



**PARENT
HANDBOOK
2020-2021**

www.smmneenah.org

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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/ren. 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.



The Religious Education staff and catechists are partners with you as you raise your child to become a strong disciple of Christ, empowered to go out and share faith with others. The catechists who teach each week are volunteers who willingly give of their time; any support and words of gratitude are deeply appreciated.

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEAM

We, the Religious Education team of St. Margaret Mary Parish, in partnership with parents, assist in guiding children in becoming faith-filled, loving Catholic Christians. Guided 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 is made up of the director, coordinator, office helper, and catechists who work with the children and youth in each grade level. The staff members are always open to your questions and concerns. They can be reached anytime by voicemail or in person based on their availability.

Please note that the RE Office is closed on Fridays.

Amy Bolle, Director of Religious Education

Coordinator Grades 1-5
Coordinator of Confirmation,
Coordinator of RCIA
Sunday 3:00pm-8:30pm
Monday 8:00am to 4:00pm
Tuesday 8:00am-4:00pm
Wednesday 8:30am-8:30pm
Thursday 8:00am-4:00pm
729-4560, Ext. 112
abolle@smcatholicschools.org



Tina Peirick, Coordinator Grades 6-10

Sunday 4:00pm-8:30pm
Tuesday & Thursday 8:30am-2:30pm
Wednesday 8:30am-8:30pm
729-4560, Ext. 116
tpeirick@smcatholicschools.org



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to a new year of Religious Education!

We look forward to helping you and your children encounter, follow, worship, and share Jesus through the Religious Education program.

Parent Meetings will be held on the following dates. Attendance is highly encouraged and recommended. A Sign Up Genius invitation will be sent for an RSVP to which date you will attend.

Please choose one date each semester to attend. All Parent Meetings will begin at 6:15pm. Sunday meetings will be held in a virtual format and Wednesday meetings will be in person.

**Semester 1 Sunday October 4, 2020
 Wednesday, October 7, 2020**

**Semester 2 Sunday, January 10, 2021
 Wednesday, January 13, 2021**

The Parent Meeting is a way to open communication and build relationships between the Parish and the Domestic Church (your home). We are here to help support and accompany you and your family as you grow as disciples of Jesus and discover ways to live out your Catholic faith each day.

*In Peace,
Amy Bolle, DRE
Tina Peirick, CRE*

ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

St. Margaret Mary Parish Community believes that Catholic Religious Education is a vital part of being Catholic. The curriculum is age appropriate and forms the foundation for the next grade level. Religious Education is most effective when children begin their religious formation when they begin school in First Grade and continue throughout one's lifetime. Confirmation begins the life long learning of faith; it does not end it. Adult Catholics are encouraged, and expected, to continue to grow in their faith throughout their lives.

TUITION AND FEES

The 2020-2021 fees are as follows:

Tuition Fee - \$125 per student for the first three students in your family. See below for information on applying SCRIP profit toward tuition.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

No child or youth is ever denied Religious Education for financial reasons. Parents may request 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 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 Bolle.

SCRIP FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FAMILIES

Religious Education families may choose to purchase SCRIP and to use 80% of the profit earned as payment toward the Religious Education tuition.

SCRIP cards can be purchased for groceries, gas, department stores, restaurants, etc., and you are able to use the full purchase price of the cards.

SCRIP profit is applied to tuition and fees, when orders are placed on-line.

For new users:

Go to shopwithscrip.com

- Click on "Join a Program"
- Enter the enrollment code for our parish: **14DF8FB61144** (this code is case sensitive) and click "Register"
- Create User Name and Password and fill in additional requested information.
- Click "Register" and follow the directions.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

SESSION DAYS AND TIMES

- **Grades 1-10** Sunday evening Virtual Session: Time Varies (See Calendar)
- **Grades 1-10** Wednesday evening IN-Person Session: 6:15pm-7:45pm
- **Confirmation (Grade 11)** Sunday evening Session: 6:15pm-7:45pm

CATECHISTS

Our goal is to maintain a ratio of 10 students to 1 catechist for an in-person class setting. Each year approximately 20 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 729-4560. To teach is to share your faith in a way that touches a young person's life forever.



PARENT PARTICIPATION

Listed below are ways to live your own faith commitment with your children:

Mass Attendance

All children are enrolled in the Religious Education program are expected to attend weekly Mass. Whatever we teach in the classroom will have little meaning if your family is not actively practicing the faith at home. Building a strong foundation in their faith is the most important and meaningful gift you pass on to your child. Children notice by our words and our actions how much (or how little) our faith means to us. We ask all parents to be good examples of discipleship at home.

Mass Times: 5:00pm Saturday; 7:30am & 9:30am Sunday

Discussion:

As you talk with your youth about what was learned in each class, share with your youth what you believe about the topic discussed.

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.

PROGRAM PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE

Please make Religious Education a priority when arranging your child's/teen's involvement in extracurricular activities. Students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions. The Diocese of Green Bay has established 30-35 hours of Religious Education required of any child participating in Religious Education classes.

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 youth is encouraged to participate actively in discussions and activities during Religious Education sessions.

Should your child/youth need to be absent please call the number below to notify the Religious Education Department of the absence:

St. Margaret Mary Religious Education 729-4560, ext. 502



Drop Off & Pick Up

Religious Education youth should be dropped off and picked up on Division Street. Younger children, Grades 1 & 2, are to be escorted to the **CHURCH** by a parent/guardian. All children must wear a mask and walk up to the carport door entrance of the church where temperatures will be taken. Children and youth will be directed to the appropriate classroom in the Church for their class session.

- **Parking:** The safety of the youth in our program is of primary importance. We ask that you park on Division St. on the SMM side of the street.
- **Drop off/Pick Up:** Please be prompt in dropping off/picking up your children. Exercise extreme caution when departing the premises. Children do not always look before running to their vehicle.

LATE ARRIVAL or EARLY DISMISSAL

If your child may be late for a session or it is necessary to take your child out of a session early, please call or email the Director/Coordinator in advance. The Catechist will be notified and arrangements for entering or exiting the building will be made.

LOCKED DOORS

In an effort to increase security during Religious Education classes, all exterior doors will be locked. Access to the Church will not be available until 10 minutes before or after sessions begin or end. PLEASE NO CONGREGATING BEFORE/AFTER CLASSES DUE TO COVID-19.

Church Front Doors will open at 6:05pm prior to class and again at 7:40pm for parents to pick up.

PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

All families will receive emails notifications for cancellations or important information for all Religious Education sessions.

If you prefer to receive a text message in addition to an email notification, please text your session code, listed below, to 81010.



- SUNDAY Virtual Session: Text @resun2020 to 81010
- WEDNESDAY 6:15pm Session: Text @rewed2020 to 81010

Once a text is sent, you will receive a welcome text back from Remind.

If you are unable to text to 81010, please try texting session code to (920) 376-9509.



CANCELLATIONS

When weather conditions are hazardous and unsafe, on campus session cancellations may happen. All cancellations will be notified by REMIND messaging.

- Wednesday evening sessions will be cancelled when Neenah Schools are cancelled or close early.
- Sunday evening sessions will not be cancelled because of the virtual nature of the sessions.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

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.

Bomb Threat

If a telephone bomb threat is received, the Director/Coordinator will inform the police immediately, 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 youth in danger. In that case, an alternate route will be led by the Director/Coordinator.

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.

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.

ST. MARGARET MARY HAS A ZERO TOLERANCE FOR HARASSMENT.

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.

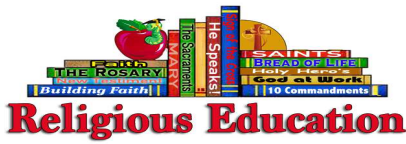


WEAPONS POLICY

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.



ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM: Grades 1- 5

Be My Disciples, RCL Benziger Publishing, is the textbook series selected for Grades 1 - 5, *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

Grade One

In Grade 1, the focus is on our loving God and the love and mercy of Jesus our friend.

Grade Two

God’s Gift—Reconciliation, Loyola Press is the text used in preparation for the 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, 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.

Grades Three through Five

For the 2020-2021 Religious Education year, Grades 3-5 will experience a lectionary based catechesis. Lectionary Based catechesis is a curriculum based on the Church’s official book of readings for the Sunday liturgy (Lectionary). The curriculum cycles through the Sunday readings using

them as the essential guide for the organization of themes and content. In this time of pandemic when families are not going to Mass due to Covid-19 the lectionary based catechesis is a wonderful way to connect the upcoming Sunday readings to the children’s lives in an age appropriate manner. It will make watching the St. Margaret Mary livestream Mass more interesting as the children have heard and learned about the readings prior to Mass.

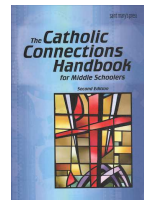
MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM: GRADES 6 - 10

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, prayer, community building, opportunities.

Supplemental session materials for the Middle and High School group programming include, Green Bay Diocesan Discipleship materials, YOUCAT and the video series from Ascension Press and *Catholic Central*.

Grades Six, Seven & Eight

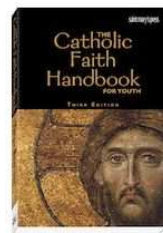
The curriculum, for Sixth and Seventh Grades, aims to strengthen each participant’s Catholic identity and inspire them to participate more fully in the Church’s mission and encourages them to find connections with their faith and daily life. Each session is interactive—with short breaks that make space for group activities and discussion in small groups.



Supplemental session materials include, *The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers* and the video series *3 minute Catechism*.

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. They will focus on learning the intellectual, spiritual, pastoral and human education of their Catholic faith and will be given a practical way to learn, live and share the faith. Each session is interactive—with short breaks that make space for group activities and discussion in small groups.



Supplemental session materials include *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition*

SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

GENERAL SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM INFORMATION:

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 continue through until Junior year of high school. This provides the necessary background of Catholicism so that the Sacraments are understandable to the young person in the context of our Catholic beliefs and practices.

Formal preparation, and first reception, of Reconciliation and Eucharist will take place in the Second Grade at St. Margaret Mary Parish. Confirmation will take place in the Junior year of high school. Information regarding parent sessions, events and celebrations will be emailed directly to the families who have children in Second Grade Religious Education and Junior year in high school.

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

RECONCILIATION

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.

RECONCILIATION COMMUNAL SERVICES:

March 4, 2021 6:30pm—First Reconciliation

It is important to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year. The Communal Reconciliation services are wonderful ways to experience the healing forgiveness and mercy of Jesus.



Key First Reconciliation Dates:

First Reconciliation Parent Meeting:

November 1, 2020 6:30pm

November 4, 2020 6:30pm

First Reconciliation Retreat:

November 22, 2020 TBD

November 25, 2019 TBD

First Reconciliation Celebrations:

March 4, 2021 6:30pm

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

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.

Key First Eucharist Dates:

First Eucharist Parent Meeting:

February 28, 2021 6:30pm

March 3, 2021 6:30pm

First Eucharist Retreat:

March 28, 2021 TBD

March 31, 2021 TBD

First Communion Masses

April 17, 2021 5:00pm

April 18, 2021 7:30am or 9:30am

April 24, 2021 5:00pm

April 25, 2021 7:30am or 9:30pm



CONFIRMATION

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 and their parents.

Key Confirmation Dates:

Confirmation Parent/Candidate Meeting:

September 20, 2020 at 6:15pm—Families with last names A-M

7:30pm—Families with last names N-Z

Confirmation Rite of Entrance and Confirmation Sponsor/Candidate Meeting:

November 11, 2020—**Rite of Entrance** at 9:30am Mass

January 10, 2021—9:30am Mass Sponsor/Candidate session to follow

Confirmation Retreat:

February 7, 2021 at Mt. Tabor from 10:00am-4:00pm

Confirmation Celebration with Bishop Ricken

April 25, 2021 at 3:00pm at St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, Neenah

FORMAL PRAYERS

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:



- **Grade One**—The Sign of the Cross, The Glory Be, The Our Father, 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
-

IN-HOME RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In-Home Religious Education is a session that is held in your home. Parents lead the In Home sessions with the online material that is provided by the Parish Religious Education team. Once the lesson is completed there is a survey that the family takes to show accountability. The In Home sessions count towards the 30-35 hours required by the Diocese of Green Bay.

IN-HOME Page Link:

<https://www.smmneenah.org/blog/in-home-religious-ed>

CALENDAR 2020-2021

<p>SEPTEMBER 2020</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>*20 Confirmation Parent Mtg. 6:00pm-7:00pm (A-W) 7:30pm-8:30pm (I+Z)</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30						<p>JANUARY 2021</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>10 OR 13 Parent Meeting 6:15pm *10 Confirmation 9:30am Mass 17 & 20 In-Home #8 Session #8 24 & 27 Session #10 *24 Confirmation Zoom (All)</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				
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Web Link to view and print Calendar:

<https://www.smmneenah.org/religious-ed--2020-2021-calendar>

RCIA

Have you ever wondered what the letters RCIA stand for when you see them? They are an acronym for **R**ites of **C**hristian **I**nitiation for **A**dults. RCIA is a process of growing deeper in faith, worship (Mass), and service in our Catholic Community through the reception of the sacraments of Baptism (if needed), Communion, and Confirmation.



If you are attending Mass with a Catholic and would like information about becoming Catholic, or find out more about the Catholic Church, this process is for you. If you know someone who has fallen away from the Church and would like to get back to practicing the faith this process is for him/her. Please contact Amy Bolle at the Parish Office at 920-729-4560 to inquire about the RCIA process.

ADULT FAITH DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Please see the St. Margaret Mary bulletin for Adult Faith Development opportunities.

GRIEFSHARE: Loss of a Spouse program

The content of this program is video based and includes group discussion with participants around your thoughts, practical day to day challenges and emotions as you navigate grief associated with the death of your spouse. Whether their death was recent or years ago the needs of the surviving spouse shift and change over time and are very real. Sharing with others who are going through similar experiences can be helpful in the healing process.

For more information please contact Ellen Mommaerts at 920-729-4560 or via email at emommaerts@smcatholicschools.org.

PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM 2020-2021

Parent Handbook

After reading the Parent Handbook, please complete the link below. It is important that we receive this completed form from each family.

Link to Form:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G7C3QL5>

PARISH INFORMATION

Church Information

Pastor: Rev. Dennis Bergsbaken

Street Address: 620 Division Street, Neenah, WI 54956

Parish Center

Mailing Address: 439 Washington Ave., Neenah, WI 54956

Phone: 920-729-4560

Website: www.smmneenah.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/smmneenah>

Parish Center Office Hours:

8:00am-4:00pm Monday thru Thursday

8:00am-12:00pm Friday

Parish Staff

Rev. Dennis Bergsbaken.....PASTOR, Ext. 102

Rev. Mr. Daniel Laurent.....DEACON

Juanita HarderDirector of Business Affairs and Operations, Ext. 107

Justin Krueger.....Director Liturgist & Musician, Ext. 108

Ellen Mommaerts, Director of Discipleship Training & Family Ministry, Ext. 109

Beckett Mathews.....Minister of Hospitality and Communications, Ext. 101

Amy Bolle..... Director of Religious Education, Ext. 112

Tina Peirick Coordinator of Religious Education, Grades 6-10, Ext. 116



WHO IS SAINT MARGARET MARY?

This year on October 16, we celebrate 100 years of her canonization!

Daughter of Claude Alacoque and Philiberte Lamyn, Margaret was born on July 22, 1647 at L'Hautecour, Burgundy, France.



She was sent to the Poor Clares School at Charolles on the death of her father, a notary, when she was eight years old. She was bedridden for five years with rheumatic fever until she was fifteen and early developed a devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

She refused marriage, and in 1671, she entered the Visitation convent at Paray-le-Monial and was professed the next year. From the time she was twenty, she experienced visions of Christ, and on December 27, 1673 she began a series of revelations that were to continue over the next year and a half. In them Christ informed her that she was His chosen instrument to spread devotion to His Sacred Heart, instructed her in a devotion that was to become known as the Nine Fridays and the Holy Hour, and asked that the feast of the Sacred Heart be established.

Rebuffed by her superior, Mother de Saumaise, in her efforts to follow the instruction she had received in the visions, she eventually won her over but was unable to convince a group of theologians of the validity of her apparitions, nor was she any more successful with many of the members of her community. She received the support of Blessed Claude La Collombiere, the community's confessor for a time, who declared that the visions were genuine.

In 1683, opposition in the community ended when Mother Melin was elected Superior and name Margaret Mary her assistant. She later became Novice Mistress, saw the convent observe the feast of the Sacred Heart privately beginning in 1686, and two years later, a chapel was built at the Paray-le-Monial to honor the Sacred Heart. Soon the observation of the feast of the Sacred Heart spread to other Visitation convents.

Margaret Mary died at the Paray-le-Monial on October 17, 1690 and was canonized on 1920. Her feast day is observed on October 16.

