

## Policies and Procedures for Room Usage at St. Joseph Parish

Visit [stjoekp.com/calendar](http://stjoekp.com/calendar) to fill out the online Parish Facilities Use form and request a room

### Scheduling a Room:

We are pleased to offer online room scheduling at St. Joseph!

All groups/individuals, whether internal or external **must** fill out one usage form for any recurring meetings annually and additionally for each occurrence of any special events throughout the year. The calendaring is July-June.

The process is three-fold.

1. **Review of Policies & Procedures:** Reading this form.
2. **Facilities Use Agreement Form:** First, all groups/entities/individuals, etc., looking to reserve space at St. Joseph must fill out our online Parish Facility Use form. Depending on the nature of the organization and meeting type, there may be additional paperwork/forms that accompany this. These forms are available as part of the online process.
3. **Room request:** Once the online Parish Facilities Use form is filled out you may request space via the green “Request a Reservation” button on the online parish calendar.
  - a. Once all paperwork associated with your group or event has been submitted and approved, your request will be reviewed and you will be notified of the outcome.
  - b. Do NOT assume your meeting is approved until you see it scheduled on the parish calendar.

### Caveats for Scheduling:

Parish-sponsored groups, events, and activities, especially those related to the parish Faith Formation program have priority for utilizing any rooms. All requested dates will be subject to remaining availability after these groups submit schedules. Should additional parish-sponsored events get booked during the year that pose a conflict, affected external organizations will be given adequate notice of no less than one week from the scheduling conflict.

### WEEKDAYS:

1. **DAYTIME Meetings:** Due to the ongoing use of the our primary meeting building by outside lessees, the use of it (**School of Religion building**) and surrounding grounds are **NOT available during weekdays**. Depending on the size and needs of your group, it *might* be possible to host you in an alternate location. Reach out to Randi Hochenberger (631-269-6635 x223 or [rhochenberger@stjoekp.com](mailto:rhochenberger@stjoekp.com)) for questions regarding this.
2. **EVENING Meetings:**
  - a. **Mondays, Wednesday-Fridays:** Availability begins at 4PM
  - b. **Tuesdays:** Availability begins at 6:30PM

**WEEKENDS:** No gatherings may take place during regular weekend masses without additional approval.

1. **Saturdays:** Must end before 5PM or not begin before 6PM
2. **Sundays:** From 1PM-5PM or after 6PM.

### Dates/Times that are unavailable or require special approval:

- The week of Thanksgiving
- December 23, 2026 through January 1, 2027
- Palm Sunday through Easter Monday
- Holy Days of Obligation and National Holidays or whenever the Parish Offices are closed
- The evening before and morning of St. Patrick’s Day, St. Joseph’s Day, and Memorial Day
- Sunday, April 25 through Saturday, May 8, 2027
- Whenever a parish mission or similar type of parish-wide event is scheduled

**Final Note:** All dates are subject to change. If the room reserved is needed for a church function, rooms may be switched to accommodate parish-sponsored functions.

## Usage Agreements (General)

All volunteer led internal ministries and external organizations, must fill out a room usage agreement and make the room request for their desired dates/time of meeting. The room usage agreement form will differentiate between an internal ministry and an external organization as well as for usages that are for recurring meetings or one-time special events. Please fill out the form accurately to the best of your ability to ensure your event/group is categorized correctly and you are filling out the appropriate information.

For the purposes of these agreements, internal ministries are groups and apostolates that are organized by volunteer parishioners and/or parish staff/clergy that directly benefit the parish or entities supported by or affiliated with the Catholic Church. External organizations are defined as groups that operate with an independent charter, mission, and/or tax ID despite any close collaboration with parish events and interests.

## Usage Agreements and Certificates of Insurance (for External Organizations only)

External organizations, as part of the Facilities Use Agreement for their regular events and/or any special events must submit proof of sufficient insurance on the part of the organization (a copy of their certificate of liability insurance naming St. Joseph as a holder). If for a special event, there may also be additional paperwork, such as clauses for caterers, musicians, etc. These extra forms are all part of the online form and obtainable by selecting the relevant criteria from the form options. Approval of any room request is contingent upon successful execution of the Agreement, which includes receipt of all necessary documentation.

## Safe Environment Compliant

Leadership of **any** organization hosting meetings on our premises must have attended a Virtus: Protecting God's Children workshop, signed a code-of-conduct (usually part of the Virtus registration process), and submitted to a background check through the Virtus application. Visit [www.stjoekp.com/virtus](http://www.stjoekp.com/virtus) or contact Randi Hochenberger (631-269-6635 x223 or [rhochenberger@stjoekp.com](mailto:rhochenberger@stjoekp.com)) for information on completing these.

If your organization provides background checks and child safety awareness courses for members, you may submit documentation showing the kind of screening and who has undergone it, however, the group leaders/organizers will still have to submit to the above parish procedure for compliance. External background checks and attendance at other child safety programs, while helpful, are **not** acceptable forms of diocesan safe environment compliance.

## Keys for the Building

If the building of your meeting is locked at the time of your meeting, the organization's leader, co-leader, or delegate must obtain and (sign-out) the key. ***The person signing out the key is responsible for ensuring ALL exterior doors are secured and the key returned*** whether or not that person is the one who initially requested the space.

Keys can be obtained from the Parish Center during normal parish office hours. If the Parish Center is closed, a key is available from the Rectory (please use the rear door, near the garages). In both locations, there is a logbook for signing out the key, so we know who has it. If after hours and no one at the rectory answers, please call the parish and follow the prompts for the "emergency priest line."

After your meeting, you are responsible for making sure that all doors leading to the outside of the building are locked, and the key is returned to the Parish Center, by dropping it through the mail slot of the rear door. If, for some reason, the key must be used overnight, permission must be obtained from the Parish Office.

Other groups may also have use of the building simultaneously. If you have already obtained a key, be mindful of the need to be aware of the access needed by the other group(s). Same goes if another group obtained the key first—you would obtain access from the key-holder of that group. You can always inquire at the Parish Office if and when other groups may be present during your gathering.

If your meeting ends while another continues, it is sometimes expedient to pass the key off to someone from the group that will remain. ***Be aware, however***, if passing off a key to someone else (which requires Office approval) the ultimate responsibility for the key remains with the person who initially signed it out.

## Facility Maintenance:

*Please note that we are a Church and not primarily focused on hall rental. Thus, we have limited maintenance and custodial staff for events and functions. It is expected that those who use our space treat it well and keep it clean. Failure to comply with these guidelines or other untoward and disrespectful use of the space may result in you or your group being disinvented to return.*

## General & Travis Hall:

- Any trash generated by groups, must be collected and placed in the dumpster next to the School of Religion building after each event/meeting.
- Please leave all rooms in the state they were found – resetting tables and chairs to their original arrangement, leaving equipment where found or putting away to its designated location, etc.
- All lights to rooms used must be turned off, windows shut, and (exterior) doors locked. A walkthrough should be done at the conclusion of each meeting to ensure these things have been completed. This is where we all work together to ensure the safety and cleanliness of our campus.
- Any groups wishing to store supplies on our premises must have authorization to do so in writing with a defined location for storage. In between gatherings, all supplies must be put away in the designated storage space. Supplies found in any unauthorized locations are subject to disposal without warning. At no time may perishable goods, even if properly sealed, be stored on premises.
- In case of emergency, all groups who are allotted storage space on campus must make their space accessible to parish staff (e.g. providing copies of keys or combinations to locks).
- Room donations are customary to help with the operational costs of our buildings. These are expected for external organizations and special events. All donations should be paid (via our online form or directly to the parish center) *before* the use of the space, unless otherwise agreed upon in writing. The donation amount should be discussed with parish staff in advance and mutually agreed upon.
- Special events also include a default maintenance fee of \$100 in addition to venue donation. *Please note that this fee does not mean the parish will provide paid custodial services. Groups, even for these events, are still responsible for the above.* The fee goes toward the support of the building, supplies, and utilities, which typically undergo extra strain during such events.

## Kitchen Use:

- Light or basic refreshments are permitted for regular meetings. We define these refreshments as follows:
  - Beverage: water, tea, coffee, juice, soda, other non-alcoholic beverages
  - Food: snack items like chips or pretzels or cakes like cookies, donuts, or brownies
    - No hot food or food requiring long-term refrigeration
- Please note that the kitchen and refrigerators are NOT available for use nor are the additional supplies contained in the cabinets unless expressly and additionally permitted. If you absolutely require refrigeration during a meeting time (not for general storage), please communicate this and request the permission.
- ***If the kitchen is used, it must be adequately cleaned after each use.*** This includes the floor of the kitchen and area in Travis Hall around the “galley” swept, all counters wiped, all appliances away, and the sink clean and clear of any debris.
- If there are special requests for appliances, such as coffee pots or serving tools, these also must be approved in advance and must be thoroughly cleaned after use and returned to their original storage locations.
- ***All items (including food items) must be taken or discarded upon conclusion of the event.*** If you would like to offer left-overs to the parish staff/priests, please communicate this to the Parish Center. If you need to come back after your event/meeting to pick up supplies, this also is permitted, but needs to be communicated in advance, especially if coordinating around other occupancies. Any food, beverage, or other items found to be remaining (without approval) after an event will be considered abandoned and repurposed or thrown out at the discretion of parish staff.

## Classroom Use:

- If using one of our upstairs classrooms, please adhere to the same policies as noted above under “General & Travis Hall.”
- In addition, as these rooms get more use by our parish families and children as well as other large-scale lessees throughout the year, it is important that groups in this space be even more diligent about cleanliness.
- Food items are generally not permitted in our classrooms. If an exception has been made for your group, it is imperative that no perishable items ever be kept on premises outside of times of room use (even if sealed).
- ***If you are allotted storage space, all items for use must be kept there and locked when not in use.*** Anything, especially potentially hazardous items such as lighters and knives must always be secured when not in use.
- The parish is not responsible for any items left out in between meetings and reserves the right to discard any items left in unauthorized spaces.

## Bake Sales

Any organization or individual requesting to have a bake sale will be limited to ONE weekend each year: one Saturday and/or Sunday to sell. If from an individual, the person must be an active member of the parish community. Boy/Girl Scouts fall under individuals. If the sale is supporting an organization, that organization must either be Catholic or at least not have or support policies or ideologies that are antithetical to Catholic sensibilities.

## Ticket Sales

Each organization that requests to sell tickets, raffles, etc. will be limited to ONE weekend each year: one Saturday and/or Sunday to sell. Organizations that have a junior division attached to them will also be given one additional weekend to sell tickets, provided the tickets are for the junior division, and not the parent organization.

Requests for ticket sales will require submitting the online form for a “special event” as they occur outside of normal meeting times.

In the event of inclement weather, all tickets will be sold in the atrium of the Parish Center. **No tickets are to be sold inside the entrance of the Church.**

Organizations may continue to have membership drives throughout the year and are not subject to above stipulations. However, to avoid scheduling conflicts, intended drives should be cleared with Randi Hochenberger (631-269-6635 x223 or [rhochenberger@stjoekp.com](mailto:rhochenberger@stjoekp.com)) well in advance of the date(s).

## Speakers and Liturgical Events

Events with external speakers or presiders that will be open to the public or to any persons additional to the organization members need to obtain permission to have their guests speak/preside. External speakers or presiders are considered any individual invited to speak/preside at an event/liturgy who is professionally unaffiliated with St. Joseph’s parish, the diocese of Rockville Centre, and/or the Universal Catholic Church (even if he/she is an active, practicing Catholic). Priests and other Church representatives/officials who are unaffiliated with our diocese are also considered “external” and subject to additional vetting. Even speakers who are members of the sponsoring organization are considered “external” for these purposes unless the event is a closed one where only organization members will be in attendance.

All events (not including the sole celebration of mass by a guest priest)\* with external speakers/presiders will have to fill out and attach with other forms the “Guest Speaker” form.

*\*If the presider is a priest/deacon from outside of the diocese, he should reach out to Fr. Peter for approval. Otherwise, official liturgies of the Church presided over by clergy of our own diocese are acceptable as is.*

## Additional Permissions

If additional permissions regarding our policies are requested or if there are questions about the existing policies or process, please send all inquiries to Randi Hochenberger (631-269-6635 x223 or [rhochenberger@stjoekp.com](mailto:rhochenberger@stjoekp.com)).