

St. Mary Catholic Church



Faith Formation

**Parent Handbook
2022-2023 School Year**

**Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish
Religious Education Center**

**5866 Main Street
P.O. Box 177
Auburndale, WI 54412
715-652-2196**

**Parish Office
715-652-2806**

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength, [and] you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Mark 12:30-31

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education is a ministry of the Church, with a mission to bring all parishioners closer to God and to one another. A parish-centered program provides many opportunities for community involvement in parish activities. Students have the opportunity to participate more fully in the Mass, to develop a sense of ownership of their parish, and to come to consider their involvement as an investment in their futures.

Lifelong learning is needed for faith to mature, and education doesn't end when schooling ends, nor with the completion of a sacramental program. You are invited to become more involved as the Religious Education program grows and reaches out to the whole parish community.

MISSION STATEMENT

The parish recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children. The purpose of the Religious Education program, and the responsibility of the parish, is to support the parents in this effort.

The Religious Education program has been developed and designed to deepen the faith of parish families, and to make its young people more aware of their Catholic roots and identity through prayer, service to the parish community, liturgy, scripture, and the sacraments.

ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Sharon Schaefer, CRE **Office: 715-652-2196**
Cell: 715-305-2014

Email stmaryre1.10@gmail.com

Father Murali - Rectory 715-652-2728

Matt Rickl, Parish Finance **715-652-2806**

Parish Kitchen **715-652-2747**

GRADE	CATECHIST
Grade 1	Liza Jensen
Grade 2	Open
Grade 3	Kaitlin Bauer
Grade 4	Mary Lou Herman
Grade 5	Missy Kloos
Grade 6 & 7	Kathy Boushon
Grade 8	Sharon Schaefer
Grade 9&10	Sharon Schaefer

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

We are starting the program with several combined classes:

6th & 7th grade will combine and 9th & 10th Confirmation prep will be combined.

Group A: 1st through 8th grade – Weekly 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. starting 9/21/22.

Group B: 9th and 10th grades (combined)— Weekly (or per schedule) 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. starting 9/21/22.

Fees for this school year ***Fees should be paid by Dec. 1st***

First & second child \$45 each

Third child \$35

Fourth child \$25

Family rate will not exceed \$150 for the school year.

There may be additional fees for retreats and extracurricular activities. This is especially true for the Confirmation class.

No registration fee is paid for Confirmation students in their Junior Year.

The Religious Education Program will accept children from other parishes if our class size allows. Non parishioner families will pay \$10 more in registration fees per child. Non parishioner families may be assessed an additional book fee.

GENERAL PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

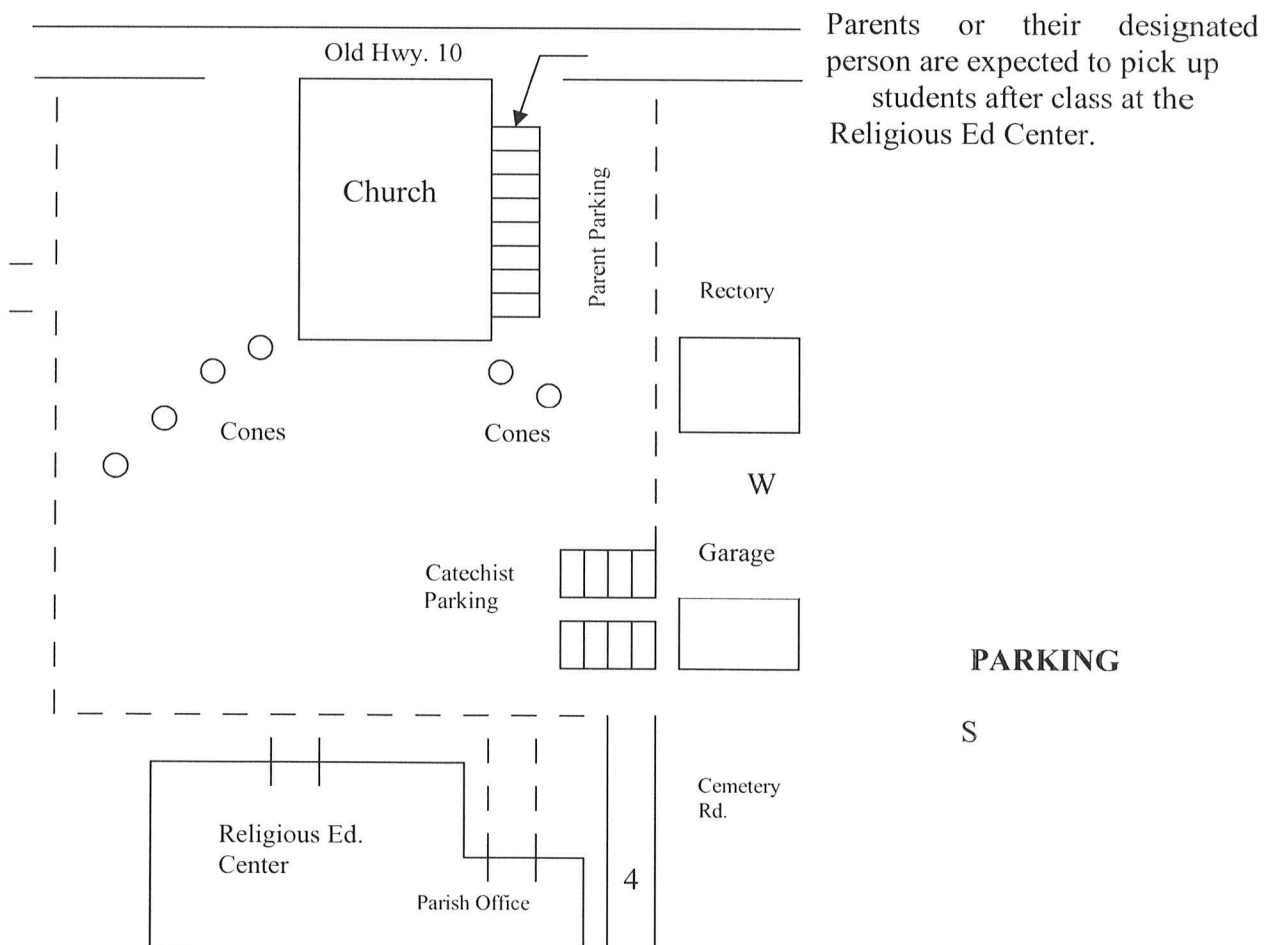
Students are expected to be on time for class. Any homework assigned needs to be completed. Forms need to be returned by the date indicated by the catechist or by the director of the program.

Announcements will appear in the church bulletin. Communications between catechist and parents or between the Religious Education Center and parents will be sent home with the students, or, if of a sensitive or important nature, may be mailed or e-mailed. Parents are encouraged to call the Center if any problems or issues arise.

A behavioral contract will be used this year. Disruptive or non-cooperative behavior is not conducive to learning, and, for the sake of the student and the class, will not be tolerated.

Disruptions from cell phones will not be permitted in the classroom. If a student is found to be texting or checking e-mail during class, or is found talking on a cell phone anywhere in the building during the hour of class time, the phone may be taken away until the end of the class period. It is the responsibility of the student to ask for the return of the cell phone.

Students are expected to leave the facility and be picked up promptly after class. Students are expected to be dropped off and picked up on parish property. If you will be late picking up your child/children, please contact the Center office to make alternate arrangements. It is especially difficult to keep track of everyone.



ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and must maintain 90% attendance to move up to the next class level. (miss no more than 2 class hours). If a child is ill or unable to attend due to an unavoidable conflict, please call the Religious Education Center at 715-652-2196 between 11 am and 6 pm on any scheduled class day. You may also call the parish office at 715-652-2806 and leave a message.

Students who miss class are expected to make up the work missed. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements to complete assigned work.

Students who are *habitually* absent without a legitimate excuse may need to attend a meeting with Father and one or both parents to resolve the problem.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When inclement weather prevents holding regular classes WDLB will be contacted. A text will be sent to the contact number provided. An email will be sent out from the RE Center notifying parents and teachers of the cancellation. Whenever the Auburndale School District cancels classes due to severe weather, Religious Education classes will not be held that evening. **If the weather changes after the school day ends and evening classes must be cancelled, WDLB radio station will be notified and parents will be emailed. Every effort will be made to reach those parents who do not have email or cell phones.**

MATERIALS BROUGHT INTO CENTER

No food, candy, gum, toys, or electronic equipment should be brought to class unless approved by the catechist. If a snack is brought to share, it should be individually wrapped and sealed.

A water bottle will be permitted. Students are also asked to remove hats in the building. Any of these items may be collected by the catechist and returned at the end of class, or may be sent to the office. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the catechist. All cell phones must be turned off while a student is in class. If a student needs to be contacted, please call the Religious Education Center office at 715-652-2196.

FIRST AID

A first aid kit and supplies are kept in the Religious Education Center office. Minor injuries and symptoms will be handled in the office. If the person in charge considers the injury or illness to be of a serious nature, the office will attempt to contact a parent or guardian, or other responsible adult, as noted in the student's records. In that case, parents will be required to sign an injury/accident report, if necessary. This will be filed with the Diocese.

APPROPRIATE DRESS

Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for a Religious Education program. Shirts with offensive messages and/or pictures are distracting and disrespectful. A student who is inappropriately dressed may be asked to put a jacket over the offending garment or a parent may be called. Inappropriate clothing interferes with the teaching and learning process.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Diocesan policy

All students in the Religious Education programs of the Diocese of La Crosse are entitled to learn in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.

Provisions:

1. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature, or unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. “Unwelcome verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature” includes, but is not limited to, “the deliberate, repeated making of unsolicited gestures, or [display of] graphic materials which are not necessary for [instructional] purposes.”

2. No student shall be subjected to sexual harassment in a program sanctioned by the Diocese of La Crosse.

3. Any student or employee who engages in sexual harassment shall be subjected to severe disciplinary measures.

4. Any student who believes that he or she is being sexually harassed shall immediately report such information to the Director of Religious Education. Any information shall be treated as confidential. All claims of sexual harassment shall be thoroughly investigated by the Director of Religious Education after consultation with the Diocesan Office of Catechesis.

5. No student shall receive any retaliation or disciplinary action for reports of sexual harassment made in good faith

DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING INSTANCES OF CHILD ABUSE The Diocese of La Crosse, through its policies and procedures, seeks to provide a prompt, appropriate and compassionate response to reporters of sexual abuse of a child by any diocesan agent (bishop, priest, deacon, employee, religious, vendor or volunteer). Anyone wishing to make a report of an allegation of sexual abuse should send that report to Mrs. Teresa Brown, Complaint Intake Agent, at the Diocese of La Crosse, P.O. Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602-4004. Alternatively, you can contact Mrs. Brown at 608.791.0179 or intakeagent@diolc.org. The reporting form is available through the Diocese of La Crosse Office of Safe Environment or on the diocesan website at: diolc.org/safe-environment/reporting. Individuals are also encouraged to take their reports directly to civil authorities. Copies of the diocesan policy are available through your local Parish and on the diocesan website. If you have any questions about the Diocese of La Crosse and the implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, please contact Teresa Brown, Diocese of La Crosse, at 608.791.2679 or tbrown@diolc.org.

SACRAMENTS

Non-participation in classes and activities necessary for the preparation for the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation may prevent or delay the reception of these sacraments. **Reception of a sacrament is at the discretion of the pastor.** The Sacrament of Confirmation must be entered into freely by the confirmation student, and must be a conscious choice.

Information pertaining to First Reconciliation and First Communion will be sent home at the appropriate times during the second grade year, and information and materials for Confirmation will be provided during the tenth grade year. Confirmation may occur in September of the junior year, in compliance with a mandate from the bishop and as scheduled by the dean of the Marshfield Deanery.

PARENT LETTER REGARDING DIOCESE PARENT AND PARISH RESPONSIBILITIES.



St. Mary's Parish
Religious Education Center

5866 Main St. † P.O. Box 177 † Auburndale, WI 54412

Phone (715) 652-2196

September 21, 2022

Dear Religious Education Parents:

St. Mary's parish desires to provide in-person faith formation for the 2022-2023 school year. We appreciate the opportunity to help your children grow in a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church through the Parish Faith Formation Program. It is a great privilege to be able to assist you, the primary teachers of your children, in the ways of faith.

The following are essential Parents' Responsibilities and Parish Responsibilities regarding the Opening of the Faith Formation Program

1) Faith Formation

- The formation schedule for children in grade school, middle school and high school will be determined after the parent meeting on September 7.
- Day and time may need to vary depending on catechist availability.
- Parents will be provided with Sacramental Preparation Resources to help prepare their child at home.

The CRE and Support Team will work with the local county health department to insure that the opening of the Parish Program goes smoothly. We will be taking every reasonable precaution, with your help, to keep the catechetical environment safe and healthy.

2) Protective Measures

Parents' Responsibilities:

- Screen your children by taking their temperature and ask health related questions (do they feel well) before going to the Faith Formation Program.
- Speak with your children about social distance and good hand washing
- Keep a child, who does not feel well, at home. Symptoms of being ill include fever,
- stomach ailments, sore throat, a bad cough, difficulty breathing, headaches, extreme fatigue etc.
- Masks are requested to be worn but remains at the discretion of the parent/guardian.

Parish Responsibilities:

- During Faith Formation, if a student appears to have an illness, the parish will help the student and proceed with a standard medical response like taking the student's temperature and isolate him/her. Sick students who have a temperature over 100.4 will be isolated from other students until a parent or guardian arrives to take them home.
- Remind catechists and adults who do not feel well to stay home.
- Provide face masks for the catechists.
- Provide adequate signage to remind anyone with fever or flu-like symptoms not to enter the building and to help encourage proper hygiene.
- It is important that social distancing be practiced by adults and should be encouraged among students. The recommendation is that this does not become a rule with consequences. The current recommended standard for social distancing is 6 feet apart and our classrooms will be set up accordingly.
- Every effort will be made so students will not share books, materials, equipment etc.
- The lay-out of classrooms and spacing of desks will determine classroom occupancy.
- The Parish will ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase the circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
- There will be no sharing of food. Only pre-wrapped packages will be allowed.
- Visitors to the Faith Formation Program, other than parents, will be limited. The parish will make this document accessible to the parish community on the parish website. The document will be reviewed regularly and **updated** as local ordinances are adjusted.

3) Hygiene & Cleaning

Parents are to review and practice the following with their children:

- Washing hands often with soap and water for twenty or more seconds
- Sanitizing hands when soap and water are unavailable.
- Keeping hands away from one's face - not touching one's face
- When sneezing or coughing, to sneeze or cough into a tissue or an elbow

Depending on class scheduling and the current health guidelines, additional parent help may be needed to wipe down desks, etc., between classes.

Parish Responsibilities include:

- All adults will wash their hands before entering the classroom / gathering area. Hands should be scrubbed with soap for twenty or more seconds.
- Hand sanitizers and wipes will be readily available. If a student, catechist, or aide leaves a classroom, he or she should sanitize his or her hands when re-entering the classroom.
- Public areas of the building, where people gather and illnesses could more easily be spread, will be cleaned after the Religious Education ends each week.
- Each building, that is not a Catholic school, will be deep-cleaned often.
- Catechetical leaders and catechists will try to limit physical contact with students. (no handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, etc.).
- After blowing their noses, students should discard the used tissue and wash or sanitize their hands. Adults will model this practice.

4) Policy & Procedures for COVID-19 Exposure & Positive Tests

Parents' Responsibilities:

- If any of your family is directly exposed to a person who is carrying COVID-19/Delta Variant, your family should quarantine as recommended by your county health department.
- Report to the County Health Department if anyone in the family tests positive for COVID-19.
- If any of your family is diagnosed with COVID-19, you will need to have completed any quarantine as recommended by health authority.

Parish Responsibilities:

- The Parish will cooperate with county or municipal health departments if a student or employee is diagnosed with a COVID-19 or another serious illness. Names will be kept confidential.
- To return to the Parish Program, an employee, catechist or volunteer who is diagnosed with COVID-19 should have completed quarantine.
- If a classroom(s)/gathering area is impacted by a student or adult diagnosed with COVID-19, the room should remain unused for three calendar days and be deep cleaned before it can be used again.

- Employees who are (1) ill or experiencing any symptoms of COVID, including, limitation, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and excessive fatigue, (2) have a suspected or diagnosed/confirmed case of COVID, (3) have been exposed to any person with a suspected or diagnosed/confirmed case of COVID, (4) returning from outside the United States, or any cruise, need to quarantine if not vaccinated in order to return to the classroom.
- Parish staff will have the contact information for:
 - County health department
 - Local clinics and hospitals
 - Local schools
 - Diocesan offices