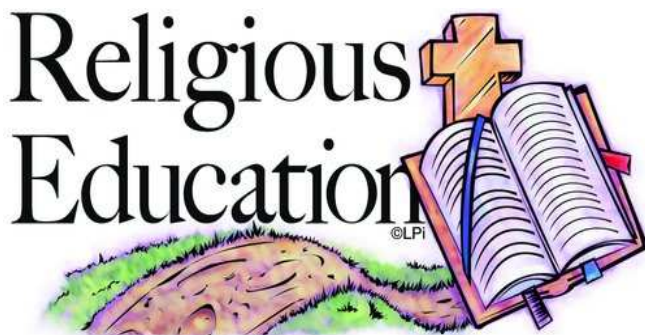


**2016-2017**



**Handbook**



*Encounter, Follow & Share Jesus*

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# ST. MARGARET MARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION

This handbook contains information about the Religious Education program mission statement, policies, curriculum, sacramental guidelines, calendar, volunteer sheet and more.

**Please keep this handbook for future reference.**

As parents, you are the most important models of faith for your child. You are the first educator of the faith for your children. Your influence on your child's faith development is more significant than any other person or experience your child will ever have. This statement is based on well-documented research.

The Religious Education staff and catechists are here to work in partnership with you as you do all you can to help your child become a believing, loving Catholic Christian. The catechists are volunteering their time and talent, and we owe them an enormous amount of support and gratitude for all they do.



Welcome to a new year of Religious Education.

We look forward to fulfilling the six “tasks of catechesis” with you:

**Six Tasks of Catechesis:**

- Promote **knowledge of the faith**
- Instill knowledge of the meaning of the **liturgy and the sacraments**
- Encourage **moral education** in Jesus Christ
- Teach how to **pray** with Christ
- Prepare to live in **community** and to participate actively in the **life and mission of the Church**
- Support a **missionary spirit** in order to be present as Christians in society.

This year we will continue to spend time on the theme “Teach Our People to Pray.” Because faith is a gift from God, it is important for us to intentionally open our hearts and minds to the power of prayer in our lives. It’s important to pray but equally important to LISTEN to God. What a perfect goal for our Religious Education program this 2016-2017 year.

**Parent Meetings:**

**Sunday August 28, 2016 at 6:30pm**

Grades 6-10

**Monday, August 29, 2016 at 3:45 pm**

Pre-K thru Grade 5

**Wednesday, August 31, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.**

Grades 1-10

Monday and Wednesday sessions will take place in St. Margaret Mary Church. **All sessions are Parents only.**

**Religious Education Staff:**

Amy Matz            Director of Religious Education;  
Sunday School, Grades 1-5 and Confirmation  
Monday Evening Bible Study

Tina Peirick       Religious Education Coordinator for Grades 6-10

Marcie Howard    Religious Education Administrative Assistant

# GREETINGS FROM THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BOARD

The Religious Education Board welcomes your family to another year of faith education. The Board is:

- ◆ A group of parish members, responsible for over-seeing all Religious Education programs in the parish from the post-baptismal programs through parent education;
- ◆ A decision-making and policy-setting body which regulates and evaluates all aspects of the parish's Religious Education programs.

The Religious Education Board meetings are held 4 times a year: August, November, February, and May. Meetings are held in the Parish Office Center Conference Room. You are welcome to attend any meeting and to express your ideas during the open forum period at the beginning of each meeting. Your input as parents and families is important to us. We need your ideas, thoughts, and suggestions to effectively plan, implement, and evaluate our policies and programs. Please use the entrance closest to the Perpetual Adoration Chapel for the meeting.

The term of office for a board member is usually three years.

- ◆ Parents, catechists and parishioners who are interested in joining the Religious Education Board have an opportunity to be selected each year as terms are completed. **The Board is currently looking for new members. Please contact Amy Matz if you are interested.**

The Religious Education Board approves the policies and procedures in this handbook. Please address your comments and concerns to any of the following members:

Jennifer Cianciolo - Parent [gcianciolo@new.rr.com](mailto:gcianciolo@new.rr.com)

Tammy Fisher - Parishioner & Catechist [tfisher@bemis.com](mailto:tfisher@bemis.com)

Jon Mathews - Parent - [jmathews1@new.rr.com](mailto:jmathews1@new.rr.com)

Amy Matz - DRE (Ex-Officio) 729-4562 [amatz@tsmcatholicsschools.org](mailto:amatz@tsmcatholicsschools.org)

Fr. Mike Ingold - Pastor (Ex-Officio) 729-4560

## Amendment

Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment. The Religious Education Director will inform you of any changes at the earliest possible opportunity. Some changes may be put into effect immediately due to unforeseen circumstances. The Religious Education Board is the body which approves all amendments to this handbook.

# **MISSION STATEMENTS**

## **Green Bay Diocesan Department of Education Catechetical Mission Statement**

Inspiring  
lifelong Catholic disciples  
rooted in  
Word, Sacraments,  
community and service.

### **St. Margaret Mary Parish Community**

We the people of St. Margaret Mary Parish,  
united in faith and prayer,  
resolve to give witness to the Gospel.  
The Holy Spirit calls and empowers us  
to love and serve,  
to lead and teach,  
to heal, forgive and understand.  
We pledge to share  
our God-given gifts and talents  
for the benefit of our parish and all people  
in the name of Jesus Christ.

### **St. Margaret Mary Religious Education Program**

We, the Religious Education team of St. Margaret Mary Parish,  
unite in partnership with parents  
as they guide their children  
in the process of becoming faith-filled, loving Catholic Christians.  
Assisted by the spirit of Jesus,  
we provide education about the Catholic faith,  
education in the Gospel way of life, and  
prayer experiences that invite spiritual transformation.  
We believe that the presence of Jesus  
makes the ministry of Religious Education effective,  
so that young people may respond to the message  
through growth in faith, worship and Christian service.

# THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEAM

The Religious Education team is made up of the director, coordinators, administrative assistant, and catechists who work with the children and youth in each of the grade levels. The staff members are always open to your questions and concerns. They can be reached anytime by voicemail or in person at the following times:

**Amy Matz**, Director of Religious Education  
Coordinator for Grades Pre-School  
through Grade 5 and Confirmation  
M 8:00am to 4:00pm (or 8:30pm on  
Bible Study evenings)  
T & Th 8:00am-4:00pm  
W 8:00am-8:00 pm  
F Off  
729-4562, Ext. 112  
[amatz@smcatholicschools.org](mailto:amatz@smcatholicschools.org)



**Tina Peirick**, Coordinator Grades 6-10  
Tuesday-Thursday 10:00am-1:00pm  
in addition to class times on  
Sunday and Wednesday evenings.  
729-4562, Ext. 116  
[tpeirick@smcatholicschools.org](mailto:tpeirick@smcatholicschools.org)



**Marcie Howard**, Administrative Assistant  
Monday-Thursday 9:00 am – 4:00 p.m.  
729-4562, Ext. 111  
[mhoward@smcatholicschools.org](mailto:mhoward@smcatholicschools.org)



# ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

We, at St. Margaret Mary Parish Community, believe that Catholic Education is a vital part of being Catholic. Because each grade's curriculum builds on the previous grades' content, Religious Education is most effective when children begin their religious education at an early age and continue all the way through the Confirmation program and beyond. Even then, Religious Education is not completed with Confirmation: the journey begins at Confirmation. Adult Catholics are expected to continue to learn about and grow in their religious education.

In order to qualify for parishioner tuition rates, people who wish to register for the Religious Education program must:

- **be registered members of the parish (or of a Neenah/Menasha parish)**
- **regularly worship with the St. Margaret Mary Parish Community (or with a Neenah/Menasha parish)**
- provide the parish with a financial contribution; because our parish subsidizes each Religious Education student at a rate of about \$450 per student, in fairness parish contributions from Religious Education families are vitally needed
- have paid all tuition and fees due from the previous year

## \$CRIP FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FAMILIES

Religious Education families may choose to purchase \$CRIP and to use 80% of the profit earned as payment toward the Religious Education tuition, including Sacrament fees. SCRIP cards are for groceries, gas, department stores, restaurants, etc., and you are able to use the full purchase price of the cards. In order for SCRIP profit to be applied to tuition and fees, **orders must be placed on-line.**

You would then print the order confirmation, clip your check to the form, and drop off both at the parish office by 9 am Monday morning. Checks need to be made out to SMCS. Filled orders are delivered to St. Margaret Mary Parish before noon on Thursday. An alternative is to set up a Presto Pay account, which would enable you to pay on-line for your SCRIP. This also makes it possible to print some SCRIP directly. Others may still need to be picked up at the parish office.





An easy way to get started is to go to the [www.smmneenah.org](http://www.smmneenah.org) website and click on SCRIP on the left hand side of the page. You will find education on how to sign up and a link to the Shop with Scrip site. A form needs to be completed which indicates that your SCRIP profit will be applied to your Religious Education tuition for SMM.

## **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

No child or youth is ever denied Religious Education for financial reasons. Parents may request to apply for tuition assistance when needed. Tuition Assistance is available for households that make a combined income of less than \$40,000 annually. All information provided on the tuition assistance form is kept strictly confidential. Please see St. Margaret Mary Parish website at [www.smmneenah.org](http://www.smmneenah.org) for a Tuition Assistance form. Monthly payment plans may be set up for ease of payment of tuition. In cases of extreme hardship please contact Amy Matz.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM CATECHISTS**

Our goal is to maintain a ratio of 15 students to 1 catechist. Each year approximately 45 people volunteer to serve as Catechists and Aides in our Religious Education Program. They do an incredible job and we appreciate their commitment and creativity. Catechists are provided with training and support. If you are interested in serving as a catechist or co-catechist this year, please call the Religious Education Office at 729-4562. To teach is to share your faith in a way that touches a young person's life forever.

## **CLASS DAYS AND TIMES** \*please see calendar

**SUNDAY School** – Sunday -9:30-10:30 a.m.

**Grades 1-5** Monday afternoon - 3:45-5:00 p.m.

**Grades 1-10** Wednesday evening - 6:30-7:45 p.m.

**Grades 6-10** Sunday evening 6:30-7:45 p.m.

**Confirmation (Grade 11)** Second and fourth Sundays (usually) 6:30-8:00pm

## **PARENT - CATECHIST CONFERENCES**

Parents and catechists are encouraged to communicate whenever possible. No formal parent-catechist conferences are pre-planned, unless requested by a parent, catechist, director/coordinator.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Listed are ways to express your own faith commitment:

### Discussion:

As you talk with your child or teen about what was learned in each class, share with your child/teen what you believe about the topic discussed.

### Example:

Children learn through your good example. It is important to attend weekend liturgy as a family. Participation in the Eucharist helps a child understand and appreciate what is taught in class.

### Connection:

Help your child and teen connect God, religion and faith with what they observe through various media and the world around them. We believe that God is with us in this world, as you do.

### Involvement:

Throughout the Religious Education year, there are various opportunities to volunteer. Parents will receive an email and information of volunteer opportunities (when needed) through Sign Up Genius

## **TUITION AND FEES**

The 2016-2017 fees are as follows:

- **Tuition Fee** - \$110 per student for the first three students in your family. See page 8 for information on applying SCRIP profit toward tuition.
  
- **Sacramental Fees** (in addition to tuition)
  - Eucharist \$30 \*
  - Reconciliation \$30 \*
  - Confirmation \$30 \*

\*Sacramental fees apply to children/youth in Catholic Schools (SMM, SMCHS, Xavier, etc)

# PROGRAM PROCEDURES

## ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Please establish Religious Education as a priority when arranging your child's or teen's involvement in various extracurricular activities. Students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions. The Diocese of Green Bay has established 30-35 hours of Religious Education are required of any child participating in Religious Education classes. **Please call the Religious Education Office at 729-4562, ext. 502, if your child will be absent.** Unless notified, we will contact the families of absent students to verify that they are safe at home. When it is impossible to attend a given class, if the parents wish to request it, the coordinator or catechist will be happy to supply materials for completing the class work at home.

Your child/teen is encouraged to participate actively in discussions and activities during Religious Education sessions. This will make the Religious Education experience more enjoyable and more profitable for your child or teen, and will help him or her feel an important part of the planned activities.

## BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Students are expected to act in a Christian manner. This includes showing respect for all catechists and other students before, during, and after class has been dismissed. The following approach will be used for disruptive behavior:

1. The catechist will remind the student of proper behavior and will expect cooperation from the student.
2. Continued disruptive behavior will be handled by the director/coordinator.
3. When negative choices become a pattern, student and parent (s) will be required to meet with the catechist and director/coordinator to seek a solution.
4. Any student showing symptoms of drug or alcohol abuse, or any student found with a weapon of any kind, will remain in a secure area until parents are notified and arrive to pick up the student. Authorities will also be notified when appropriate.

## **CANCELLATIONS DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS**

When weather conditions are hazardous on a school day, St. Margaret Mary Religious Education Program will follow the lead of the Neenah Public Schools. When Neenah Schools are cancelled, Religious Education classes are cancelled on Monday or Wednesday. Sunday evening classes will be cancelled at the discretion of the Director and parents will be notified by text/email. Unless under very extreme conditions, Sunday morning classes will not be cancelled, due to the fact that they take place during a Mass time.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL FROM CLASS**

If you find it necessary to take your child out of class before scheduled dismissal, please provide the catechist with a signed note to that effect before the beginning of class.

## **ENTERING AND GATHERING**

Religious Education participants should be dropped off and picked up either on Division Street or outside the gated area on Washington Street. Upon entering the school building, all class participants will gather by class, in the gym. When the catechist is ready, he/she will lead the youth to their classroom. Sunday morning participants are dropped off in their classrooms which are held in the church.

Parents of children in PreSchool and Kindergarten on Sunday morning and Grades 1-2 (Monday & Wednesday) are asked to pick up their child(ren) from the classroom at the end of the class period. Older siblings may pick up younger siblings after class time.

## **LOCKED DOORS**

In an effort to increase security during Religious Education classes, all exterior doors will be locked. Access can be gained into the building by buzzing and the Director/Coordinator will open the door.

## **MEDICATION**

Except in extraordinary circumstances, which must be approved by the director/ coordinator, the Religious Education personnel will not supervise the taking of medication.

## **OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES**

Permission slips, signed by a child's/teen's parent or guardian, must be on file before that child/teen will be allowed to participate in an off-site activity or field trip.

## **PARKING PROCEDURES**

The safety of the children in our program is of primary importance. We ask that you follow the procedures listed below in order to assist in the safe arrival and departure of all the students.

- Please park in the church parking lot, along Washington Ave, on Division Street or Reed Street.
- Too often children do not look before they run; therefore, we ask you to use extra caution before moving your vehicle.
- Prompt pick-up is greatly appreciated.

## **DIOCESAN POLICIES**

St. Margaret Mary Religious Education Program, as part of the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay, abides by the policies and regulations of the Diocesan Board of Education. Not all of the diocesan policies are duplicated in this handbook. A copy of the diocesan board policies can be found in the Religious Education Office. Any interested person may review these policies upon request.

The following diocesan policies are listed here because of their serious nature.

## **BACKGROUND CHECKS & ABUSE AWARENESS TRAINING**

The Bishop's *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, Articles 12 and 13, states: "Dioceses will establish 'safe environment' programs, *and* evaluate the background of all diocesan and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors." The Diocese of Green Bay has determined the following persons are covered by this charter and will participate in a *Protecting God's Children* Adult Awareness Session:

- All employees
- Any volunteer who has contact with children/youth/individuals at risk and encounters said person(s) more than four (4) times in a program year and/or

- acts as a chaperone on an overnight event and/or
- is the adult driver in a vehicle transporting said person(s) and/or
- spends an average of one (1) or more hour(s) a week in any given four (4) week period with said person(s) and/or
- is not under the direct/immediate supervision of a parish/ educational/catechetical employee.
- Persons serving in ministries which may involve children/youth/ individuals at risk.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Bomb Threat**

If a telephone bomb threat is received, the Director/Coordinator will be notified immediately. The Director/Coordinator shall inform the police at once, and accept the decision of the police concerning the course of action to be taken. If the police order the building to be vacated, the building will be evacuated by fire drill procedures, unless to do so would place the students in danger. In that case, an alternate route will be led by the Director/Coordinator.

### **Fire Emergency**

Fire emergency directions are posted in each classroom near the doorway. Catechists will be asked to familiarize themselves and their students with the necessary procedures.

### **Tornado Emergency**

Tornado emergency directions are posted near the doorway in each classroom. Each classroom is assigned a safe area within the building. Catechists will be asked to familiarize themselves with the necessary procedures.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the educational programs governed by the Diocesan Board of Education to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from any type of harassment. No employee, volunteer or student associated with these programs shall be subject to any type of harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, volunteer or student to harass another employee, volunteer or student.

Each Director/Coordinator shall be responsible for promoting understanding and acceptance of, and assuring compliance with local, state and federal laws and board policy and procedures governing harassment within the educational/catechetical program or office. Violations of this policy or procedure will be cause for disciplinary action.

## **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Since parish school and Religious Education personnel are in a unique position to observe and identify potential cases of abused and/or neglected children, responsible action by school and Religious Education personnel and catechists can be achieved through recognition and understanding of the problem, knowing the reporting procedures and acting accordingly as specified by state law.

Administrators are required to follow the requirements of civil law and the guidelines as set by the Department of Education. Such guidelines should make staff personnel aware that by state statute they are immune from civil and/or criminal liability when reporting suspected child abuse cases. Failure to report may result in legal action which may include a fine, imprisonment or both.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

Firearms, weapons and other dangerous objects are not permitted in schools or Religious Education buildings. The possession or use of such by employees, volunteers, or students is not permitted on the grounds or property used or operated by the parish, school or Religious Education program.

Police shall be notified immediately if an assault or battery occurs resulting from use or threatened use of a firearm, weapon, or dangerous object. When possible, such dangerous objects shall be taken from the person. Parents of students found in possession of such dangerous objects shall be notified immediately.

Any students in possession of a firearm while participating in any school, parish, regional or diocesan program shall be immediately suspended.



# CURRICULUM

## Sunday School

**Promise**, Pflaum Gospel Weeklies. The *Promise* magazine uses storytelling, prayer and activities to introduce young learners to a greater understanding of the scriptures and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Each week's lesson promotes sharing of the children's own experiences, listening to a Gospel story and carrying out a related activity. These materials connect the Word of God with children's lives, assuring that children associate faith, learning and life.

## ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

**Be My Disciples**, RCL Benziger Publishing, is the textbook series selected for Grades 1 - 6, excluding Grade 2. The texts are based on the structure of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the spirit of the *General and National Directories for Catechesis*. Each unit in the book features: What Catholics Believe, How Catholics Worship, How Catholics Live, and How Catholics Pray. To find additional resources for working with your children, we invite you to use this website: [www.bemydisciples.com/parents](http://www.bemydisciples.com/parents)

### Grade One - Monday/Wednesday

**Be My Disciples:** In Grade 1, the focus is on the following topics: our Church community, our loving God, God's Son, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Church as the followers of Jesus.

### Grade Two

**God's Gift—Reconciliation**, Loyola Press, is the text used in preparation for the first celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation for second graders. This book emphasizes the fact that God calls us friends; that Jesus saves, forgives and heals us; that the Holy Spirit guides us; and, that God is always with us. The ideas in the text are covered through a partnership between parents and catechists

**God's Gift - Eucharist, Grade 2**, Loyola Press, is the text used in the preparation for First Communion. This program is designed to actively involve the family, catechist and parish community in the child's preparation. The basic actions of the Eucharist determine the eight program themes: Belonging, Gathering, Reflecting, Listening, Preparing, Remembering, Receiving and Journeying. A special feature of the series is "My Own Mass Booklet," which the children can use at Mass.



## **Grade Three**

**Be My Disciples:** In Grade 3, the students study the church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic. The church is one in our belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The church as a whole and individuals can be holy, forgiving and healing. Catholics are open to all, which is the very meaning of the word “catholic”. The church is apostolic, continuing the work of the apostles. Therefore, the Apostles’ Creed is studied especially in the third grade. The church also has a mission in the world.

## **Grade Four**

**Be My Disciples:** In the Fourth Grade, the students focus on the Trinity – three persons in one God. God the Creator’s goodness is revealed to us through scripture. Jesus is the image of God. The Holy Spirit guides us and gives us strength; at Pentecost, believers received the great gift of the Spirit. Our relationship with God is strengthened through the sacraments, the commandments and the beatitudes. Each of us has a role in the world that God wants us to carry out.

## **Grade Five**

**Be My Disciples:** Grade 5, centers on a study of all seven sacraments, which are presented as sacred signs and celebrations. The sacraments are God’s gift of life and grace to us. Through Baptism and Confirmation, we become members of the Body of Christ and are strengthened in our faith. In the Eucharist, we celebrate what we as a community believe. Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are sacraments of healing which are meant to be celebrated primarily in the community. Through Matrimony, the family or “domestic church” is born. Holy Orders is a sacrament of leadership and ministry.

## **CLASSES GRADE SIX THROUGH TEN**

St. Margaret Mary Parish has great care and concern for youth. We see the treasure held within each student in our parish community and we have an immense desire to provide the best Religious Education experience for our young people. In an effort to connect youth and the parish community more completely, we will provide and promote worship, community building and learning opportunities.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Religious Education students in Grades Sixth through Eighth will experience the four components of Religious Education: content, community-building, service and prayer. Middle school classes will use curriculum from *Be My Disciples (Grade 6)* and *The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers (Grade 7 & 8)*.

## Grade Six

In the Sixth Grade, students learn to develop the habits of being a disciple and make decisions to live as an active committed member to the Catholic Church. *Be My Disciples* (RCL Benziger) helps students to grow in knowledge of Catholic scripture, tradition and the liturgical year and connects faith with their life experiences. [www.bemydisciples.com/parents](http://www.bemydisciples.com/parents)

Class structure will follow the process: *Explore, Discover and Decide*

Grade Sixth Curriculum will focus on the following topics:

- Discipleship
- God the Father
- Celebrating the Liturgy
- Sacraments
- Moral Decisions
- Commandments

## Grade Seven and Eight

The curriculum, for Seventh and Eighth Grades, aims to strengthen each participant's Catholic identity and inspire them to participate more fully in the Church's mission. *The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers* (Saint Mary's Press) offers a hands-on approach in the classroom and encourages students to find connections with their faith and daily life. For more information: [www.smp.org](http://www.smp.org)

Class structure will follow the format; *Pray It, Think About it, Live It, Church History, People of Faith and Liturgy Connection*.

Grade Seven Curriculum will focus on the following topics:

- New Testament
- The Life of Jesus Christ
- The Holy Spirit
- Prayer
- Respecting Life

Grade Eight Curriculum will focus on the following topics:

- Creed
- The Church
- The Liturgy
- Sacraments
- The Bible

## **HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

Religious Education students in High School will focus on learning the intellectual, spiritual, pastoral and human education of their faith. High school classes will use *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition*.

### **Grades Nine and Ten**

In Grades Nine and Ten students learn the essentials of the Catholic Faith and strengthen their understanding of key topics and doctrine in preparation for Confirmation. *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition* (Saint Mary's Press) guides students with a practical way to learn, live and share the Catholic faith through a holistic approach and reflects the Catechism of the Catholic Church. For more information:

[www.smp.org](http://www.smp.org)

Class structure will follow the format; *Pray It, Study It and Live It* .

High School Curriculum will focus on the following topics:

- The Catholic Church
- Sacraments of Healing
- Sacraments of Service
- Christian Morality
- The Holy Spirit

### **Confirmation**

The Confirmation program is a special year of preparation for those who are Juniors or Seniors in high school. The candidates meet together in large and small group settings. They also meet with their individual sponsors. Topics covered in the Confirmation sessions are:

- I Believe in God
- Made in the Image of God
- I Believe in Jesus Christ
- Jesus' Passion
- Greatest Commandment

- Mary, the Mother of Jesus
- I Believe in the Holy Spirit
- I Believe in the Catholic Church
- I Believe in the Communion of Saints
- I Believe in the Forgiveness of Sins, the Resurrection of the Body and Life Everlasting

The Confirmation program meets twice a month, typically on the second & fourth Sundays of a month. Please see the schedule for the exact dates.

## **YOUTH Mass**

A youth oriented Mass will be held at 9:30am on the second Sunday of each month. Youth in Religious Education in Grades 6-10 and Confirmation candidates will be responsible for the ministry roles for these Masses. Youth in Grades 4-10 are invited to participate in the choir.

## **FOCUS Group**

Students in Grades 6-10 will participate in the Focus Group during class time. The topic, Sacraments, will be presented by Deacon Dan Laurent, Dan Bornemann and Mary Schmeichel. Parents are encouraged and welcomed to attend. Dates to be announced.

## **FORMAL PRAYERS AND TEACHINGS**

Young people will find it easier to memorize formal prayers. They learn these prayers and teachings better if parents work with them. We propose this plan for memorization:

**Sunday School**—The Sign of the Cross and The Glory Be

**Grade One**—The Our Father and The Hail Mary;

**Grade Two**—Act of Contrition

**Grade Three**—The Apostle's Creed and The Rosary

**Grade Four**—The Ten Commandments and Nicene Creed

**Grade Five and Beyond**—All of the Above

Each family will be given a copy of the prayers for their grade level to be used for home study. The catechists will periodically review the prayers with the children in class.

# SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

## GENERAL POLICIES

In order to ensure that our students are thoroughly prepared to receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation, we require parents to enroll their children in Religious Education beginning in the First Grade and continuing through each of the following years. This provides the necessary background so that the sacraments are understandable to the young person in the context of our Catholic beliefs and practices.

All children in a sacramental grade must be baptized in order to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist, and Confirmation.

## RECONCILIATION: SACRAMENT OF HEALING

The Sacrament of Reconciliation celebrates God's healing power and the forgiveness of our sins. When the priest prays the words of absolution, we experience the mercy of God. Formal preparation and first reception of this sacrament for this year will take place in the Second Grade at St. Margaret Mary Parish. Information regarding parent sessions, events and celebrations will be emailed directly to the families who have registered.

### First Reconciliation events are:

First Reconciliation Parent Meeting:

September 19 at 3:45pm  
September 21 at 6:30pm

First Reconciliation Retreat:

November 5 at 9:00am-11:30am  
November 12 at 1:00pm-3:30pm

First Reconciliation Celebration:

December 6 at 6:00pm



# **EUCHARIST: SACRAMENT OF INITIATION**

The Eucharist is the central celebration of the Church and our greatest act of worship during which we thank God for all of the gifts we have received, especially the gift of Jesus. We listen to the Word of God and we share a meal together. As Catholics, we believe that Jesus is truly present to us in the Eucharistic bread and wine. Formal preparation and first reception of the sacrament ordinarily takes place in the Second Grade. Information regarding parent sessions, events and celebrations will be emailed directly to the families involved.

## **Scheduled Eucharist events are as follows:**

First Eucharist Parent Meeting:

February 20, 2017 at 3:45pm  
February 22, 2017 at 6:30pm

First Eucharist Retreat:

March 11, 2017 at 9:00am  
March 18, 2017 at 1:00pm

First Eucharist Rite of Enrollment:

April 8, 2016 at the 5:00pm Mass

First Communion Masses

April 29 5:00pm  
April 30 7:30am, 9:30am and 11:30am  
(11:30 is a special Mass)



## **CONFIRMATION: SACRAMENT OF INITIATION**

Confirmation strengthens the new life we received at Baptism and makes us living witnesses of Jesus in the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Sacrament of Confirmation is usually celebrated in the eleventh or twelfth grade. Information regarding parent and sponsor meetings, events and celebrations will be emailed directly to the Confirmation candidates.

### **Key Confirmation events:**

Confirmation Parent/Candidate Meeting:

September 11, 2016 at 6:30pm

Confirmation Sponsor/Candidate Meeting:

October 9, 2016 at 6:30pm

Confirmation Rite of Entrance:

January 22, 2017 at the 9:30am Mass (It's also a Sponsor/Candidate session)

Confirmation Retreat:

February 12, 2017 at Mt. Tabor from  
10:00am-5:00pm

Confirmation Rehearsal:

April 26, 2017 at 8:00pm

Confirmation Celebration:

April 27, 2017 at 6:30pm with Bishop Ricken



# **FAITH DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL AGES**

## **FAITH ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE**

This group assesses faith educational needs of the adult members of the parish, plans and then promotes adult programs to enrich the spiritual lives of our parishioners. They also provide materials to families for Advent and Lent. Opportunities include scripture study, religious videos, Renew Groups, R.C.I.A., "Soup and Sermon" offerings during Advent and Lent, book study groups, bus trip/pilgrimage, short retreats and other faith enrichment programs. Contact Joan Bartman 729-4560 x 106.

## **ADULT BIBLE STUDY**

### **MONDAY EVENING**

A Monday Evening Bible Study for adults (18 years of age and older) is held twice a month in the Parish Center Conference Room from 6:30-8:00pm. A study of the Old Testament is underway. New members are welcome at any time. Faith-sharing is interwoven with the Bible study, creating a format that benefits everyone spiritually. Monday evening Bible Study usually meets the First & Third Mondays of each month. Exceptions are made but are published in the bulletin. Please call Amy Matz for more information

### **WEDNESDAY MORNING**

A Wednesday Morning Bible Study is held in the Parish Center at 9:00 a.m. The scriptures for the upcoming Sunday are studied and shared through discussion. The session is on-going, but is occasionally replaced with a video. Contact Joan Bartman, Pastoral Associate, for further information: 729-4560, Ext. 106.

