

# St. Margaret Mary K - 8 Faith Formation Programs

## PARENTS' HANDBOOK 2019-2020

St. Margaret Mary Parish  
1450 Green Trails Drive  
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Web Page: [www.smmp.com](http://www.smmp.com)

Parent Handbook for Kindergarten - Eighth Grade  
Faith Formation Programs

### Christian Education Commission

The Christian Education Commission is a consultative body which operates in the decision-making process by shaping and adopting policies concerning the children and youth faith formation programs of the parish. The Christian Education Commission meets monthly. All are welcome to attend.

Fr. Paul Hottinger, Pastor	630-369-0777
Jacqui Snyder, Director	630-369-0833 / <a href="mailto:jsnyder@smmp.com">jsnyder@smmp.com</a>
Chris Lupo, Chairperson, Christian Education Commission	

*August, 2019*

*Dear Parents,*

*Living in the present age is a daunting task even for those well equipped with faith and faith understanding. We do not know all the challenges our children will have to face as they reach adulthood. The greatest favor we can do for them is to help them form a strong personal relationship with God and teach them what Jesus taught us.*

*As Pope Paul VI insisted, the gospel is really attractive, the truth is desirable. We must not be like a light put under a bushel basket, but a light that shines in the darkness. This requires faith and faith formation. It is never too early to start, or too late to continue.*

*My great thanks to the wonderful, caring catechists who give so much time to our children. Let us all share the work of teaching as Jesus did.*

*Sincerely,*

*Father Paul*

*Dear Parents,*

*God has gifted parents with the responsibility of raising and educating their children as Christians in the Catholic Tradition. Our St. Margaret Mary Parish Program exists to assist you in this awesome duty. Our program can impart knowledge of our faith through classes and other opportunities throughout the year, but it is the parents that really teach what it means to be a Christian by their everyday living example.*

*Besides weekly classes, we strongly encourage you to participate in weekly Mass, Reconciliation Services during Advent and Lent, Children's Masses, the Liturgy of the Word program for our younger children, and as many of the service projects as your family can attend. We also invite you to volunteer when opportunities arise which fit your family and work lives. By being involved in Church programs and worshipping together at Mass, you show your children that growth in Faith has a priority in your family.*

*Please read this handbook which contains information regarding our K thru 8 Faith Formation Programs. We are here to support you in whatever ways you may need to fulfill your responsibility to your children and the Church. Please feel free to call or contact me if you have questions or need any help in any aspect of the program. May God bless you and your precious children each day.*

*Sincerely,*

*Jacqui Snyder, Director*

## **2019-2020 Faith Formation Programs Kindergarten - 8th grade**

Children are accepted into St. Margaret Mary Parish Faith Formation Programs if the following requirements are fulfilled:

- Their family is registered with St. Margaret Mary Parish
- They have been baptized
- They are 5 years old by September 1st
- There is available space.

### **Session Times:**

Monday	3:30-4:30 P.M. K-5th Grade
Monday	7:00-8:00 P.M. 6-8th Grade
Tuesday	3:30-4:30 P.M. K-5th Grade
Tuesday	4:45-5:45 P.M. K-8th Grade
Wednesday	3:30-4:30 P.M. K-5th Grade
Wednesday	4:45-5:45 P.M. K-8th Grade

### **Supplementary Programs:**

Other programs which enhance the faith development of the children include:

Liturgy of the Word: Sundays 8:00 A.M. & 10:00 A.M. Masses

Children in Grades K-3 are dismissed from Mass for the readings and a short homily geared to their age level. They return to sit with their parents before Communion.

Mini Retreats: Grade 2 prior to First Communion; Grade 3 prior to First Reconciliation  
Grades 6, 7 & 8 scheduled on April 18, 2020.

Children's Masses: Saturdays at 5:00 P.M.

Nov 23, 2019 - 1st — 5th Grades;

Feb 29, 2020 - 1st — 5th Grades

Ongoing information regarding our Faith Formation programs will be found on our Web Page: [www.SMMP.com](http://www.SMMP.com), in the Sunday Bulletin, **and in e-mail notices throughout the year.** (It is imperative that parents provide our office with a valid e-mail address as e-mail is our primary means of communication.) Parents will be notified by email of class cancellations due to severe weather conditions. We also post class cancellations on [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com).

Rainbows, a support group for children who have suffered a significant loss in their lives either by death or divorce, is provided by St. Raphael & St. Thomas the Apostle for Kindergarten through Grade 12. Call our office for information and registration.

REACH, faith sharing for special needs children, is offered at SS. Peter and Paul. Call our office for information and registration.

## **St. Margaret Mary Program Curriculum**

### **Kindergarten - 8th Grade**

Our program is designed to assist parents in their efforts to nourish the gift of faith in their children. As part of the Catholic Christian Community, we have the responsibility to share our faith with our children.

The **Kindergarten** program focuses on God as Creator.

**Grades 1-5:** Your children will be taught their faith through seven themes: Creation, God, Jesus Christ, the Church, Christian Morality, Sacraments and Salvation History. Each year these themes will be expanded according to your child's ability and maturity. In addition, Grade 2 will focus on the Eucharist, Grade 3 on Reconciliation and the Church, Grade 4 on moral development and Grade 5 on the Sacraments.

**Grade 6:** Three themes will be covered; *Revelation, The Trinity* and *Sacraments*.

**Grade 7:** Three additional themes will be covered; *Jesus Christ, The Mass* and *The Church*.

**Grade 8:** Three final themes will be covered; *Morality, Theology of the Body for Teens*, and *Kingdom of God*.

#### **Sacrament Preparation:**

The Sacrament of **1st Holy Eucharist** (Holy Communion) is usually received in 2nd Grade after completion of two years of Religious Education. Children who have had no formal religious education prior to 2nd grade must have at least 2 years of formal faith formation classes before the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Contact the Children & Youth Formation Office (630-369-0833) to set up an appointment to discuss your individual situation.

Preparation for 1st Holy Communion includes:

- Child's attendance at regular weekly classes
- Parents are expected to attend one of the Sacramental Retreats; choice of *Oct 20, 2019* or *Feb 2, 2020*.
- A Parent/Child meeting on *March 10, 2020*
- Children's Sacrament of Eucharist Retreat on *March 7, 2020*

*First Holy Communion is scheduled to be celebrated for 2nd graders (who have completed 2 years of formation) on April 26 & May 3, 2020 at the noon Masses. Parents will choose between the 2 dates.*

The Sacrament of **Reconciliation** is introduced in 2nd grade and more in depth instruction is given in 3rd grade. **The majority of children in our program will receive 1st Reconciliation at the end of the first semester of their 3rd grade year.** This Sacrament is received in a group celebration. It is vital that parents help their child prepare for 1st Reconciliation by becoming familiar with the theology we are teaching your child regarding sin and forgiveness. Preparation for 1st Reconciliation includes:

- Child's attendance at regular weekly classes
- Parent meeting scheduled for *October 16, 2019*
- Parent/Child meeting scheduled for *November 5, 2019*
- Children's Sacrament of Reconciliation Retreat scheduled for *November 2, 2019*.

*The Sacrament of Reconciliation is scheduled to be celebrated on December 3, 2019.*

#### **For parents who wish their 2nd grader to receive 1st Reconciliation BEFORE First Communion:**

All 2nd graders will receive a minimal amount of instruction on sin, forgiveness and reconciliation during regular classes; 3 lessons are devoted to this. Parents of 2nd graders may choose to have their child receive 1st Reconciliation at the end of the first semester of 2nd grade rather than waiting until 3rd grade. All parents of 2nd graders will receive a mailing early in the class year with a return form asking you to indicate your preference: i.e. \*My child will receive 1st Reconciliation in 3rd grade (which is the norm at St. Margaret Mary) OR \*My child will receive 1st Reconciliation in 2nd grade. Should you choose the 2nd grade option, you will be given materials to prepare your child at home to receive this sacrament.

The curriculum for all 3rd graders includes a strong emphasis on sin, forgiveness and reconciliation during the first semester.

### **Prayer and Liturgical Celebrations throughout the year:**

Prayer Services for special feasts and occasions will be celebrated (Advent, Lent, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, etc.).

Mass is celebrated with the children on Holy Days of Obligation **if it occurs on a class day**. Children's Masses will be celebrated during the school year. Further information will be communicated.

### **2019-20 Fees:**

The following fees have been set by the Christian Education Commission and should be paid at time of registration. **Registration fees increase by \$25 for registrations received after 7/15/19 and by \$50 for registrations received after 8/19/19.** (Sacrament fees do not increase.)

1 Child - \$175; 2 Children - \$250; 3 or more children - \$315  
**Plus a sacrament fee of \$30 per sacrament received during the year**  
(Includes 1st Communion, 1st Reconciliation, & Confirmation)

No child will be denied entrance to any program because of lack of payment. For a tuition waiver, please contact the Pastor or the Children & Youth Faith Formation Office.

Parish policy provides for total tuition waiver for families of Catechists/Youth Ministry facilitators. Sacrament fees must still be paid. A \$50.00 reduction in tuition will be given to adult babysitters and adult catechist aides who assist on a regular basis.

### **Homework:**

Generally, homework is not assigned. Children in grades K - 5 will take home a folder each week which may contain parent communications from your child's catechist or our office, or papers/crafts the children have worked on during class. Occasionally, your child's catechist may request that they complete something at home that wasn't finished in class. **FOLDERS SHOULD BE EMPTIED EACH WEEK AND RETURNED TO THE NEXT CLASS.**

Parents are also requested to teach and practice traditional prayers at home. A copy of the prayers the children are expected to know is included in this document.

The student books that we use contain supplemental content that can't be covered within our time constraint per week. Thus, the Catechist will cover the main themes as we deem essential.

### **Emergencies:**

In case of an emergency (tornado, etc.), no child will be allowed to leave the building **without a parent or a designated adult picking him/her up.**

\*\*Parents are required to sign the following medical waiver on the registration form at the time of registration:

*As a parent and/or legal guardian, I authorize the treatment of my minor child/children by a qualified and licensed medical doctor in the event of a medical emergency, which, in the opinion of the attending physician, may endanger his or her life, cause physical disability or undue discomfort if I am delayed. I authorize the Parish authorities to send my child (properly accompanied) to an available hospital or physician. This consent is granted only after a reasonable effort has been made to reach me.*

In case of emergency closing due to inclement weather, please check this website:

EMERGENCYCLOSINGCENTER.COM

We will also send out a Constant Contact email with class cancellations.

### **Videotaping, Still Photography & Social Media Policy:**

Videos and still photographs may be taken and used for future promotional efforts, but **NO CHILD WILL BE IDENTIFIED BY NAME**. No photos of the students are to be posted or uploaded to any social media platform.

### **Cell Phone Policy:**

All students are expected to turn their phones off before class and place them in the designated “cell phone parking lot area”. Compliance is necessary and appreciated as to minimize classroom distractions and disruptions. If a student chooses not to comply, their catechist will send them to see Jacqui Snyder.

### **Food/Drink Policy:**

No food or beverages will be permitted in the classrooms. Compliance is appreciated due to safety concerns with allergens and to minimize distractions.

### **Attendance:**

Your child is expected to attend all sessions and to be on time. **Please call the office** (331-701-4398) if your child will be absent from class. If your child is seriously ill, or there is a family crisis, please call the office to let us know.

### **Communication:**

From Parents:

Whenever you or your child has a problem or a suggestion, please contact the appropriate person:

1. Concerning child's sessions, other children, difficulty with lessons, etc...**contact your child's Catechist.**
2. Concerning Catechists or overall program, etc...**contact Jacqui Snyder.**
3. Concerning the Director or the program as a whole...**contact the Chairperson of the Christian Education Commission or the Pastor.**

### **Arrival & Dismissal:**

The safety of your children is our priority. We ask that you park in the lower Green Trails parking lot for both arrival and dismissal and **use the Parish Center entrance. This is the only entrance/exit that is monitored by an adult.** Please walk your kindergarten thru 5th grade children to their class. At dismissal time, K thru 5 catechists will walk children back to the Parish Center for pick-up. Again, we ask K thru 5 parents to come into the building for pick-up. Best practice is for Jr. High students to use this entrance/exit as well.

Please call 630-369-0833 if you're going to be delayed when picking up children.

## **Discipline:**

In order to accomplish the faith formation of your child, there must be a sense of order and discipline within the class. Being respectful of our volunteer catechists is imperative!! Disruptions shorten the effective teaching time and infringe on the other students. Disruptive or rude behavior cannot be tolerated. We understand and sympathize with parents whose children have been diagnosed with ADD or ADHD. We will work with them to the best of our capability, but in severe cases, parents may be asked to do a "Home Study" with their children for the remainder of the semester. The following are the Catechists' guidelines regarding discipline:

1. No child has the right to disturb the learning process of the other children in the group. Here is the basic plan of action:
  - a. Tell a child that his/her behavior is unacceptable BECAUSE it is preventing the rest of the group from learning.
  - b. If the child chooses not to improve his/her behavior, the child will be sent (with a companion) to Jacqui Snyder.
  - c. Mrs. Snyder will contact the child's parents (or the catechist may, if he/she chooses).
  - d. If all other means have been utilized and have proven unsuccessful, the child will complete the semester in Home Study.
2. Basic rules for all children:
  - a. Respect for each other is essential Christian behavior; therefore, being disrespectful to anyone, fighting, being rude, or using bad or offensive language is not tolerated.
  - b. Respect for our place of worship and learning requires that we do not damage or misuse the building or the things in it.
  - c. Respect for ourselves means we dress appropriately for class and care for our health. Coats and hats should be removed and hung up during class time and "hoodies" should be worn off the head.

## PRAYERS

### ***Sign of the Cross***

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### ***Our Father***

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name;  
Thy kingdom come;  
Thy will be done on earth  
As it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

### ***Grace Before Meals*** (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)

Bless us, O Lord, and these Your gifts  
which we are about to receive  
from Your bounty,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen

### ***Act of Contrition*** (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade)

My God,  
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.  
In choosing to do wrong  
and failing to do good,  
I have sinned against you  
whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend, with your help,  
to do penance, to sin no more,  
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.  
Our Savior Jesus Christ  
suffered and died for us.  
In his name, my God, have mercy.

### ***Hail Mary***

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee;  
Blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners now  
and at the hour of our death. Amen.

### ***Glory Be to the Father***

Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning  
is now, and ever shall be  
world without end. Amen.

### ***Grace After Meals*** (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)

We give You thanks, almighty God,  
for these and all Your gifts.  
which we have received  
through Christ our Lord. Amen

### ***Guardian Angel Prayer***

Angel of God,  
my guardian dear,  
to whom God's love  
commits me here;  
ever this day  
be at my side  
to light and guard,  
rule and guide.