowledge the good in others when it is difficult; strive to do difficult tasks with God's grace
MAGNIFICENCE	Doing great things for God	Being wasteful; not responding to grace	Use one's talents for the good; act with generosity towards others
PATIENCE	Bearing present difficulties calmly	Being impatient while completing a difficult task or in handling challenging circumstances	Listen to others; wait for one's turn; tolerate inconveniences and annoyances without complaining
PERSEVERANCE	Taking the steps necessary to carry out objectives in spite of difficulties	Quickly giving up when a task is challenging	Complete task from start to finish; stay with a task when it is hard, difficult, or boring

VIRTUE	MEANING	OPPOSING TRAIT	WAYS TO CULTIVATE
TEMPERANCE (Self-Control)	Enables one to be moderate in the pleasure and use of created goods	Intemperance; overindulging in a good thing	Exercise the freedom to say "no" to one's wants and desires
HONESTY	Sincerity, openness and truthfulness in one's words and actions	Being dishonest in words and actions; telling lies	Live uprightly in words and actions; recognize that "God sees the heart"
HUMILITY	Awareness that all our gifts come from God and appreciation for the gifts of others	Failing to recognize the gifts of others; being too proud or having false humility	Show deference to others; acknowledge the accomplishments of others; look at one's strengths and weaknesses honestly
MEEKNESS	Serenity of spirit while focusing on the needs of others	Giving in to anger and losing one's temper when working or playing with others	Remain calm; allow others to go first; wait without complaining
MODERATION	Attention to balance in one's life	Giving in to being excessive in one or more areas of one's life	Set limits for oneself; create a balance in one's life by limiting the use of media, consumption of additional food and drink etc.
MODESTY	Purity of heart in action, especially in regards to dress and speech	Choosing to dress or act in a way inconsistent with one's dignity as a child of God	Follow the dress code; recognize your dignity as a person; ask yourself if you are respecting yourself as a child of God
ORDERLINESS	Keeping oneself physically clean and neat and one's belongings in good order	Disorder with regard to one's space and physical appearance	Establish order in one's daily life; keep one's space and appearance orderly and clean
SELF-CONTROL	Joyful mastery over one's passions and desires	Being excessive in words or actions, acting impulsively	Mastery of one's desires; practice restraint in regards to words and actions

Cell Phone / Smart Watch Policy

It is strongly recommended that students do not bring cell phones or smart watches to school. Those that choose to bring their device are to keep them OFF and in their backpack at all times.

Homework

The administration and staff of St. Joseph School reaffirm the necessity and value of homework. Research has proven that homework assignments strengthen skills already learned in classroom instruction and also assist students in developing study skills that are essential for continued success in learning. Failure to complete homework assignments seriously impacts a student's level of achievement and hinders one's growth in personal responsibility. The homework policy that follows aims to promote excellence and the total growth of each student enrolled at St. Joseph School.

Frequency: Students can expect homework daily depending on grade level.

Length: Students can expect approximately one to one and one half hours of homework daily. At times, assigned projects or reports will require additional time.

Quality of Work: Students are expected to complete assigned work as directed. All work is to be: complete, neat, as accurate as possible, and on time. If not done to specifications, the work will be redone until it is acceptable by the teacher.

Late Assignments: Assignments, which are not submitted when asked for, are considered LATE.

- 10% will be deducted if late but handed in the next day.
- 20% total will be deducted if two days late
- 30% total will be deducted if three days late
- 0% will be given if the assignment is four or more days late.

Late Assignments Due to Absence:

Students will have one day for each day absent to make up assignments that are missed due to absences or illness. NOTE: parents are asked to pick up or make other arrangements for these assignments to be picked up when a student is ill. After a student returns to school, he/she must see the teachers about any additional work, tests, etc. No work will be accepted unless a note from the parent is provided that states the reason for absence.

Format for Assignments:

- All papers for all teachers are to be headed in this way in the top left margin of loose-leaf papers:
 - First and Last Names
 - Date
 - Subject of pages
- Only loose-leaf paper may be used for assignments. No spiral paper may be used for assignments.
- Math work is to be done only in pencil.
- Blue or black ink is to be used for all other assignments
- Red pens are to be used for grading work.
- No drawings or scribbles on papers will be acceptable.

Honors and Awards

Students may earn honors each quarter based on grades and conduct.

- First honors are given for all A's in all subjects and Conduct with Marks of Satisfactory in Effort, Computer, Physical Education, Music, and Art.
- Second honors are given for A's and B's in all subjects and Conduct with Marks of Satisfactory in Effort, Computer, Physical Education, Music, and Art.
- Third honors are given to those students who have A's and B's in Conduct, no D's, F's or marks of Unsatisfactory in other areas on the report card.
- Awards are given for perfect attendance during the quarter. This includes no tardiness.

- Students receiving First Honors all four quarters of the year will receive an award at the end of the year.

Teacher Assist

Personalized learning and support includes 20-30 minutes during each school day for our 7th and 8th grade students.

Friday Folder

Students will receive all graded assignments and completed work on Friday to assemble into a pack to be taken home. This folder is to be returned to the homeroom teacher the next school day.

Sports

St. Joseph School offers a variety of sports for students in grades 5 to 8. Girls may participate in volleyball, soccer, basketball, and softball. Boys may participate in soccer, basketball, and baseball.

Continued participation in sports is contingent upon good grades and conduct. A student must maintain a 2.0 Grade Point Average to participate in a given sport. Conduct must be satisfactory (85% or higher) at all times. Students who are ineligible will be evaluated each week until the grades and conduct are acceptable to participate again in sports.

Any student receiving an F (69% or lower) grade in Religion, Math, English, Reading, Science, Social Studies, Health, or Spelling/Vocabulary will be ineligible to participate in practice and games for one week from Monday to Monday.

Standardized Testing

STAR Testing for all grades will take place three times a year. Students will be tested in math, reading and early literacy. Teachers will analyze the results to inform their curriculum planning. Summary reports on individual student progress will be sent home to parents.

High School Information

High School Placement Tests

8th graders planning to attend a Catholic high school in Michigan or Ohio will have to take a placement test. St. Mary Catholic Central gives this test in November and Catholic High Schools in Toledo give their test in February. You will be notified about the specific dates in plenty of time.

Topics on the placement tests:

- Vocabulary: analogies, definitions
- Math: sequences, geometry, fractions, powers, angles, square root, greater than, less than, rounding, percent, equations, problem solving, greatest common factor, least common multiple, measurement-English and Metric, graphs, proportions, area, circles, integers, decimals, etc.
- Language: punctuation, capitalization, subject/verb agreement in sentences, paragraphs, topic sentences, friendly letters, business letters, simple, compound, and complex sentences, spelling, grammar, and being able to write paragraphs and essay question answers.
- Reading: be able to comprehend what is read and answer questions, draw inferences, draw conclusions, describe character, plot, and timeline. All these topics are studied in the grades. Science and Social Studies are tested in the area of reading.

The principal has the right to make changes to the handbook as necessary. Parents will receive timely notification of any changes.



St. Joseph Catholic School

2238 Manhattan Street, Erie, MI 48133 *Phone 734-848-6985

School Email:

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Principal Email:

amy.cousino@stjosepherie.com

Chromebook Student Expectations

In signing the Technology User Agreement located in the student handbook, you committed to follow all user guidelines and student expectations, understanding that violating these guidelines and expectations may result in disciplinary action *and/or* restrictions with use of your Chromebook.

As a learner:

1. I will be responsible for my Chromebook at all times.
 - My Chromebook will never be left unattended.
 - My Chromebook will be situated securely on a flat, stable work surface.
 - My Chromebook will be treated carefully so it is not subjected to malicious or accidental damage (i.e. as a result of horseplay, pounding keys or mousepad).
 - I will carry my Chromebook in the closed position. I will never pick up or carry the Chromebook by the display screen or with one hand.
2. I will store my Chromebook in my **secured designated space** in my classroom when not in use (i.e. lunch, phys. ed., after school activities). My Chromebook stays at school.
3. I will be **on-task** during class at all times and use my Chromebook for **educational purposes**. **Non-educational games are not allowed at any time.**
4. I will not decorate, draw, or write on my Chromebook, or allow it to be subject to graffiti.
5. I will keep my Chromebook at a safe distance from food or liquids.
6. I will keep personal accounts/passwords private and will adhere to proper digital citizenship guidelines.
7. I will report to my teacher any inappropriate content I may encounter.
8. I will report any problems or damages to my Chromebook at the time of their occurrence immediately by notifying my homeroom teacher.
9. I understand that my Chromebook is property of St. Joseph Catholic School.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Student Name: _____ Grade: _____



St. Joseph Catholic School

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Principal Email:

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Consequences for Violation of Chromebook Student Expectations:

- First offense - warning and email to parent, depending on severity, possible loss of wifi privileges for up to two days
- Second offense - parent notification and conference if needed, loss of student chromebook/wifi privileges for up to a week, student seated so screen is visible to teacher
- Third offense - loss of Chromebook, parent meeting, student contract detailing expectations for return of privileges

*Students who misuse technology may immediately move to loss of privileges and/or a parent meeting as we work to support progressive discipline but take each incident case by case.