

2023-2024 St. Patrick School Volunteer Handbook



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Dear Volunteers,

**“I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have
done for you,
you should also do.”
John 13:15**

Thank you for your willingness to share your time, talent, and treasure with the faith community of St. Patrick School!

Our faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote the value of Christian service as you join in the teaching ministry of the Church. Please feel free to ask for help, direction, or advice as you participate in the numerous opportunities as listed in the *Appendix* of this handbook.

Let us pray together that God, Who began this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

May He bless you in your priceless gift of gratuitous service!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Doreen M. Shipman

Principal

Mission Statement

The mission of St. Patrick School is to foster the spiritual growth and academic life of its students, faculty, and staff and to teach children, with the cooperation of parents, a Catholic way of life.

Philosophy

St. Patrick School is a unique Christian community organized to foster the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth of each person in a spirit of dedication, freedom, and love that is based on the Gospel message.

We strive to give each child the necessary fundamentals of their faith to become good Christian adults. We realize that each child is special, possessing his or her own talents. We hope to develop these talents to their potential by teaching our students to have a respectful and responsible attitude, to think creatively and independently, to strive for excellence, and to be a faithful servant of our Lord.

Believing that the parents are the first and foremost educators of their children, we cooperate with and supplement the home in providing leadership (social graces) in the formal Catholic education of their children. As a faculty, we work together, each developing our own subject area with professional competence but sensitive to those opportunities to aid students in all aspects of their lives.

Religious themes arise naturally throughout each teaching day. Our attention to these themes help our students grow in knowledge and in commitment to God, to the parish, and to the world in which we all live.

Diocesan Mandates

All volunteers at St. Patrick School must comply with mandates as set forth by the Diocese of Peoria, including safe environment training, background checks, and safe driver training. These trainings and programs can be accessed at:

<https://cmgconnect.org/> These mandates are important: (1) to protect young people; (2) to protect the volunteer; and (3) to protect the school from liability.

Anyone interested in volunteering who has not yet met these mandates should contact the school office for further information.

Volunteer Activities

Volunteer activities are listed in the “Appendix” under “St. Patrick School Volunteer Opportunities.” Volunteer service is *highly encouraged* at St. Patrick School to help support all of the activities and extra-curricular programs that are important for the success of our school.

Volunteer Rights

As a volunteer you have the right to:

1. be welcomed as a valued member of our community;
2. be assigned to a volunteer area where you feel comfortable and confident;
3. the respect of our community;
4. receive necessary information;
5. have your questions answered clearly and promptly;
6. make suggestions to the professional staff;
7. volunteer as long as you and the Administration agree.

Volunteer Responsibilities

As a volunteer, you are responsible for:

1. arriving on time and staying for the agreed-upon time;
2. notifying the appropriate persons if you are going to be absent or tardy;
3. performing your tasks to the best of your ability;
4. understanding that the Administration values your service, but may not always be able to honor your preference for days, times and places of service;
5. keeping young people under your supervision safe and appropriately occupied;
6. notifying your supervising faculty or staff member or the Administration about unsafe conditions or issues causing you concern;
7. supporting the teachings of the Catholic Church and living in accordance with those teachings;
8. supporting the authority of teachers, staff, and the Administration;
9. upholding school rules;
10. keeping confidential information that you have garnered during your volunteer service that is private to students and/or their families;
11. promptly making known the confidences of young persons that involve issues of health, life, and/or safety.

The following responsibilities are referenced from the Catholic Diocese of Peoria's *Volunteers Code of Conduct*:

"As a volunteer, I will:

- refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the Administration;
- refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the Administration;
- cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

As a volunteer, I will not:

- smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth;
- use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering;
- use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time;
- pose any health risk to children and/or youth (i.e., no fevers or contagious situations);
- strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth;
- humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth;
- touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner;
- use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth;
- use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth."

Discipline Code

Volunteers shall adhere to the code of discipline as presented in the *St. Patrick School Parent-Student Handbook*.

Field Trips

Volunteers who serve as chaperones on field trips should note the following:

1. All school rules are in force unless the Administration has explicitly stated otherwise.
2. Chaperones are to stay with their assigned groups.
3. Supervision is both mental and physical. Be sure that your attention is always on the young people you have been assigned to supervise.
4. If your own school-aged child is on the trip, he or she must not be treated any differently than any other child.
5. Children of volunteers who are not currently enrolled in St. Patrick School are not allowed to accompany volunteers on field trips.
6. Volunteers' first responsibility is the safety of the students.

Health and Safety

Any student reporting illness or injury should be referred to the supervising faculty or staff member immediately. If there is no other adult in proximity, use the closest intercom phone to contact the school office (list of intercom phone numbers is posted next to phone). In an emergency, bring the student to the office immediately.

Although St. Patrick School does not have a nurse on staff, office personnel will assess the student and contact parents/guardians per procedures stated in the *St. Patrick School Parent-Student Handbook*.

Any volunteer on the playground or in the play yard area should have a two-way radio. The radios are located in the school office and should be returned to the office when finished.

Emergency Procedures

Fire:

1. Close classroom doors, outside doors, and any fire doors that may be open.
2. Do not close any windows that may be open.
3. Students walk silently in an orderly single line.
4. Exit following directions posted in the classroom.
5. Once outside, students join their homeroom teacher who checks attendance.
6. Stay in designated spot in silence until signaled to return to building.

Tornado/Disaster:

1. Students walk silently in an orderly single line.
2. Exit, following directions posted in classroom for Tornado/Disaster drills.
3. Students join their homeroom teacher who checks attendance.
4. Take a position of sitting with hands covering head until signal is given for release.
5. Return to classroom quietly.

Earthquake:

1. Drop, cover head immediately.
2. Crawl under desk or nearest table.
3. Listen for further instructions.

Intruder in the Building:

1. Coded announcement will be given when possible.
2. Close all classroom doors which should already be in locked position.
3. Remain in the classroom until otherwise notified.
4. Do not let any student leave the room.

Child Abuse Laws and Reporting

School personnel are mandatory reporters in the State of Illinois and therefore, if abuse is suspected, it is the volunteer's responsibility to report the abuse. It should be noted that volunteers are the reporting agents, not the screening agents; thus, it is *not* appropriate for volunteers to conduct investigations to determine the truth or falsity of the suspicion. Volunteers who make child abuse reports must notify the Administration *immediately* and make the report in the presence of the Principal and/or Assistant Principal.

Loyalty to the Church and School

When you are a volunteer, you are a representative of the Church and the School. You are expected to support the directions given by the Staff and the Administration. If you disagree with policy, the Administration will be happy to hear your concerns and discuss them with you. Since you are serving in a Catholic School, you are expected to support the Administration and the teachings of the Catholic Church and to live in a manner consistent with that support.

Diocesan Policies, C-401, C-402, D-147

Volunteers should be familiar with these diocesan policies regarding bullying and harassment. They may be accessed at the diocesan website, <https://cdop.org/> under the "Office of Catholic Schools" link or in the *St. Patrick School Parent-Student Handbook*.

Confidentiality

In the course of your volunteer work, you may learn confidential information about young people and faculty/staff. You are expected to keep this information confidential in any setting inside or outside the school just as you would want your own privacy rights respected.

However, information about a student who intends to harm self/others or is reporting physical/sexual abuse *must be reported to the Principal immediately*. This information must be shared with the Administration and not kept confidential.

Supervision of Volunteers

The Administration is responsible for the total school operation; thus, they supervise or may delegate supervision of all who serve in any capacity in this volunteer ministry.

Procedures

School Hours: Grades K-8 are in class from 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Students may enter the building at 7:50 a.m. and go to their classroom upon arrival. If they arrive before 7:50 a.m., they must be in Extended-Care in Room 101.

Office Hours: The school office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Sign-In/Out: Volunteers are asked to sign-in and sign-out in the visitor's notebook located outside the school office. Nametags are located inside the office and must be returned when signing out.

Volunteer Dress Code: It is expected that volunteers reflect the image of St. Patrick School and wear modest clothing while working in the school or during school activities. Short-Shorts are not permitted when volunteering. Tops worn must be modest and not showing cleavage. Tops with spaghetti straps, strapless tops, or tank tops are not to be worn during volunteering.

Inclement Weather: If it should be necessary to close school because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made over television (WMBD, WEEK, WHOI), email, or text, and/or by the telephone communication system (RenWeb Parent Alert).

Right to Amend

St. Patrick School reserves the right to amend this *Volunteer Handbook*. Volunteers will be notified promptly of any changes.

APPENDIX

“VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES”

Athletic Committee – Supports coaches and teams representing St. Patrick School.

Athletic Volunteer* – During sports' season(s), assists with cleaning up after the games; helps with concessions; works “the gate;” sweeps under bleachers; picks up trash; rolls up mats; puts chairs up in rack; cleans up any area where the sport event takes place. **Required service for athletes' parents/guardians.*

Band “Aids” Booster Club – Assists with band functions and fundraises for the school band.

Chaperone – Escorts students on class field trips or assists room parents with a class party or event. Siblings and children not enrolled in the class should not be in attendance during your volunteering time.

Classroom Parties – Attends classroom parties to help room parents as needed. Siblings and children not enrolled in the class should not be in attendance during your volunteering time.

Classroom Treats – Sends treats in to school for a class party.

Commission on Education – Appointed member who advises pastor and principal on educational matters. Meetings are generally held four times per year or as needed.

Concessions' Stand – Sales, setup and cleanup of admission tickets and concessions during athletic/educational events.

Concessions' Stand Coordinator – Orders concession items and schedules workers.

Grandparent Reading Buddy – Reads to grades PK-4 during their assigned library time once-a-month (minimum) to support the home and school connection with our cherished grandparents of our parish and our children in our school community.

Grant Writer – Researches, writes and applies for educational grants that are available for parochial grade schools and approved by the Administration.

Graphic Artist/Designer – Creates art work and designs brochures, posters and flyers for school or parish.

Guest Speaker or Career Day Speaker– Speaks to a class, group of students, or entire school.

Library Helper – Assists the school librarian.

Parent Ministry - Saints Zélie and Louis Martin were ordinary parents with extraordinary faith. Leading by their example and under their patronage, the St. Pat's Parent Ministry that was formed in the fall of 2021, joyfully and faithfully volunteers time, talent, and treasure to support St. Patrick School in the growth, development, and well-being of our future saints. Efforts and volunteer opportunities include:

- **ROOM PARENTS:** Support teachers in their efforts to educate our children.
- **AMBASSADOR PROGRAM:** Support the growth of our student population as well as strengthen our current school community by hosting, supporting, and welcoming prospective and newly enrolled families to St. Patrick School.
- **TEACHER & STAFF APPRECIATION COMMITTEE:** celebrate the efforts of our teachers, staff, principal, and pastor in the spiritual and academic development of our children.

Prayer Partner – Pray consistently for the faculty, staff, and students of St. Patrick School.