

ST. MARY PRESCHOOL



ESCONDIDO



ST. MARY

— CATHOLIC CHURCH | ESCONDIDO —

EXPERIENCING CHRIST—LOVING AND SERVING NEIGHBORS

2020-2021, St. Mary Preschool

Preschool Director: Amanda Harriff

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your family to St Mary Preschool! We are thrilled to have you join our preschool program and we look forward to the joys and adventures your child will experience. We are proud of the ministry our preschool provides and are excited to partner with you in your child's education at the start of their academic career.

St. Mary is a faith community of children, parents, and teachers working together to provide a parochial education in the Catholic tradition. Our mission is to provide a Christ centered atmosphere where each child can develop a love for the Lord and learning.

We assist parents in their role as the primary educator of their children by extending, enriching and encouraging the work they have begun. We encourage growth in self-awareness and build self-esteem through our dynamic education approach which prepares each child for a successful transition into kindergarten.

The St. Mary Preschool family handbook has been designed to give you the information you will need for a smooth and productive year. The handbook will give you pertinent information pertaining to the school, so it is imperative that you read the entire document so that you understand the rules, policies, procedures and expectations of our school.

Amanda Harriff
Preschool Director

*The Director reserves the right to make adjustments to the handbook as deemed appropriate. If there is a discrepancy in the interpretation of the handbook, the final decision will be determined by the Director.

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St. Mary Parish Mission Statement

St. Mary Parish in Escondido, CA, welcomes everyone to enter God's Covenant of love, forgiveness and healing and in turn follow His Will manifested in Revelation (Scripture, His life and Apostolic Tradition). As such, our Parish provides followers of Jesus Christ, who alone is Savior, the practice of Roman Catholicism witnessing in faith the one true God in the three persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Initiated into the life of God through grace by baptism, we are brothers and sisters in the mystical body of Christ, united in professing the faith in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church established by Jesus and steadfast in our pursuit to know, love and serve God.

Honoring His commandments in particular to *"love Him above all things and neighbor as self"*, and thus strengthen our parish, build up the Universal Church, and mission to extend the Kingdom of God, we pledge to always uphold the fullness of revealed Truth, teach and serve one another by word and deed, and live as faithful stewards of God's gifts contributing our time, talents and treasures. Above all we resolve to conversion and holiness through prayer and sacrifice by *"carrying our cross daily"* to encounter God and exercise faith and hope in His love, mercy and promises taking advantage of all He has provided to aid us toward eternal union with Him in Heaven; namely the Bible (His Word), the Sacraments (His Life), the Church – *Militant, Purgative and Triumphant* (His Body), and Mary (His and our mother).

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary Preschool mission is to provide a Christ-centered environment where each child can develop a love for the Lord and learning.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary preschool students are immersed in a Christ-centered learning environment, grounded in the Catholic faith, which supports the development of the whole child; spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally. We acknowledge parents are the primary educators of their children and we partner with parents to provide an outstanding Catholic education. We encourage students to develop their God-given talents by fostering an atmosphere of dignity and respect for all.

VALUES

We value family and encourage parents and teachers to work together to create the best possible experience for each child.

COMMITMENT

We provide a safe and loving Catholic environment of love, acceptance and belonging through scripture and prayer. We assist parents in their role as the primary educators of their children by extending, enriching and encouraging the work they have already begun. We encourage growth in self-awareness and build self-esteem through our dynamic education approach which prepares each child for a successful transition into kindergarten.

PRIORITIES FOR ADMISSION

- ✓ Students of families in good standing already enrolled at St. Mary School.
- ✓ Students of families in good standing at St. Mary Church.
- ✓ Students of families in good standing at other Catholic parishes.
- ✓ All other families who accept the St. Mary Preschool Philosophy.

AGE FOR ADMISSION

All children must be utilizing independent toileting, no assistance needed. No diapers or pull ups.

- ✓ 2 years old on/by September 1st, of the academic year
- ✓ 3 years old on/by September 1st, of the academic year to enter preschool
- ✓ 4 years old on/by September 1st, of the academic year to enter Pre-K

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

- Parents complete enrollment contract, all licensing forms and pay registration fee at time of registration.
- Acceptance is finalized upon Director approval after a one-month probationary period. If determined, anytime throughout the year, that the child's needs cannot be met, the Director will request parents withdraw their child from the program.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Diego, mindful of their mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, grant admission to students of any race, color, and national and/or ethnic origin. Each is given all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students at the schools. The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Diego do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national and/or ethnic origin, age, sex or disability in the administration of educational policies or programs.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

An annual registration fee per child is due at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable.

St. Mary Preschool has partnered with FACTS Management to manage tuition payments. FACTS Management allows parents to pay tuition and fees over time, making it easier to afford a quality education for their children. Parents agree to enroll with FACTS to have their monthly tuition automatically withdrawn from an account of their choice. There is a one-time FACTS charge of \$43.00.

Please refer to separate tuition sheet for current rates.

Financial requirements are as follows:

- Payment of tuition in monthly installments through FACTS on the 10th or 20th.
- All FACTS requirements and fees associated with failed payments apply.
- Parents picking their children up after the designated program time, will be charged a fee of one dollar per minute. This fee will be added to your monthly tuition through FACTS.
- Tuition credits will not be given due to absences, illness, or vacations.

OUR PROGRAM

St. Mary Preschool program builds your child's self-esteem, confidence, and independence as well as promotes a positive school experience. We balance our academics with each child's developmental stage.

All students will learn about the mass, explore and see the different parts of the church and observe how to worship. Pre-kindergarten students will attend mass on Wednesday mornings starting in October.

On mass day students wear navy blue polos and khaki bottoms. Please have students at school by 7:45am and attend to their restroom needs prior to the service at 8:00am. Students will walk to mass with their class. If student is late please bring them to the church.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION/SCHOOL HOURS

St. Mary Preschool follows the St. Mary School calendar, with a few minor exceptions. *Please note early bird and extended day do not have an extra charge. Daily schedule hours are noted for reference. Lunch bunch is an extension of our half day program which allows students to eat lunch with their peers and spend additional time developing social skills. Hours of operation are as follows:

- Early bird care: 7:30am-8:00am.
- Morning session: 8:00am–12:00pm.
- Lunch bunch: 12:00pm-12:30pm.
- Full day session: 8:00am-3:30pm.
- Extended day: 3:30pm-4:30pm.

Parents may choose one of the following schedules:

- 2 Half Days per week or 2 Full Days per week- **Tues/Thurs**
- 3 Half Days per week or 3 Full Days per week- **Mon/Wed/Fri**
- 5 Half Days per week or 5 Full days per week- **Mon-Fri**

Please bring all items labeled on the first day. Recommended items:

- Water bottle
- Snack (one for half day students, two for full day students)
- Lunch
- One complete change of clothes to leave at school
- Cot sheet and blanket (for students who are full day)
*no pillows please

***Please note we are a peanut-free school.**

***Our staff cannot wake up your child from rest time per licensing.**

LUNCH BUNCH

We will utilize this extra time in the day to eat lunch and play outside, but also to enhance the child's learning experience by reading, doing creative music and movement and crafts. Most of all, we have fun!

Policies to be aware of:

1. Lunch bunch is offered M-F, 12:00-12:30. Students must be picked up by 12:30. After 12:30 we will charge a late fee of \$1.00 per minute as our afternoon kids start rest time immediately following lunch.
2. Lunch bunch fee is \$10 per session. Fees will be added to FACTS at the end of each month.
3. There will be a binder on the sign in table specifically for lunch bunch. Everyone will sign in on the same sheet. Please sign in on the days your child will attend.
4. Once your child is signed up for a spot, they are expected to attend. If they do not please note that you will be charged the session fee of \$10.
5. Please pack a healthy lunch/drink for your child. We are a peanut-free school.

DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURE

Preschool driveway is located on 13th Avenue.

- **The gate will be closed and locked during St. Mary School class time.**
- **The gate will be open in the morning until 7:55 am.**
- **It will be reopened again at 2:45 pm.**

*Please note if you arrive outside the times listed above you will need to enter through the front office of the school.

CODE: EACH PARENT WILL RECEIVE AN INDIVIDUAL GATE CODE. It has 4 digits plus the # key. The gate will buzz and then it can be opened.

SIGN IN:

- sign-in with full signature
- walk student into their classroom
- drop off water bottle, snack & lunch (placed in the fridge)
- please be sure that your child is under the supervision of a teacher before you leave

SIGN OUT:

- sign-out with full signature
- check student and parent folders
- pick up student and items from classroom
- please make sure the teacher sees you and your child leave

Students are released only to those listed on the emergency form and will be required to show a picture ID.

COMMUNICATION

Please check parent bulletin board near the entrance of each classroom for announcements. A newsletter will be sent via email each month to keep you informed of announcements and school activities.

Please see the Director with all questions, comments or concerns. Teachers will contact parents via email with any student concerns.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is used to teach, not punish. Our discipline policy states that children may not be disruptive to our teaching or to the student's learning, safety or development. As a Catholic preschool, we include the teaching of kindness and gentleness. It is our goal that the children will learn to be kind, gentle and respectful in their behavior, accept boundaries and develop self-control.

1. Positive Guidance

- All children have off days and are still learning right from wrong. It is the job of teachers to help them learn, provide positive guidance and help them to understand how to make safe and healthy choices.

2. Redirection

- Teachers will redirect a child's attention, offering a different age-appropriate activity than the one they are struggling with, or having trouble cooperating with peers on.
- Children feel empowered when they make the right choices, and this encourages them to keep on trying.

3. Time out

- Time out can be an effective preschool discipline policy when redirecting a child or offering positive guidance fails, but it must be used appropriately.
- Children who need a time out will be supervised at all times.
- Children will only sit for about one minute per their age in years (three minutes for a three-year-old, for example).
- Before being reintroduced to the group, the teacher will explain what the child did wrong to land in the time out spot and brainstorm with the child on ways to improve.

4. Communication policies

- Parents will be notified in writing in the case of major or reoccurring behavioral challenges.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

Our policy is to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff. We are aware that it is not uncommon for children to display aggressive behavior in preschool settings. We do not want any of your children to be affected by this behavior. It is our goal that the aggressor be encouraged to use appropriate problem solving and social skills. Behaviors that are determined by the Teacher and/or Director to be a safety threat to others (biting, hitting, pinching, kicking, etc.) will be handled as such:

1st Incident:

- The child will be removed from the area and taken to the office.
- The parents will be notified. The teacher/director will complete an incident report and discuss the behavior with the parents.
- Parents will have the option of picking up the child early.
- All parties involved will receive documentation of the incident.
- The teacher will encourage the child to develop problem solving and social skills.

2nd Incident:

Same procedure as 1st incident with the exception of the following:

- The parent will be required to pick up their child at that time.
- A conference with the parents, teacher and director will be scheduled to discuss the incident and possible solutions.
- Third incident course of action will be determined at this time and may include student's removal from the school for a day or longer.

3rd Incident:

Same procedure as 2nd incident along with predetermined third incident course of action being carried out.

Throughout the entire process, staff will continually work together with parents to assist the child in the development of appropriate behavior.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

If a student will be absent from class, please notify the Preschool via email or phone by 9:00am the day of the absence. The office will notify the teacher of the absence.

Please include the reason for the absence- illness, personal, out of town. For illnesses please provide information if they have experienced any of the following:

- A fever of 100 or higher in the past 24 hours
- Vomit or diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Persistent, congested or productive cough
- Colored nasal discharge
- Colored discharge from eyes or eyes are red or swollen
- Are unusually tired, irritable or do not seem like themselves
- Evidence of head lice
- Any medical diagnosis if seen by a professional

We ask that you keep him/her home for **a full 24 hours after vomiting, significant coughing and runny nose, or after the temperature** has returned to normal and your child is symptom free. There is no tuition credit given due to absences or illness.

*Please note that instructional hours begin at 9am and the teachers would appreciate if your child arrived on time each day as to not miss an important part of the day.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Parents must notify the preschool when their child has a communicable disease. Please see list attached. Child will be sent home and able to return once treated and cleared by a medical professional. The school must notify parents if other students have been exposed to the disease.

FIRST AID/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- All emergency forms will be kept in school files and copies will be in each classroom binder available for immediate use.
- Ouch/incident reports shall be filled out for any accident occurring at school. Reports will be completed and signed by the staff member who witnessed the incident and reviewed by the director. The original will be sent home with the child and a copy is kept in school files.
- First aid kits are in each classroom and school office shall include necessary, basic items as recommended by the Red Cross.

NOTE: All staff are CPR and first aid certified.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

We thank and praise God for all the children in our care. We would like to join you in celebrating your child's birthday. If you would like to bring a special treat, please let your child's teacher know in advance. The treat must be store bought and peanut free.

UNIFORMS

School policy requires students to wear uniforms.

Uniform requirements are:

- Navy blue or khaki pants, shorts, skirts
- White/Navy/or Light Blue collared shirt/blouse
- Any color **closed-toed** shoes and socks (no sandals of any type)
- Navy blue sweaters or jackets

REQUIREMENT TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

All preschool teachers and staff are mandated or required to comply with the suspected child abuse reporting requirements as stated in the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing, Title 22 Handbook.

STAFF

Our school maintains high standards which are met by each individual member of our staff. Each teacher has a genuine interest and love for children and is experienced in working with each individual child during their most formative years. Our staff all meet the State of California licensing requirements, are mandated reporters and are CPR and first aid certified.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

St. Mary Preschool Holidays are:

September - Labor Day

October- Columbus Day

November – Veterans Day, Thanksgiving week

December - Christmas Break (2 weeks)

January -Martin Luther King Day and Friday before

February - Presidents' Day

April – Easter Break (1 week)

May - Memorial Day

EMERGENCIES

If the school is closed due to an emergency situation that occurs after school hours, (fire, earthquake, etc.) you may call the Elementary School Office at (760) 743-3431 to obtain a daily pre-recorded message about when classes will resume or any other information we feel parents will need to know. Information may also be available on the local news stations. St. Mary Preschool will follow the same emergency schedule as the Escondido Union K-8 School District.

When an emergency occurs during school, all children will remain at school and parents will be called immediately to come pick up their child. If St. Mary campus becomes unsafe, parents will be notified of the relocation site. Staff will remain with the children until all parents arrive.