

January 2018

Dear Parents,

A few years ago, at the suggestion of the School Admissions Office, I put in writing *registration procedures*, which I tried to simplify. In the past, there had been some oversight, and even confusion, regarding requisites for those who claim to be Fatima parishioners. So...here's a friendly reminder of what such a claim entails.

To be officially considered a Fatima parishioner by the school, one must have been registered in the parish for at least six months. All Fatima parishioner families must have at least 10 service hours annually (with the school or the parish). In the past, the required number was 20 hours. Upon my arrival as pastor, I reduced this number keeping in mind the busyness of family life. Again, it was an attempt to help simplify and make life a bit easier for you. The procedure now is for you to indicate on your parishioner status form that you have or have not fulfilled your volunteer hours. The Registered Status form can now be downloaded at www.fatimalafayette.org. We will trust what you write on your form. **Note: All registered parishioner families with children at Fatima School must turn in a registered status form by October 31st to the Church Parish office, regardless of your status. The form may not be mailed in, dropped in the Parish drop box or sent to the school.**

Fatima parishioners must also have contributed to the parish the sum of **\$250.00 by October 31st** each calendar year. This is to be shown by way of offertory envelopes or by the way of Online Giving.

For clarification, here's the game plan in a nutshell: To make the registration process more manageable on our end, it is required that the \$250.00 be contributed to Fatima Parish by October 31st of each calendar year. This prevents last minute confusion and chaos during the days of registration and allows ample time for us to process your status information. The money is to come to Fatima parish by use of the offertory envelopes, which are mailed to each registered parishioner on a monthly basis or by way of online giving (Go to fatimalafayette.org and click on the "Online Giving" link.)

If you opt to make your payment online: Using Online Giving has the added convenience of your not having to take the extra step of coming to the parish office to verify your registered status form. The office can communicate with you directly online.

If you opt to make your payment by using the offertory envelope system: The mailing system for offertory envelopes is highly encouraged by the Diocese and most parishes comply. It costs the parish money to do such a mailing, thus it is inappropriate to request that those who are receiving them use the offertory envelopes. If you opt to use the envelope system, the manner in which you get the money to us is up to you – though it is my hope that it be done through the offertory collection at Mass. This brings me to my third and final point: **What does it mean to be a registered parishioner of a Church parish?**

To be a registered parishioner means that one uses the parish as a place for Sunday worship. To register in a Church parish simply to ensure that a child gets into a school system, without any intention of being present to the parish for Sunday worship, is not exactly a gesture of integrity. With this being said, I choose to trust in the goodness of people. I do not intend to be a "traffic cop" for those who try to cheat the system. My experience is that most people happily comply, but there are always some who deceive. Such deceptive posture eventually catches up with us. Our children are watching. We teach them by our own example. If we choose not to "pay" now, we will end up "paying" later. Count on it! This is an important lesson for parents to learn in the spiritual life, preventing much heartache down the road.

So... I hope to see those who state on paper they are registered Fatima parishioners in the pews on Sundays. Don't forget to use your offertory envelopes in order for us to record your contributions by October 31st or go Online. Non-registered parishioners simply pay the out of parish fee to the school office.

The School Advisory Board and the Admissions Office a few years ago unanimously approved the above policy. Their input was important to me, as I do not like to make isolated decisions on these types of matters. It's another attempt for me to be fair and sensitive to your busy lives.

Please know that I am always here for you and your children. They are a great group of kids.

In Christ,
Rev. Michael J. Russo, Pastor