

NEW FAMILY RESOURCE GUIDE

WELCOME TO ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

CELEBRATING
FAITH

STRENGTHENING
FAMILY

BUILDING
COMMUNITY





WELCOME

TO THE SJCS PANTHER FAMILY

We are so blessed to have you as a member of our school family. Below you will find hints and tips we hope you find helpful as you get acquainted with your new community.

Please know we are here to help and we look forward to walking this journey alongside of you!

We ask that you please take some time to read and review the school handbook with your child(ren).

- Visit stjcs.com
- Click "Parent Portal"
- On main portal page, under "School Resources", you will find the School Handbook.

This document will cover many important topics, anything from carpool procedures to how we celebrate birthdays.

Many families instantly feel more at ease after reading the document and familiarizing themselves with school procedures, policies, and rules.

All families are required to print, sign, and return the last page of the handbook to their child(ren)'s homeroom teacher by the last day of August.

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MEET OUR ADMINISTRATION



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SCHOOL PRAYER

LORD - MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE; WHERE THERE IS HATRED, LET ME SOW LOVE; WHERE THERE IS INJURY, PARDON; WHERE THERE IS DOUBT, FAITH; WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR, HOPE; WHERE THERE IS DARKNESS, LIGHT; AND WHERE THERE IS SADNESS, JOY.

O DIVINE MASTER, GRANT THAT I MAY NOT SO MUCH SEEK TO BE CONSOLED AS TO CONSOLE; TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS TO UNDERSTAND; TO BE LOVED, AS TO LOVE; FOR IT IS IN GIVING THAT WE RECEIVE, IT IS IN PARDONING THAT WE ARE PARDONED, AND IT IS IN DYING THAT WE ARE BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE.

~ ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



CATHEDRAL (L to R): Fr. Martin Nguyen, Parochial Vicar;
Fr. Miguel Gonzalez, Rector; Fr. Chris Dorsey, Parochial Vicar.

One of the main ways the school will share information and communicate with you is via the Parent Portal.

Many of the resources referenced throughout this guide can be accessed without your family designated login via the School Resource section on the Parent Portal.

In late July you will receive an email from the school with your family designated username and initial password. Once you setup your account, you will have access to the following via the Parent Portal.

- School Calendar
- News and announcements
- Principal's Message
- Your child's teachers' weekly newsletters/blog posts and updates
- School directory
- Grades and report cards
- Homework
- Absences and tardy count
- Important Links
- PPA Newsletter

We suggest bookmarking the website's main page on your computer. You can easily access the Parent Portal from your cell phone. Simply go to your web browser and enter our school-specific link:

www.plusportals.com/SaintJamesCathedralSchool.

Then, from an iPhone, simply click the share icon at the bottom of your screen (e.g., small box with upward arrow), scroll to the left, click on the "add to homescreen" option, click "okay" and you will now have a shortcut on your phone!

For Android phones, once at the website, tap the menu button and then click "add to homescreen". For both platforms, you will be able to enter a name for the shortcut before adding it to your home screen. Please note: you may hear people call this tool Parent Portal or Rediker; the official name is "Parent Portal", however they both refer to the same thing!

Principal Helwig's Monthly "St. James Happenings" Emails - At the beginning of each month you will receive an email from principal Helwig highlighting upcoming events at the school.

St. James Website - Our website has so much to offer for current families and prospective families alike. Please take some time to explore the different drop-down tabs. Our website is www.stjcs.com.



VOLUNTEERING FINGERPRINTING SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING

Any parent who wishes to volunteer at the school (for example, lunchroom helper, coach, field trip chaperone, mystery reader, classroom volunteer, etc.) must be fingerprinted/background checked and cleared through the Diocese of Orlando.

The cost is approximately \$50.00. We strongly suggest making an appointment ASAP as it can take anywhere from 6-12 weeks for fingerprints and background checks to clear. You may not volunteer in any capacity until you have been cleared.

The Diocesan fingerprinting procedure has been computerized. You may begin the process by logging on to www.orlandodiocese.org. When you go to the main page, you will see a dark orange tab at the top labeled "How do I..." – click here and then click on the link to "register for safe environment training and fingerprinting". You will need to complete two different processes.

First, to register for an appointment to be fingerprinted (there are many options of places this can be done) and then separately you need to take an interactive safe environment course on your personal time via your computer and complete the corresponding quiz. Upon passing the quiz, please print it out and return to the St. James school front office attn.: Linda Puntel. **When registering to be fingerprinted, you will need the following specific code designating you as a volunteer of St. James school: FPSJSchoolVol.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: This policy applies to all employees, parents, chaperones, and volunteers of St. James Cathedral School.

UNIFORM ORDERING & RECYCLING

Risse Brothers Uniforms is the official supplier of regular (non-PE) uniforms for our school. Address: 100 Candace Dr, Maitland, FL 32751, phone: (407-339-1486), website: www.rissebrothers.com. School uniforms may not be purchased from another source. Orders may be shipped for an additional fee. Please refer to the school handbook for uniform specifications located on the Parent Portal under School Resources. Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4 wear the same uniform daily and they must be purchased from Risse Brothers.

A Uniform Recycle Center is organized by our wonderful parent volunteers and is available to all families. Through this program, the school offers recycled uniforms (located in the back of the cafeteria). Uniforms in the center are FREE! We encourage you to "give back" by donating uniforms that your child(ren) have outgrown.

****Please note** — Our school has a new logo and the 2017-2018 school year is a transition year for uniform shirts with the old logo. As of the 2018-2019 school year, all students' shirts must have the new logo.

PE uniforms (grades K-8) are sold and distributed by the school throughout the year on a rotational basis via the Panther Athletic Club (PAC). PE apparel may be purchased via the Panther Store found on the school website. Please contact our Athletic Director at athletic.director@stjcs.com with any questions. During the summer, there will be two pick-up days and the uniforms will also be available for pick-up at Meet the Teacher in August.

Spirit Gear-Once per week on Fridays, students may wear an official Spirit Wear shirt (club or team shirts are not permitted) with PE shorts or regular school bottoms. Regular school shoes must be worn and uniform accessory rules still apply on Spirit Day. "Spirit Gear" includes shirts and other items that show our "panther pride" for all members of the family. This gear may be purchased via the Panther Partner Store or at Meet the Teacher.

How many uniforms should I purchase? This decision is clearly based on one's laundering habits and routines, as well as budget. A good rule of thumb is 3 Standard Uniforms, 1 full PE set (number of PE classes per week varies by age), and 1 Spirit Wear set which all children have the option to wear on Fridays.

PANTHER PARENT ASSOCIATION (PPA)

One of the best ways to meet families and make lifelong friends is to volunteer – to serve our school and honor the Lord by sharing your God-given talents -- via our Panther Parent Association (PPA). We kindly ask that each family contribute 15 hours per year. To learn more about the varied volunteer opportunities, please visit our "Get Involved" page on the school website: stjcs.com.

CARPOOL

Detailed information and maps regarding carpool can be found in the student handbook. Please note that at "Meet the Teacher" (the day prior to the first day of school) each family will receive a laminated carpool tag stating your child's last name to be displayed on your dashboard for carpool dismissal. If you do/did not receive this, please contact Linda Puntel in the front office.

It is helpful to note that if you have multiple children or are carpooling, the oldest child always goes to the youngest child's carpool pick-up location. If you are carpooling with another family, you'll receive virtual "bonus points" for placing a piece of paper with the last name of the family you are picking up in addition to your own tag.

Don't worry - we'll get you who you need, so long as you are on the approved pick-up list for a given child...Approved List of Individuals to Pick-up your Child(ren)-When you receive your password and link to enter the Parent Portal you will be able to enter all persons you permit to pick-up your child(ren).

Please refer to the frequently asked questions (FAQ's) section for more great "what if" questions!

MASS

Parents are always welcomed at Mass each week on Wednesdays at 8:15am in the assembly hall. All school Masses and liturgical services can be found on the Parent Portal Calendar. Students in grades K-2 have a "Mass buddy", an older student in 6th-8th grade with whom they are paired. Children sit with their "Mass buddy" at all services, as well as participate in special religious learning activities throughout the year. The following are frequently asked questions regarding Mass:

Do I go with my child to their classroom in the morning before Mass? No, you can go straight to the assembly hall.

Do I sit with my child and his/her class? You can sit with your child in the bleacher area of the assembly hall or with their class.

In the handbook, it states children must wear the full regular uniform on Mass days. What if they have PE class on these days? Children in grades K-2 may wear their PE uniforms to school on Mass days. Children in grades 3-8 must wear their regular uniform to school on Mass days and bring their PE uniform to change later for their enrichment class.

SAFETY IS OUR #1 CONCERN

We do not take lightly the ministry and privilege of protecting your most prized, God-given possessions.

On your school tour, you saw all of our staff wearing name badges and all volunteers/visitors wearing bright yellow tags, learned about our safety cameras, campus police officers, our buzzer system, and more.

In addition to those measures, we have 3 automated external defibrillator (AED) machines on campus and all of our teachers are CPR certified and trained to use the defibrillators.

We also want you to know that if you come to pick up your child from school, we may ask to see your ID until we get to know you and your family. Please know this request is for the safety of your child and all children at the school.



OFFICER KEITH GIBSON

LUNCH

Daily hot lunch is provided for a fee at our school by SLA management for families who wish to participate. (Lunch is included in the Pre-K 3&4 tuition).

You can learn more about the program, cost, set-up a family debit account (your child does not/cannot pay daily with cash), and find the monthly menus via the Parent Portal main page under School Resources or via our Panther Store on our school website: stjcs.com.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

BEFORE SCHOOL: Children may be dropped off at school in the cafeteria starting at 7:00am where they will be supervised free of charge until the first bell rings at 7:40am.

Once the bell rings, students will proceed to their homerooms. (Kindergarten students and their siblings/carpool mates arriving from 7:30am on are to be dropped off at the Kindergarten drop/off pick-up gate on Hillman Street. Prior to 7:30 AM these students would proceed to the cafeteria like the rest of the student body.

AFTER SCHOOL, an extension of learning and fun outside the regular classroom, runs Monday-Friday from dismissal-6:00 PM and is available to all students in grades K-8 on a full -time or part- time basis. We are also open on select student holidays from 7:00 AM-6:00 PM with an array of fun activities that take place on and off campus.

Students are grouped and supervised in a safe and secure environment according to grade level with structured activities, including an opportunity to complete homework in a quiet setting. A snack will be provided.

Students who are enrolled in the After School program may choose to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities for an additional fee. See details below.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students at SJCS may elect to participate in our extra-curricular activities such as cheerleading, choir, robotics, chess, cooking, golf, and more.

These activities are offered on campus via outside programs throughout the school year.

To see a list of the current offerings, please visit the "Student Life" tab on our website stjcs.com for more information. For registration information call our office at (407) 841-4432.



PRE-K THROUGH 5TH (PRIMARY & INTERMEDIATE)

Catholic Youth Sports League (CYS) league is available for children in grades Pre-K-5th. Sports offered include:

- Soccer
- 5 v. 5 Soccer
- Flag Football
- Track
- Girls Lacrosse
- Basketball

To learn more about CYS, please visit the "Athletics" page under "Student Life" on our school website: stjcs.com.

6TH - 8TH (MIDDLE SCHOOL)

Different sports options are available for different-aged students. The Panther Athletic Club (PAC) is a sports program for students in Middle School.

All students who participate in PAC play in the Diocesan Sports League made up of the twelve (12) Catholic Schools in the greater Orlando area.

Boys and girls may participate in basketball, volleyball, soccer, or track. Registration for each sport takes place prior to the beginning of each season. Students are encouraged to join PAC regardless of playing experience; however, team commitment is expected.



Many of our students play multiple sports to help broaden their social and athletic experiences.

VOLUNTEERS are needed to make this league a success. To be a volunteer team mom or dad or Coach, please email the Athletic Director, Lisa Watson, at athletic.director@stjcs.com for information.



WHAT'S ON STJCS.COM?

Our school website is a great resource to help you stay connected and explore more of St. James. Outside of the Parent Portal, below is a snapshot of the more commonly visited tabs:

STUDENT LIFE

- Explore Student Life
- After School
- Athletics
- Clubs & Organizations
- Summer Programs

GET INVOLVED

- Panther Promise
- Catholic Identity
- Events
- School Calendar
- PPA

PANTHER STORE

- Event Tickets
- PE Uniforms
- SCRIP Enrollment
- SLA Lunch Account
- School Supply Packs
- School Uniforms
- Spirit Wear

Be sure to explore PPA where you will find information on our committees, volunteer opportunities, and more. Visit our website often to learn all aspects of our school or give us a call anytime for personal assistance (407) 841-4432.

STAYING CONNECTED BETWEEN NOW & START OF SCHOOL YEAR...

Please take time to preview the Summer Checklist and complete these items in advance.

Additionally, for families with children entering grades pre-K3, pre-K4, and Kindergarten, you will receive an invitation to a class playdate to be held during the summer on campus. This is a great way to meet friends before the year starts and feel more comfortable on school grounds.

For families with a child(ren) entering grades 1-8, you will be contacted by a Panther Partner Family – a “veteran” St. James family who has a child in the same grade as yours -- and they will invite you to meet-up (maybe for ice-cream, pizza, at the park, etc.). This is completely optional.

At the meet-up, the “veteran” St. James parents can walk you through any questions you may have and your child will make a new friend and have a familiar face to look for on the first day of school!

Please note: class lists will be released at Meet the Teacher for pre-K3 and pre-K4 students, as well as grades first through eighth.

Kindergarten students will receive a post-card in the mail in early August from their respective homeroom teacher.

OVER THE SUMMER CHECKLIST

- Set up your FACTS tuition payment account (even if you intend to pay the tuition fee in full with a one-time payment). The use of this program is mandated by the Diocese. Instructions can be found on the Parent Portal.
- Make an appointment to be Fingerprinted and take the Safe Environment Training Course Online.
- Check the Parent Portal under School Resources section for the Summer Reading Lists (grades 1-8).
- Purchase School Uniforms via our Panther Store on our school website: stjcs.com or our Uniform Recycling Center. Order appropriate shoes. For uniform specs, please refer to the School Resource section found on the Parent Portal.
- Purchase PE Uniforms via the Panther Store on our school website: stjcs.com
- If applicable, register for Afterschool. Visit the Student Life tab on our school website: stjcs.com.
- If desired, sign up for a lunch account via our Panther Store on our school website: stjcs.com and select SLA Management to register or visit the Parent Portal. (Lunch is included in the Pre-K 3&4 tuition).
- Locate your respective grade school supply list via the Parent Portal under School Resources. Purchase supplies on your own or through our Panther Store via our school website stjcs.com. An email will come in early June should you wish to participate in the pre-packaged supply program offered by the school.
- In mid-summer, when you receive a link and password, log into your Parent Portal account and start to familiarize yourself with the platform, as well as check to make sure contact information is correct and make any necessary updates – you will learn how to do this at the parent orientation meetings.
- Attend the Parent Portal training over the summer. Training to be held on campus.

What if my child leaves a book/supplies in school after dismissal?

If a child remembers prior to the front office closing, he/she may ask to retrieve the item and will ONLY be allowed to get it if accompanied by school personnel. Please do not simply ask your child to “run back/up quickly”—children may not roam the halls unattended.

For birthdays, what is an acceptable treat to send in for my child’s class?

Birthdays are so special! A treat may be sent in so long as there is one for each member of your child’s homeroom class. We ask that you send individual items that do not require cutting, such as cupcakes or doughnuts. Simply drop the item off to the front office with your child’s name, homeroom, and grade clearly labeled. Your child will distribute their treat to classmates during lunch.

**See the handbook for more specifics regarding birthdays, invites, and allergies. Some grade levels have different policies. Your teacher will be in contact with you.*

What if my child takes a daily medication or I want to have as-needed medication during a particular time period?

Medication must be in a labeled, un-opened bottle and accompanied by doctor’s note or a written and signed note from guardian with specific details including dosage, time, etc. If medicine is as-needed, this must be indicated, as well as directive for frequency, etc.

Please put the medicine in a Ziplock bag with appropriate form and your child’s name, grade, and homeroom and hand deliver it to the front office. Students may not have medicine in their possession. (No cough drops may be given unless provided by the parent.)

We were informed that there is a student with dietary allergies in my child’s class (dairy, peanut, etc.). Can I still send those items in my child’s lunch? For example, may I send a peanut butter and jelly sandwich?

Thank you for your concern for all our students. While we ask that snacks in certain grade levels be peanut or dairy free (and provide a list of approved items-forthcoming from homeroom teachers where applicable), at lunch time students with a specific allergy sit at a “safe table” with any students who purchase lunch from the school as all SLA lunches meet the “peanut free” requirements. Thus, if a student in your child’s class has a peanut allergy, for example, it is still okay for you to send a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

What is the rain dismissal policy?

If it is raining only, we will have a normal dismissal so please pack your child an umbrella or rain coat to be kept in their backpack. If there is lightning, we will delay dismissal and you may come inside to sign out your child from the front office. Otherwise students will be kept inside until the 30 minute warning from the time of the last lightning strike occurs.

Early dismissals?

We do not have weekly early dismissals; however, we do have some noon (12 o’clock) dismissals on certain Wednesdays throughout the school year for our teachers’ professional development and continuing education. Please refer to the school calendar available on the Parent Portal. For your convenience, a list of all noon dismissals can be found under School Resources on the main page of the Parent Portal.

Can you bring siblings with you when you volunteer?

We love our future Panthers, but for safety reasons siblings are not allowed to accompany parents who are volunteering. Many families find it easy and rewarding to swap care so that each of them can enjoy spending time serving and volunteering at the school.

How do I know if my fingerprints cleared? Who do I contact? Who tracks? How long are they good for? Will I get a renewal reminder?

Please contact school receptionist to see if your fingerprints and background check have cleared. Fingerprints are valid for 5 years and the school tries to send a friendly reminder as expiration dates approach, however, it is ultimately up to each volunteer to keep track of his/her dates.

If my child is sick, who should I notify and how?

Please email the classroom/homeroom teacher and send a courtesy copy to front.office@stjcs.com. (All teachers' email addresses can be found on your parent portal and on our website.)

If I have to take my child out of school early for an appointment, who should I notify? Please email the classroom/homeroom teacher and send a courtesy copy to front.office@stjcs.com. (All teachers' email addresses can be found on your parent portal and on our website.)

REMINDER - As stated and explained in the school handbook, we ask that no students be signed out of school between 2:30pm and dismissal at 3:15pm for safety reasons. If you have a 4 o'clock appointment, for example, and wanted to get your child at 3pm, you must do so by 2:30pm.

In an emergency situation, how will the school communicate directives to the parents? The school will contact parents and guardians in two ways: a mass email and a mass text. It is imperative that you have entered working email addresses under your parent portal account, as well as cell phone numbers and indicated the proper carrier. **Please keep contact information up-to-date at all times via the parent portal.**

What if I have a change of carpool plans during the day or I am running late for pick up? Please email (front.office@stjcs.com) or call the front office (407-841-4432 ext.0). After closing prayer, which is broadcasted on inside and outside speakers, carpool announcements are made internally for ONLY teachers and students to hear.

What if I am late to carpool line, where do my children go? At 3:30pm, any child who has not yet been picked up is taken to the cafeteria and is signed into our Afterschool program. He/she will be well taken care of by our staff. No registration charge is assessed until after the third occurrence, but daily fees will be assessed.

If I prefer to park and walk to pick up my child at dismissal, what is the protocol? You may meet your child where he or she would be picked up for carpool line (please stand outside of the fence) and ask a teacher to bring you your child.

PRE-K "TOP 5" HELPFUL HINTS

1. Parents are encouraged and welcome to join the class for prayer and pledge outside each day on the Pre-K playground at 7:50 AM on Cathcart street.
2. Each child needs a backpack. Backpacks come to school on Mondays and only go home on Fridays. Please be sure your child's bag has a change of clothes including undergarments, a blanket, and a favorite animal for nap.
3. Lunch is included in the Pre-K tuition. Snacks are provided daily by families on a rotational basis.
4. Parents must walk up to the Pre-K playground to drop-off and to pick-up their child each day.
5. Upon school dismissal, all Pre-K parents must park and come to the Pre-K playground to pick up their child(ren). Older siblings must wait with their younger brother or sister to be picked up.



Academic excellence and spiritual enrichment since 1928



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