

Welcome to the St. Mary by the Lake 2020-2021 Faith Formation Program

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"Let the little children come to me." In Christ's own words we are beckoned to draw closer to Him. It is in this spirit that the St. Mary by the Lake Faith Formation Program strives to find each "little one" where he/she is and encourage them to take steps closer to God.

This handbook contains information concerning details of the St. Mary by the Lake Faith Formation Program for children, teens and adults, as well as, our Sacramental Preparation Programs.



ST MARY BY THE LAKE FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

We promote knowledge of our faith

We catechize Church teachings

We catechize facts about Jesus, Scripture, and Liturgy

We promote Christian moral formation

We encourage discipleship

We stimulate Christian attitudes and behaviors

We promote prayer and worship

We emphasize the importance of the Mass and the Sacraments

We invite students to have a deeper relationship with Jesus

Role of the Parents

Parents are the primary educators in the faith. Together with them... all members of the family play an active part in the education of the younger members... The family is defined as the "domestic Church"...

General Directory for Catechesis, #255

We believe that formation in Catholic Christianity employs a partnership between parents and the parish. While the parish can provide formal formation in faith, we encourage, and provide support for, parents to take an active role in their children's ongoing faith development. Our Catholic tradition sees weekly participation in the Mass to be an essential practice for this to take place.

Role of the Catechist

Catechists in our Faith Formation Program are Catholic persons of faith who volunteer their time and talent to share that gift of faith with the youth of the parish. Catechists strive to build up a community spirit among the youth which will strengthen and nourish them, and which will call them to discover, internalize, proclaim, and live the Gospel message, and to grow in faith.

GENERAL REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Information regarding the Faith Formation Programs is emailed and/or mailed in the Spring to all eligible parish members for the following catechetical year. Additionally, program announcements will appear in the Sunday bulletin. Registration for the 2019/20 catechetical year will commence on or about June 1st. To facilitate program planning and material ordering registration forms for the 2019/20 Catechetical year are due no later than September 30th.

REGISTRATION

Registration for Faith Formation Programs will be accepted by completing the 2019/20 Registration Form, signing the policy agreement and returning it by mail, in the Sunday offertory collection basket, or in person. Registration Forms are available on-line registration by visiting the St. Mary by the Lake Parish website at <http://www.stmarybythelake.org>.

REGISTRATION FEES

Registration tuition & fees cover only a fraction of the total cost of the Faith Formation Program. The remainder of the program fees are covered by the parish through our stewardship of treasure provided via parish envelopes. In September 2019, registered households will receive a statement of the Tuition & Fees due.

*****No family is turned away because of an inability to pay.*****

Faith Formation Tuition:

	Registration
Elementary School K-6th	\$80
Middle School 7th-8th	\$100
High School 9th-11th	\$100

*** Family Cap of \$200 excluding sacramental fees*

**** Non-parishioners will be assessed a \$25.00 fee.*

Sacrament Process Fees:

1st Reconciliation & 1st Eucharist	\$50
(in addition to class fee)	
Confirmation	\$100
(in addition to class fee)	

*All fees will be billed by the Parish Office on September 30, 2021
and need to be paid in full by November 31, 2021 unless a payment plan has been arranged.*

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP



Financial hardships should never prevent a family from registering their children in the Faith Formation Program. Financial assistance is available for those who demonstrate a need. All information shared will be kept in strict confidence.

To discuss financial assistance, please contact Heather Warner in the Parish office. A Financial Assistance Request form will be made available to you, or you can download one at www.stmarybythelake.org. Because fees are a direct cost to the parish, families are asked to cover as much of them as possible. Payment options are available.

CATECHIST MINISTRY COMMITMENT

Catechetical volunteer positions have different time and talent obligations as required by their specific catechetical process. One way we thank volunteers who share their time and talent for the entire catechetical year is to waive all registration fees.

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

COVID-19 SAFETY POLICY

In response to CoVID-19 and for the safety of our parishioners, all individuals age 5 and up will follow current CDC advisories and Archdiocese policies regarding social distancing and face coverings when attending St. Mary by the Lake Faith Formation programming.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP SAFETY INFORMATION:

To ensure the safety of our children, we ask all parents to follow our established drop off and pick up procedure as follows:

- Students should enter the building immediately upon arrival for their safety.
- Park your car and come into the building to pick up your child.
- Children will be instructed to wait in the entranceway or in the building under supervision.

ABSENCE FROM CLASS

We are responsible for students during the time they are registered for our program. Therefore, we must keep accurate attendance and tardiness records on file in the Faith Formation Office. When a child is absent, please call and leave a message in the Faith Formation Office that your child(ren) will not be attending.

CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event that school is called off for Racine Unified Schools **due to weather conditions**, there will be no Faith Formation classes for that evening. If SMBL determines that conditions are unsafe, cancellation information will be broadcast by 3:00p.m. on WTMJ Channel 4, which can be accessed at www.tmj4.com.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parent contact information and alternate contact information must be provided on the registration form. In the event a child becomes ill or is injured during class, every effort will be made to contact the parents or guardians first. If parents cannot be reached in a timely manner, the alternate emergency contact(s) will be notified. If any of this information changes throughout the year, please inform the Faith Formation Office.

MEDICAL NEEDS/ ALLERGIES AND HEALTH CONCERNS

Parents must indicate on the registration form student's allergies and any other health problems which may help us better meet his/her safety needs during class time. Allergy information will be shared with catechists/volunteers. If a student is required to keep on his/her person, personal inhalers or other medicines or medical equipment, the parent must indicate this information on the registration form and complete a medication release form.

CELL PHONE & RIGHT TO INSPECT POLICY

Students who text messages during class will be given a verbal reminder to turn off their cell phone. At the next offense, the cell phone will be taken away and returned to the student after class. If a student is suspected of having weapons or drugs in his/her possession, the DRE is required to investigate. SMBL reserves the right to search and seize drugs, weapons and other contraband when there is reasonable belief that such contraband is in the possession of a student or volunteer.

INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL NEEDS FAITH FORMATION

By right of baptism, all Catholics should receive the benefit of the appropriate sacraments. In the St. Mary by the Lake Faith Formation program, no child will be denied sacramental preparation and the opportunity for spiritual enrichment. We are committed to serve children with special needs and their families with programming and formational opportunities deemed appropriate for the individual. We believe that each child should have the opportunity to build a relationship with God at his/her level. The opportunity is provided on the registration form to specify any special needs a student might have. These include special learning needs or disabilities. These needs will be shared with catechists and other volunteers when deemed necessary and appropriate. Every effort will be made to accommodate all children and youth in our programs.

FAITH FORMATION HOMESCHOOLING

Generally, the catechesis of children takes place in parish religious education/faith formation programs. The Faith is to be shared in a community context. However, there may be unique circumstances that prevent that full participation, and families may choose to provide formal systematic catechesis for their children in the home.

The Church, catechetical leaders, catechists, and parents all realize that much (if not most,) education in faith takes place outside a classroom setting - in the family, in the neighborhood, in the parish community. It is in these settings that children see and experience the lived faith.

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee does not allow homeschooling for sacramental preparation. Children preparing for sacraments of initiation must be prepared for the sacraments in the parish.

The St. Mary by the Lake Faith Formation program will work to support and assist any family in their decision. If you home school your child(ren) and would like more information or when/how one would go about coordinating the reception of sacraments for your child(ren) in our parish, please contact Heather Warner in the Faith Formation Office at 262-639-3616.

SAFEGUARDING ALL GOD'S FAMILY POLICY

For Students:

As mandated, the diocese requires that all students be given the opportunity to attend a presentation on ways to keep themselves safe. This will be offered during class time during the catechetical year. Parents will be given the opportunity to preview the information presented. These presentations will reinforce our belief in the respect and dignity of each human person and help children be more aware of what constitutes a safe boundary among family, friends, and strangers.

Pursuant to state law and the diocesan Safe Environment Policy, we are required to report suspected child abuse and we will follow the state laws and diocesan policy on such matters.

For Parents:

At the Opening Parent Meeting and throughout the year, parents will be provided with Safeguarding All God's Family information and newsletters. The information presented is useful in keeping family members safe from child predators, as well as pertinent information regarding bullying, internet safety and other topics.

For Catechists and all Volunteers:

All volunteers must have an interview with Director of Faith Formation. Criminal and personal background checks are done and safe environment training is completed before a volunteer is allowed to minister in the Christian Formation Program.

EMERGENCY PLANS

LOCKDOWN PLAN

In the unlikely event of an intruder, the catechists will lock their doors and all students and catechists will remain in the classroom until they are informed by the Director of Faith Formation and/or other official authority that it is safe to unlock the classroom doors. When the authorities deem it safe to do so, the classroom catechists will ensure the safe dismissal of each student to their parents on the sign out sheet.

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

In the unlikely event of a fire, catechists will pick up the communication folder and walk the children out to the assigned area for their classroom as indicated on the map by the classroom door. The catechists will take roll upon arriving at their designated location and will indicate the safe dismissal of each student to their parents on the sign out sheet.



BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Following Jesus' command, "Love one another as I have loved you", our Faith Formation staff and students treat each other with mutual respect. To create an environment that promotes Christian values and behaviors, and which creates a positive learning space, all students, catechists and guests must abide by the Faith Formation behavior guidelines.

General rules for all program participants:

- Respect all people and the property of others.
- Behave in a courteous manner.
- Take good care of church property.
- Settle disagreements in a peaceful manner

Specific Behavior Guidelines:

1. Respect and courtesy toward directors, catechists, and other students is expected at all times.
2. Students are not to enter their classrooms until an adult is present.
3. Students are not to remove any items from the desks they are using, or tamper with property of St. Mary by the Lake.
4. Classes will start promptly at the designated time.
5. Young people not involved in the program are not allowed in or around the building when programs are meeting.
6. Students are expected to bring their religion textbook and/or materials/folders to class each week.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In order to maintain an atmosphere of learning and growth in faith, the following process for disciplinary action will be observed:

FIRST OCCASION

The catechist will speak to the student privately concerning his/her behavior. Students may be sent to see the program director for disruptive behavior.

SECOND OCCASION

The catechist will call the parents and notify the director that the parents have been contacted.

THIRD OCCASION

The catechist and director may determine that the student shall not be allowed to return to class until the catechist, program director and parents have met with the student. Any student who has been sent to meet with the director two times for disruptive behavior may not return to the class until such a meeting has taken place.

A student who continues negative behavior following steps 1-3 will be dismissed from the program for the current year at the discretion of the program director. Options for home study will be offered to parents/guardians. Students dismissed the previous year may not re-enter the program without first having a meeting with the director

GENERAL SACRAMENT PREPARATION GUIDELINES



Sacraments are expressions of faith and essential to what it means to live as a Catholic Christian. Our sacrament preparation processes are created to be opportunities for children and parents to grow in faith and learn or deepen their understanding of the sacrament and the graces received in the sacramental ritual and how they can help one to live as disciples of Jesus.

Families must be registered members of St. Mary by the Lake Parish. Participation in Sacrament Preparations by members of other parishes must be accompanied by a letter of permission from the Pastor of their home parish.

Sacrament preparation is separate from the regular faith formation process for children and youth.

PARENTAL ROLE

At their child's Baptism, parents agreed to be the primary educators of their child in the faith by word and example. Therefore, parents are expected to work in partnership with the Church to help their children prepare to celebrate the sacraments.

- ✓ To participate in a sacrament preparation process complete involvement of the child and his/her parent(s) is mandated as required in each preparation process.
- ✓ **All parent meetings incorporated into a sacrament preparation processes are mandatory.** If a parent cannot attend, a delegate such as a grandparent, uncle, aunt, etc. may be sent to receive the necessary information.
- ✓ The Faith Formation Program will advertise the sacrament schedule in their calendars and updated process information in the bulletin, newsletters and web site. It is the parent's responsibility to read these communications and keep informed as to when a process begins and all the requirements within the process.

MASS ATTENDANCE

The Eucharistic celebration is the 'source and summit' of our faith. At Mass "we participate in the Paschal Mystery of Christ, that is, in his dying and rising which is made present for us in the Eucharistic sacrifice." (USCCA Ch 17) Through our participation in this paschal process, we are transformed with the bread and wine into the Body of Christ to bring Christ's message of peace and love into the world. **To be adequately prepared to celebrate the sacraments, children and youth should attend Mass weekly.**



PROOF OF BAPTISM

Proof of Baptism is required and must be turned in at registration for a sacrament preparation process. Proof of Baptism of the candidate is required and consists of original Baptismal Certificate or photo copy. All original documents will be returned. Copies from other parishes may be sent directly to the Christian Formation Office at 7605 Lakeshore Drive, Racine, WI 53402.

Individuals baptized in an accepted non-Catholic Christian ecclesial community, will make a profession of faith prior to preparing for the sacraments.

Sacramental Preparation First Reconciliation

The sacrament of Reconciliation is first celebrated with children in 2nd grade. It is preferred that one full year of Catholic faith formation has been completed prior to enrolling. Preparation is held in the fall. Parents and children attend preparation sessions together to become more aware of the forgiveness which is ours through Jesus Christ.

Sacramental Preparation First Communion

Through the preparation process, children in 2nd grade or higher and their families deepen their understanding of this sacred mystery. It is preferred that one full year of Catholic faith formation has been completed prior to enrolling. Preparation is held in the spring. Parents and children attend preparation sessions together. The true presence of Christ in the Eucharist is highlighted and children are taught the proper way to receive Jesus in Holy Communion.

Sacramental Preparation Confirmation

Along with Baptism and Eucharist, Confirmation is a sacrament of Christian Initiation. It represents a sealing of Baptism and the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Confirmation program is designed to help our young people to explore, deepen and strengthen the seeds of faith they were given at baptism. The candidates, themselves, are choosing the Catholic faith as a way of life.

The preparation process is designed for eleventh grade students. The purpose of the program is as follows:

- To empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ
- To encourage them to participate in the life, mission, and work of the Church
- To promote their spiritual growth

The candidate must:

- Participate in two years of formal religious education in either parochial school or a parish Religious Education Program in 9th and 10th grade.
- Be knowledgeable about the basic teachings of our Faith.
- Participate FULLY in the Parish Confirmation Program
- Attend and participate in class and attend Mass on Sundays
- Participate in the service projects requirements
- Participate in the confirmation retreat

Candidates and families will receive a Confirmation Handbook detailing program expectations.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC) is for children between the Ages of 8 and 16, and who have reached 2nd grade age, whether baptized or unbaptized. Children preparing to receive the Sacraments they have missed since Baptism, or to join the Catholic Church through Baptism, will attend sacramental preparation sessions in addition to Christian Formation classes on a regular basis beginning in September and continuing through the Easter Season. The process enables children to enter into a relationship with God and share in the life of their identity as Children of God. The importance of weekly Mass will be stressed as will understanding the parts of the Mass.

Each family comes to the process with different needs. The children will be of various ages and have had different levels of previous instruction. Families will meet with the Director of Faith Formation to determine the preparatory needs of the family. Every child will need a Sponsor/Godparent. The Sponsor/Godparent will be someone other than a parent, who will support the child in his or her Catholic Journey. The sponsor must be a Baptized and Confirmed Catholic, who is over the age of 16, and is in good standing with the Catholic Church. The sponsor will fill out a sponsor registration form.

Elementary Faith Formation Grades K5-6

Elementary Faith Formation at St. Mary by the Lake Parish is designed for all children attending a public school in grades K5 – 6. Classes are held in the Education Center and taught by volunteer catechists who receive training to enable them to share our Catholic faith in an effective way.

In 1st through 6th grade, will utilize the *Discover: Finding Faith in Life*, a Bible based curriculum. Filled with exciting, energetic learning that will get your kids out of their seats as they excitedly dive into the Bible and the teachings of the Church! Each child receives their own Discover! Kit, containing everything they need for their exciting faith journey. Children will dive into Bible stories in their own Catholic Children's Bible to encounter Jesus through the stories and people of scripture. Then, they get out of their seats for a built-in energetic learning activity that helps build a meaningful lesson. Next, they connect the Bible story and hand-on activity with Catholic doctrine through age-appropriate prayers, puzzles, and challenges in their Activity Book.

Middle School Faith Formation Grades 7-8th

The St. Mary by the Lake Faith Formation program provides an opportunity for Middle and High School students in grades 7th through 10th to grow in faith by developing a meaningful relationship with Jesus, a better understanding of our Catholic tradition and help to plant roots for the adult years. This program includes instruction, fellowship, prayer, service, and fun. The Youth Ministry program also provides opportunities for youth to engage in service, social and retreat opportunities throughout the year.

7th & 8th Grade Curriculum:

- **Fall 2021 Altaration:** Altaration addresses head-on one of the biggest problems we all face: how do we get Catholic teens to appreciate the awesome beauty and mystery of the Mass...and to actually look forward to attending and participating?
- **Spring 2022 Connected: Catholic Social Teaching for This Generation:** We live in a broken and hurting world. Teens today see division, anxiety, and tension all around them. *Connected: Catholic Social Teaching for This Generation* brings Christ's healing message to a world that sorely needs it through the topics that are most important to teens right now.

High School Faith Formation Grades 9-10th

Two years of High School Christian Formation classes are required of any young person, not enrolled in a Catholic High School before they begin to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The St. Mary by the Lake Faith Formation program provides an opportunity for youth in grades 9th through 10th to grow in faith by developing a meaningful relationship with Jesus, a better understanding of our Catholic tradition and help to plant roots for the adult years. This program includes instruction, fellowship, prayer, service, and fun. The Director of Youth Ministry and Catechists use a variety of activities and media to help connect their faith to their everyday life experiences. The Youth Ministry program also provides opportunities for youth to engage in service, social and retreat opportunities throughout the year.

9th & 10th Grade Curriculum:

- **Fall 2021 Altaration:** Altaration addresses head-on one of the biggest problems we all face: how do we get Catholic teens to appreciate the awesome beauty and mystery of the Mass...and to actually look forward to attending and participating?
- **Spring 2022 Connected: Catholic Social Teaching for This Generation:** We live in a broken and hurting world. Teens today see division, anxiety, and tension all around them. *Connected: Catholic Social Teaching for This Generation* brings Christ's healing message to a world that sorely needs it through the topics that are most important to teens right now.

