

ST. MARY HYDE PARK

St. Mary Parish ACTIVE PARISHIONER STATUS Q&A

1. What is an Active Parishioner?

An Active Parishioner is registered, normally attends Sunday Mass at any Eastside Catholic Sunday liturgy and financially supports the ministries of our Family parishes. Families must be registered in the parish and active for six months before applying for the Active Parishioner Tuition. The parish database is used for recording:

- **Attendance** is tracked by recording envelopes returned in the basket at Sunday Masses at any of our Eastside Catholic Family churches.
- Financial support is measured by gifts designated to Sunday Giving including gifts online, in envelopes, and/or mailed (Donor Advised Trusts, stocks)

2. What is the purpose of an Active Parishioner Scholarship application, and why are we tracking?

The Scholarship process replaces the previous "In Parish Tuition Covenant" and In Parish tuition rate. The application serves as a request to be considered for this scholarship.

The AP Scholarship maximum is set each year to reduce the burden of tuition above the maximum EdChoice tuition award. This scholarship would be individually reduced by family according to the availability of other aid such as SGO & CEF scholarships if awarded above the family pay balance. According to OH law, the amount of the net tuition after these awards can NOT be less than the maximum EdChoice tuition award.

Attendance and giving criteria are considered the common criteria in many of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Parishes offering Active Parishioner rates, and envelope tracking is currently the best approach for measurement.

With the recent availability of EdChoice and SGO Scholarships Choice initiatives, we are required to substantiate criteria that determine the tuition charged to each family. Envelope use allows the business office to fairly award Active Parishioner Scholarships and facilitate stewardship gifts of treasure.

While tuition covers the annual operating expenses of the school, additional parish support including rent free use of facilities and shared administration staffing not included in SMS direct operation costs as well as other intangible benefits to the school as a Parish ministry. Yet, financial stability of the Parish is required to support our SMS Ministry.

Please note that the Catholic Education Fund (CEF) grants that support attendance at Catholic Schools are available. The applications are submitted through Facts Grants. Watch for the annual notification and deadlines for the process year to year. Emergency CEF assistance is also available throughout the year— please contact the school office for more information.

3. How is this criterion measured?

'Regular' use of the envelopes has been the best practice for measuring attendance since the inception of Online giving, decades ago. In this way, you are actively participating in the Offertory at Mass.

- Envelopes put in the basket at Mass are entered for attendance for that weekend Mass, regardless of envelope date, and regardless of whether they contain a contribution or not. Zero amounts are entered and counted.
- Envelopes mailed or dropped in the office are recorded as "Mailed," which does not apply to attendance.
- Occasional 'forgotten' envelopes can be backdated when requested.

4. I give online and I have no use for the envelopes for giving, so why bother?

- Envelopes include giving causes beyond Sunday Giving.
- Envelopes provide a way to actively participate in the Offertory at Mass and serve the purpose of recording attendance.
- The use of an envelope in the collection basket is considered the 'best practice' in our parishes today.

5. I do not have envelopes: I did not get them/did not bring them with me to Mass/or ran out of time to find them or ...

- If you are NOT getting your envelope bundle every two months, please email the parish office with your name, and we will work to correct it: office@eastsideregion.org.
- The post office is not always faithful with delivery. Often, they are returned to us without explanation, but that could be weeks or months later. We will forward to school if we get them.
- IF you move, that creates another challenge. Please contact the parish office when you move to update your Parish Registration. The school and church data systems are not connected and forwarding notifications from the USPS to us is significantly delayed.
- Some families suggested that keeping the envelopes in their car was help.
- If you do not have envelopes, you can re-purpose an envelope from your junk mail or simply include a note with the following information: “**StMary**” /**Your last name** / **your Street** so we correctly match you.
- There are often envelopes at the back of church you are welcome to use if all else fails.

6. I prefer to donate with a Donor Advised Fund, or stock gift which is more practical to gift monthly, quarterly, or annually. Does that meet the requirement?

YES, your regular use in this case is established as an annual basis.

7. What amount is expected?

- There is no specific amount expected, each family has unique financial capabilities. No amount is too large or small.
- Consistent gift amounts are helpful to our budgeting and operations planning.
- You might consider the amount of Parish support for your child(ren) to attend. SMS INCLUDING the In Parish Scholarship amount, as well as the costs of the many ministries and needs of the Parish beyond the school.

8. I give to the SMS Annual Fund, SVDP, Festival Sponsorships, or other initiatives of the Parish, does that count?

- We value all gifts. However, Sunday Giving is the base giving that supports our everyday operational expenses and ministries of our Parish. Therefore, we ask that you consider Sunday Giving first and that is what we track for the AP Scholarship.
- Please continue to support these other needs as you are able.

9. I attend Mass every Sunday, but at a different parish. Why doesn't that count?

It is OUR St. Mary Parish community and the Eastside Catholic staff that support SMS. As a Catholic faith community, together we support the faith development of our children.

We understand that you might attend outside Masses for many reasons. We simply ask that your regular Sunday Mass obligations are fulfilled thru attendance at St. Mary, or ANY church in the Eastside Catholic Family of Parishes. St. Mary envelopes are faithfully directed to St. Mary when used at other Eastside Family Parish churches.