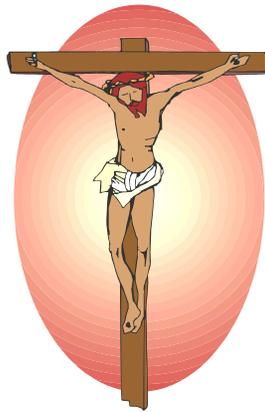




St. Mary/St. John

Faith Formation Family Handbook

Revised September 2014



Faith Formation Office Phone: 725-7714
FF Office Address: 528 Second St., Menasha

Catholic Faith Formation Center – CFFC - (Former St. John's School)
CFFC Address: 628 Fifth Street, Menasha
Phone: 920-722-4830

Faith Formation Program
Faith Formation Director - Sally Michalkiewicz 725-7714 Ext. 425, smichalkiewicz@tcces.org
Faith Formation Coordinator – Joanne Vanness 725-7714 Ext. 424, jvanness@tcces.org

Parish Website - <http://www.menashacatholicparishes.org/>

Table of Contents

GREETING

COMMON CATHOLIC PRAYERS and PRACTICES

GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

MISSION STATEMENTS...

ENROLLMENT GUIDELINES...

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

- Baptism of Children beyond age 7...
- Enrollment Guidelines for First Reconciliation,
First Eucharist and Confirmation...
- First Reconciliation...
- First Eucharist...
- Special Preparation of children between Ages 7 & 18...
- Confirmation...

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY...

- We believe...
- Our focus...
- Our goal...

YOUTH MINISTRY...

- Our vision...
- Our goals...

POLICIES...

- Attendance...
- Early Dismissal from class...
- Class Times...
- Entering, gathering, and departing classes...
- Cancellation of classes...
- Emergency procedures...
- Guests...
- Homework ...
- Medications...
- Parents/Family Meetings...
- Off-Site Activities...
- Weapons Policy...
- Illegal drugs and alcohol use policy
- Communication Devices...
- Participation...
- Take-home Folders...
- Behavior and Discipline...
- Dress Code Policy...
- Tuition

ELEMENTARY GRADES CURRICULUM...

Overview...Grade One...Grade Two...Grade Three...
Grade Four...Grade Five...

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM...

Grade Six...Grade Seven...Grade Eight...Grade Nine...
Grade Ten...Grade Eleven...- Confirmation preparation
Grade Twelve

FORMAL PRAYERS LEARNING SCHEDULE

SAFE ENVIRONMENT CLASS...

PARISH INFORMATION...

Reconciliation
RCIA, Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults...

ADULT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES...

CATECHISTS...

PARENT VOLUNTEERS...

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS...

REGISTRATION...

SCRIP EXPLANATION ...

FEED YOUR BODY AND FEED YOUR SOUL –

TUITION

A FAMILY PROMISE OF PARTNERSHIP ...

“HEART-TO-HEART PARTNERSHIP”

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new year of Faith Formation! We look forward to working with you as we learn more about Jesus our Savior and celebrate our Catholic faith together. Young people receive their spirituality from you at home, from our church community, and directly as a gift from God. Your influence on your child's faith development is more significant than any other person or experience your child will ever have.

God showed His love for us by requiring that we take time out of our busy lives, once a week, to give Him honor and worship, so we can be spiritually healthy. God has inspired the Church to require our attendance *at Mass at a Catholic Church, every weekend*. Attendance at Mass gives us the opportunity to be spiritually fed when we listen to God's words as the Scriptures are proclaimed, and when we receive Jesus in Holy Communion. Both Jesus and our Catholic Church requires that we also receive God's graces in the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once each year. We may not receive Holy Communion unless serious sin has been forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Our Faith Formation catechists and curriculum present and reinforce the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith. There is/has been confusion by some students because they are not being taken or encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and are not attending Mass each weekend and on Holy Days of Obligation. Because PARENTS are the most important teachers of our Catholic Faith for their children, this sends a mixed message to children. It is confusing if the parents put little importance on the practice of our Catholic Faith, but the catechists and our Catholic Church emphasize how important it is to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. God and our Church always invite us to come back to receiving the Sacraments, both for ourselves and as an example for our children and to continue to learn more about Him and His Church. *Children "hear" our actions, how we live, more than they "hear" our words.*

The Faith Formation program provides a safe place for young people to share spiritual ideas, a place where they can pray together and learn more about God, the Bible and the teachings of our Catholic Church. Worship experiences will also be part of the formation process, as well as youth ministry activities for grades six through twelve.

The Faith Formation staff and catechists here work in partnership with you, as you do all you can to help your child become a believing, loving Catholic Christian. The catechists are volunteering their time and talent and we owe them an enormous amount of support and gratitude.

Let us pray for each other as we begin this year of Faith Formation. Together with you, we will invite your children to meet Jesus, respond to Him as a Person and as God, and live as a Christian in everyday life. Let us remember to be thankful to God our Father for all of our parishioners whose pledges support the larger portion of the Faith Formation program expenses not covered by tuition fees.

Please take time to read this handbook and to call if you have any questions. ***Please also sign and return the 2nd to last page, so that we know you have received and accepted our parish policies contained in the Handbook.*** As always, please contact the Faith Formation office with any questions or concerns. May God bless you and your family with wisdom, holiness, and health.

Yours in Jesus,

Fr. Paul Paider

Sally Michalkiewicz

Joanne Vanness

COMMON CATHOLIC PRAYERS

THE 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.

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.

AN ACT OF CONTRITION

Father, I am sorry, for all my sins. I am sorry for the wrong things I have done. I am sorry for the good things I have failed to do. I will try to do better. Help me to love others. Amen.

AN ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee. I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all because I have offended Thee, my God, Who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen

GLORY BE

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.

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

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

GRACE BEFORE MEALS

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

GRACE AFTER MEALS

We give you thanks almighty God, for all the benefits, 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, to guard, To rule, and guide. Amen.

BEDTIME PRAYER

Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord, my soul to keep. Guard me safely through this night. Wake me with the morning light. God bless...*(Mom, Dad, John, etc..)*. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, instructs the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Spirit we may be ever wise and rejoice in His consolations. We make our prayer in the name of Christ Our Lord. Amen.

THE 5 PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

1. Attend Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and rest from servile labor.
2. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year – especially if there is unconfessed serious (mortal) sin.
3. Receive Holy Communion *at least* during the Easter season.
4. Fast and abstain on days of penance established by the Church.
5. Provide for the material needs of the Church according to your ability.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

1. Baptism
2. Penance
3. Holy Eucharist
4. Confirmation
5. Marriage
6. Holy Orders
7. Blessing (Anointing) of the Sick

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

THE ANGELUS

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

Hail Mary...

AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH.

And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,
that we may be made worthy of the promises
of Christ.

Let us Pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O
Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we to
whom the incarnation of Thy Son was made
known by the message of the angel, may by
His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory
of His resurrection; through the same Christ
our Lord. Amen

THE BEATITUDES

from **Matthew 5:3-11**; and **Luke 6:20-26**

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.
2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

"...Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:31-46).

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Clothe the naked.
4. Shelter the homeless.
5. Visit the sick.
6. Visit the imprisoned.
7. Bury the dead.

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

1. Counsel the doubtful.
2. Instruct the ignorant.
3. Admonish the sinner.
4. Comfort the sorrowful.
5. Forgive injuries.
6. Bear wrongs patiently
7. Pray for the living and the dead.

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

These gifts are given by the Holy Spirit at Confirmation and: “...assist us in our mission and witness” and are “permanent dispositions that move us to respond to the guidance of the Spirit.”

(Quotes above are from the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults – known also as the “USCCA”, p 207-209, 513)

WISDOM – Wisdom is the ability to see with eyes of faith and to judge God’s will for you. “Wisdom enables us to see the world from God’s viewpoint, which can help us come to grasp the purpose and plan of God.” (p. 208)

UNDERSTANDING – Understanding gives you a grasp of what Jesus means in your life and the lives of others. “...understanding stimulates us to work on knowing ourselves as part of our growth in knowing God.” (p 209)

KNOWLEDGE – Knowledge helps you to be aware of Jesus’ message. “...knowledge directs us to a contemplation, or thoughtful reflection, of the mystery of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – as well as of the mysteries of the Catholic faith.” (p. 208-209)

FORTITUDE – (Courage) – Fortitude or Courage provides the strength needed to face troubles. “When the Spirit pours fortitude or courage into our hearts, we can trust that we will be prepared to stand up for Christ and the Gospel when challenged.” (p. 209)

COUNSEL – (Right Judgment) Counsel is the gift that helps you decide what to do in problem situations. ‘...counsel or right judgment grows in us, we can sense the quiet teaching that the Spirit gives us about our moral lives and the training of our consciences.’ (p. 209)

PIETY - (Reverence) – Piety brings a deep appreciation of God’s power and the ability to approach Him as a loving Father. “The gift of piety or reverence is an act of respect for the Father who created us, for Jesus who saved us, and for the Spirit who is sanctifying us.” (p. 209)

FEAR OF THE LORD – (Wonder and awe in God’s presence) -is the wonderment of how God operates in your life. “...the gift of fear of the Lord or wonder and awe in God’s presence can infuse honesty into our relationship with God, a frankness that places us in awe before the majesty of God. Yet the gift also imparts an attitude of grateful wonder that God loves us and that we can share in his life.” (p. 209)

THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“When we are responsive to the grace of Confirmation and the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, we begin to bear the fruits of the Spirit.” (p. 209 United States Catholic Catechism for Adults – known also as the “USCCA”)
This is how we know the Holy Spirit is active in our lives and that we are using the seven gifts.

CHARITY (LOVE) – Filled with the Spirit, as Jesus was when he proclaimed His mission, we are able to reach out to those around us and those beyond us who are poor or sick or victims of injustice. We are constantly concerned about the suffering of others in need.

JOY – Once we know that God cares for us, accepts us, loves us and is always actively present with us through his Spirit, we become filled with a happiness that won’t quit.

PEACE – Because we have such a close relationship with God, because we realize God is as close to us as our own breath, we are encompassed by a great calmness and serenity, harmony and tranquility.

PATIENCE – Knowing we are truly loved and lovable, we have the ability to endure pain, suffering and the insensitivity of other people. We let the moments of anguish pass. This is patience.

KINDNESS – By this fruit of the Spirit we become less aggressive and hostile, and instead become gentler. Gentleness and consideration for others becomes more natural for us.

GOODNESS – Goodness refers to how we act within the community. Within the community, we are truly able to be ourselves. We are more relaxed and able to be the real persons we are meant to be. We are meant to fulfill the path of love and concern that comes from the Spirit within.

GENEROSITY – Bigheartedness, selflessness and the need to give of oneself and one’s resources becomes part of those who live the love of the Spirit.

GENTLENESS– With healed hearts, we no longer need to insist upon our own way. We behave with a mild manner. We relax into the decisions that are made and yet, firmly keep in mind the goodness of others and our service to their needs.

FAITHFULNESS – With the security of knowing that God is truly with us in every breath we take, believing in other people becomes easier. We exhibit a deep trust in people.

MODESTY – When the Spirit of love fills our life, we no longer need to impress other people with our power or degrees or connections or wealth. Modesty is moderation in the way we dress, in our speech and in our actions.

SELF CONTROL – The community also helps us to achieve self-control. We develop the awareness of what is the best and most appropriate action for many areas of our lives.

CHASTITY – Also within community, we are able to form loving and caring friendships, which help us act appropriately with our gift of sexuality.

MISSION STATEMENT – ST. MARY Parish Community

We, the Catholic Community of St. Mary's Parish, are a Eucharistic people who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
We are called by the Lord to spread the Gospel of love and forgiveness to others through our Catholic Faith by our word and example.

MISSION STATEMENT – ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST Parish Community

The Parish of St. John the Baptist is a community of faith filled people dedicated to fulfill the mission of the Lord by living and proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ.
As Catholic Christians, we grow in knowing the Lord's love by our worship, education, and service to others. By our words and actions, we welcome others with open hearts to join us in the name of the Lord.

MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. MARY/ST. JOHN FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

We, the Faith Formation team of St. Mary and St. John Parish Communities,
unite in partnership with parents
as they guide their children
in the process of becoming faith-filled, loving Catholic Christians.
Assisted by the Spirit of Jesus,
we provide information about the Catholic faith,
formation in the Gospel way of life, and
prayer experiences that invite spiritual transformation.
We believe that the presence of Jesus
makes the ministry of Faith Formation effective,
so that young people may respond to the message
through growth in faith, worship and Christian service.

Amendment

The statements in this handbook are subject to amendment. The Faith Formation Director will inform you of all changes at the earliest possible opportunity. Some changes may be put into effect immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.

Enrollment Guidelines

We at St. Mary's and St. John's Parish Communities believe that Catholic Education is a vital part of Catholic faith life. Because each grade's curriculum builds on what was taught in the grades before it, Faith Formation is most effective when children begin at an early age and complete the full program. According to Diocesan recommendations, our formal Faith Formation program for children will continue all the way through 11th Grade. *Formation in our faith does NOT end with Confirmation in 11th or 12th grade* but should continue throughout one's life. All adult Catholic Christians are encouraged to continue learning and growing in the faith. Please watch for adult faith formation opportunities in bulletins and flyers and included with this Family Handbook.

Because of the importance of a strong educational and faith basis for First Reconciliation and First Communion preparation, and since each year's faith formation curriculum builds on the previous years, children entering the Faith Formation program for the first time after they have completed the first grade in their secular school, will not automatically be registered for the second grade and the First Reconciliation and the First Communion preparation program. To determine the best placement for a child, an interview will be held with the parent, child, FF Coordinator and in some cases the Pastor. A mutual agreement will be reached about the placement of the child, which is in the best interest of the child. Options include: placement in RCIC – (Rite of Christian Initiation for Children), make-up classes, either before entrance into the second grade program or at the same time as the second grade (or other grade) program, home study, etc.

Furthermore, students entering our Confirmation program must have attended Faith Formation classes the years prior to receiving this sacrament, unless prior arrangements to make up the missed grade level(s) have been made with the Pastor and the FF Director. The ongoing years of Faith Formation are needed to ensure the child's understanding and appreciation of our Catholic Faith and the Sacraments.

Additional Enrollment Guidelines for First Eucharist, First Reconciliation & Confirmation

- -An up-to-date Baptismal Certificate is **REQUIRED** before the reception of the sacraments.
- -The Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are usually celebrated in the 2nd Grade at St. Mary's and St. John's Parishes.
- The Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in 11th Grade.

First Reconciliation: Sacrament of Healing

First Reconciliation preparation is a partnership process between the home and the parish. First Reconciliation usually happens in the Second Grade.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation celebrates God's healing and forgiveness of sins. When the priest prays the words of absolution, we experience the mercy of God.

Children need to give evidence of the ability to:

- a. reflect on their personal actions;
- b. distinguish between a sin, accident, or mistake and,
- c. understand God's mercy as it is expressed in the sacrament.

The parents must attend a Parent Session to receive the information and materials, which will help them in preparing their child for reception of the sacrament. They will be given the background information they need to understand the process, the moral development of children, and the "how to" of Reconciliation. There will be a retreat experience before the reception of Reconciliation for the students and their parents, and a Parent/Candidate session "Church Search".

First Communion: Sacrament of Initiation

The Eucharist is the central celebration of the Church and our greatest act of worship during which we thank God for all the gifts we have received. We listen to the Word of God during the Liturgy of the Word and witness Jesus' sacrifice of love when we celebrate the Liturgy of the Eucharist. As Catholics, we believe that Jesus is actually present to us in the Eucharistic Bread and Wine. Formal preparation and first reception of the sacrament ordinarily take place in the Second Grade. **Families are an integral part of the preparation process.** Parents are asked to attend a Parent Meeting and a practice during the Second Grade school year. The purpose of the meeting is to help the parents prepare the child for the reception of Holy Communion.

- A. One meeting involves meeting with the Pastor, the Pastoral Associate, or the FF Director/Coordinator to learn about the sacrament on an adult level and to have him/her answer any questions.
- B. There is a required Parent/Candidates session on the Mass.
- C. There will be a mini-retreat for students and their parents before the reception of their First Communion. They spend time in prayer, discussing church manners, and reception of the Eucharist. There will also be a rehearsal with the candidates and parents.

Special Preparation of Children between Ages 8 & 18

(For First Communion, First Reconciliation or Confirmation) This preparation is for baptized children who are out of sync with our parish preparation. Students participate in individual instruction to bring them into sync with their grade level. For instance, a 10-year-old child who has not received First Communion would be prepared for this sacrament on an individual basis while attending regular Faith Formation classes.

Baptism of Children beyond Age 7

This is for children from seven years to 18 years who have not been baptized or educated in the Catholic faith. The instruction is done on an individual basis by contacting the Parish Offices.

Confirmation: Sacrament of Initiation

The Sacrament of Confirmation is a celebration of the gift of God's Spirit in our lives. 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 Grade. Individual cases will be reviewed at the discretion of the Pastor and FF Director.

This program requires students to have participated in Faith Formation classes throughout their high school career, including 11th grade. The year of formal preparation for the Sacrament is best seen as a continuation of the years of catechesis through childhood.

Teens requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation should go back to their Parish Faith Formation Office to enroll in classes and follow these guidelines:

1. Youth should be in at least the 11th grade and enrolled in either a Catholic High School or Faith Formation classes.
2. Must attend the Parent/Candidate and Sponsor/Candidate Meetings in Spring/Fall.
3. Must have full attendance at the Confirmation Retreat.
4. Have at least 30 hours of community service with 15 hours being in and for the Candidate's parish since freshman year in high school.
5. Attend all required class sessions.
6. Must choose a sponsor who is a practicing confirmed Catholic, is age 16 or older, and who is NOT a parent. It is preferred to choose a baptismal godparent who is available to attend meetings/classes with the Candidate.

The Bishop strongly recommends that the Candidate make the final decision on whether or not he or she wants to be confirmed, after participating in the preparation portion of the process.

Children's Ministry

We Believe: The experience of God in the family, whether named or not, enters each person at a fundamentally deep and lasting level. This cannot be denied. God is present as long as genuine love is present and acted on.

"We don't need to import God into the family. God is already there. The family is the first and foremost setting where each of us is formed and encounters the love of the living God! Love begets love. Plain and simple. And love is happening in families, in various degrees and ways."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church and Familystyle, by Dr. David Thomas & Mary Joyce Calnan, page 126)

- **Parents and the home are the most influential force in the life of a child and responsible for the faith life of that same child.**
- Faith Formation classes *supplement* the family's faith development process.
- Catechists are faith-filled people dedicated to share their faith and spread the message of Jesus.

Our Focus:

- to provide an atmosphere for the growth of each child as a person: in the spiritual, moral, physical and intellectual aspect of his/her life.
- to give each child the opportunity to respond to others with thoughtful action, initiative and creativity.
- to help each student experience Jesus' love so he or she can make a spontaneous response to Christianity in their daily life.

Our Goal - The Faith Formation Staff and Catechists seek to **partner** with parents and guardians in order to foster a love of God and strive to present the essential truths of our Catholic faith to the children of St. Mary's and St. John's.

Youth Ministry

Our Vision

The Youth Ministry program at St. Mary's and St. John's is dedicated to helping the young people in our Church of today, to capture in a fuller and richer sense, the call of Christ to Gospel values and a Catholic, Christian lifestyle.

OUR GOALS

Our goals are to focus the total personal and spiritual life of our young people within a caring Catholic Christian community and to draw young people into responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of our faith community.

A strong youth ministry program is multidimensional because young people are multidimensional. Therefore, we pray, play, worship, serve, heal, follow and build community together. Our ministry with youth is not limited to those who have a history of church involvement. We also reach out to those who are struggling and do not have a place to belong.

Our Youth Minister guides it, along with a Youth Ministry Team of youth and adults, offering individual parish opportunities along with citywide opportunities. Parish children and teenagers in grades 6-12 are invited to attend the Committee meetings and participate in the Youth Ministry program and activities.

POLICIES

Attendance at Mass

The Catholic Church has said that attendance at Mass on weekends and Holy Days of Obligation are required of all Catholics from the age of reason on up (around the age of 7). Parents, please establish attendance at Mass and regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a top priority for you and your family. If you do not - neither will your child/children. Jesus and the Catholic Church help us recognize that reception of the sacraments is necessary to give us the grace we need to be the best people that God has created us to be. When we go to Mass and hear the Word of God proclaimed to us in the Scriptures and receive Jesus' Body and Blood in the Eucharist, we are blessed with the spiritual nourishment that only God can give us. When we've fallen into serious sin, we have been given the beautiful gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation through which we can reconcile ourselves with God. God is so in love with us that He's given us these gifts!

Attendance at Class

Parents, please establish Faith Formation classes as a top priority. If you do not, then your child/children will not either. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and retreats. Please call the Faith Formation Office, at 725-7714 or 722-4830 if your child will be absent. Office aides will call parents to inform you of any absences that were not called in. If your child arrives late, please have them check in at the library so you are not called unnecessarily.

Early Dismissal from Class

If you find it necessary to take your child out of class before scheduled dismissal, please provide a signed note to that effect before the beginning of class.

Class Times

Generally, classes meet on Wednesday evenings for grade school, middle school, and high school, from 6:00-7:15 PM. The 11th Grade students will attend designated Faith Formation classes before Confirmation preparation begins. Check the FF Calendar for times. Confirmation candidates will meet on designated Sunday mornings during Fall through Spring.

Entering, Gathering and Departing - Class

Students should arrive NO EARLIER THAN 10 minutes prior to the beginning of classes, unless they are participating in the light supper if it is being offered in the cafeteria from 4:45-5:50 pm. Catechists will not be available in their classrooms until 5:50 PM. Please BE PROMPT in picking up your children. We do not want any child to be left alone outside without supervision.

- If your child is in first, second, or third grade, please park your car and escort your children *into* and *out* of the building. Your child must be picked up at his/her classroom.
- Please park in marked parking places only. Too often children do not look before they run: therefore, we ask you not to park in front of the school building doors. For your convenience, parking is available on both 5th and 6th Street. The gym door on 6th Street **will not be opened** for security reasons. The front doors at the 5th Street entrance will be open from 5:40-7:30 PM.
- If you are picking up your child in the parking lot, please instruct your child not to run in the parking lot and also to watch for moving vehicles in the lot. We want to avoid any accidents that might occur.

Cancellation of Classes

If the public schools close due to inclement weather, Faith Formation Classes are also cancelled. If weather conditions deteriorate later in the afternoon or early evening, (when school closing is no longer an issue), **please use your best judgment** in regard to sending your child. If time permits, an announcement will be made on the radio on **1150AM - WHBY and 94.3FM - WROE**. In addition, an announcement will be placed on our answering machine. For questions regarding cancellation, please call the Faith Formation Office at 725-7714 or the CFFC at 722-4830.

Emergency Procedures

During class times, students and catechists will practice for emergency events, which might occur. These events may include but not be limited to: fire, tornado, bomb threat, or other emergency situations. These practices are to ensure that all feel comfortable if an emergency should occur.

Guests

Guests of students are welcomed in the class but are required to check in the Faith Formation Office (which is in the Family Library) first, with written parental permission. Parents, please call first if at all possible. That way, the catechist will have enough supplies on hand for extra students.

Homework

We realize that students' schedules are hectic, so we are careful not to assign busy work. However, there will be times when homework is assigned, such as reading their chapters and memorization, which are necessary to learn the content of the chapter and to reinforce a lesson (such as memorizing prayers and the Commandments). Faith Formation/Religious Education isn't only about a person's faith, but is also an academic field of study. Parents are encouraged to work with their children. Grades 1-5 will be receiving a "Family Page" each week. We encourage you to complete the page with your children and return the page signed to his/her teacher. In the case of an extended absence, please contact your child's catechist.

All students will receive a "Mass Sheet" to fill out each week about what they observed at Mass the following weekend. We ask that the children return these pages each week to their catechists.

Medications

Any child requiring medication, either prescription or non-prescription, must have written permission from their parent. In the case of a prescription medicine, the medicine must come to class in its original container with label containing instructions on dispensing of medicine.

Parents' Meetings / Family Events

All parents are expected to attend our first evening of classes – Family Orientation - to meet the Catechists, visit classrooms and ask questions of the catechists, and Facilitator/Coordinator. In addition there are some family opportunities in place such as Family Reconciliation Night, Family Christmas Night, Ash Wednesday Mass and a Lenten Prayer Service. We do ask that you try to participate in your child's classroom, at least once a year.

In addition, **families with students in sacramental programs are responsible for attending parent/child meetings**, which provide you with information about the sacrament and its celebration.

Off-Site Activities

Permission slips, signed by a child's parent or guardian, must be on file before that child will be allowed to participate in an off-site activity or field trip. This includes but is not limited to retreats held at another parish/retreat site. Children without permission slips signed by a parent or guardian will **NOT** be allowed to participate in the off-site activity and will remain in the Faith Formation Center until the child is picked up.

Weapons Policy

Firearms, weapons and other dangerous objects are not permitted in any school or parish building. Exemptions to this policy are granted to law enforcement officers. Any instrument or device of any sort that is actually used in such a manner that it may inflict death or serious injury to another, establishes the object as a weapon. Weapons include, but are not limited to, any form of knife, firearm, or device such as clubs or brass knuckles that may inflict injury.

Any student in possession of a firearm and/or weapon while participating in any faith formation or parish event shall be immediately suspended pending a hearing before Father Paul, the Faith Formation Facilitator/Coordinator and the Parish Pastoral Council. The normal consequence for possession of a weapon on parish property will be expulsion from the Faith Formation program for no less than 12 months. In order to be re-admitted to the program, the student bears the burden of proof that s/he does not pose a threat to the safety of others.

Police shall be notified immediately if an assault or battery occurs resulting from use or threatened use of a weapon or other dangerous object. When possible, such dangerous objects shall be taken from the person. Parents of students found in possession of a dangerous object shall be notified immediately.

It is illegal to discharge a firearm in the school zone.

Illegal Drugs and Alcohol use Policy

Illegal drugs and alcohol are not permitted in any school or parish building. Any student using or in possession of drugs or alcohol on school or parish property or at any events will be expelled from the Faith Formation program. Police will be notified immediately and the student will be turned over to the law enforcement agency. In order to be re-admitted to the Faith Formation Program, restitution must be made, and conversation with the coordinator and the Faith Formation committee and Parish Priest to determine eligibility.

Communication Devices

Students may not possess or use 2-way electronic devices during class time or other parish sponsored events. This includes pagers, beepers, and cell phones – these should be left at home during class. Our FF Office has a phone for any student who needs to call home. If students forget to leave them at home, Catechists will collect such devices at the beginning of class and students may pick them up on their way out of class.

Participation

You only get out of something what you have put into it. This is true in faith formation, too!! We would like your child to participate in class. Boredom is guaranteed for your children if they just sit back and do nothing. Please encourage their participation!

Communication – Take-home Folders

Students will regularly bring home information and assignments. Please make sure you take a few moments each week to look over the contents and see that the envelope/folder is returned the following week. This is our primary means of communication with you, so please be aware that there is information being sent to you through this system and sometimes there may be information sent via email if you provide us with yours.

In addition, we will be using the church bulletin, parish newsletter, pulpit announcements and our **Parish website**, <http://www.menashacatholicparishes.org/>.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE EXPECTATIONS

Our Faith Formation Discipline plan will:

- promote the well being and safety of all students and staff
- protect the right of every catechist to teach and every student to learn
- maintain the dignity, worth, sacredness, and value of each person
- include appropriate and timely communications with parents
- foster personal responsibility and accountability of actions by students and staff
- exemplify Gospel values, particularly that of love

Principles involved:

- Students do not have the right to prevent the teacher from teaching or stop other students from learning.
- Each time a student breaks a rule there is a consequence. Students who follow the rules are reinforced.
- Students are made aware of the behavior expectations for positive behavior and the consequences to stop misbehavior.
- Catechists, through the Faith Formation Facilitator/Coordinator, have the right to ask parents for whatever assistance is necessary to maximize their potential influence with a student.

The following statements are the classroom rules, which will be standard in each classroom:

- Students show respect for the teacher, classmates and building at all times in actions and words.
- Students speak when called on by the teacher (or when given permission).
- Students keep hands, feet and objects to themselves.
- A student may be asked to leave the faith formation program due to serious misconduct, at the discretion of the Coordinator, following consultation with the pastor and parents, and pursue home study for a period of time.
- Any student showing symptoms of drug or alcohol abuse will remain at the Faith Formation Office, which is in the Faith Formation Family Library, until parents are notified and arrive to pick up the student.

Students are expected to show respect for the catechists, other students and the program as a whole during class time and at all parish-sponsored activities on and off parish premises.

Please convey to your child/children that their catechists are volunteers who give of their time to come and teach about the Catholic faith. They do this because of their love of God and their love of God's children. They deserve to be treated with respect.

Dress Code Policy:

We have established a dress code to assist our families in developing the **virtue of modesty**. Modesty is defined as a virtue (a good habit) that assists people with the ability to be moderate in everything.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines modesty as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. It further defines modesty under articles 2521 through 2524.

- “Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. It is ordered to chastity to whose sensitivity it bears witness. It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons and their solidarity.” (CCC 2521)
- “...Modesty is decency. It inspires one’s choice of clothing...” (CCC 2522)
- “...Modesty inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of fashion and the pressures of prevailing ideologies.” (CCC 2523)
- “...Teaching modesty to children and adolescents means awakening in them respect for the human person.” (CCC 2524)

Therefore, in light of what the Catholic Church teaches us about modesty and chastity, through the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we do have recommendations for proper dress at Mass and in our Faith Formation (FF) classes.

- No one is allowed to wear short shirts/ blouses where his/her body (stomach and back) is showing when standing or sitting, or will show, if his/her arms are raised.
- They are not allowed to wear spaghetti-strap shirts without a modest shirt over it or under it and the collar or top of the shirt must touch the collarbone.
- Students are not allowed to wear low cut/extremely baggy pants that expose their undergarments and backs when they bend over, or sit down.
- Students are not allowed to wear any inappropriate t-shirts to class. This includes t-shirts that have advertising for satanic cults, beer or alcohol, cigarettes, “Hooters”, drugs, satanic or vulgar rock groups, etc.
- Short shorts will not be allowed. Shorts must be of modest length, to cover most of the thigh, and should be at/or slightly above the knee.

As adults and as parents, it is ALL of our responsibilities to help our youth understand *the importance of modesty*. Appearances do count when it comes to the messages our children are sending to one another and to other people of all ages. The messages they receive and send should be messages that are clean, appropriate, and respectful of each other; messages they wouldn’t be ashamed for Jesus to see.

Elementary Grade Curriculum

The Education Department of the Diocese of Green Bay is continuing with the updating of the religious education curriculum guidelines for children in K- 12th Grade. The expectation by the Green Bay Diocese is that students will continue classes through their senior year in high school, in keeping with the Catholic Church’s emphasis on life-long learning. There is no graduation from learning about our Catholic Faith. Please have your 12th grade student sign up for at least one of the adult classes available throughout the year. This could be something that parents can do with their 12th grader!

Overview - The following overview is offered to facilitate the partnership the Catechists and the parents share in teaching about God and the Catholic faith. We encourage parents to expand on the various topics by finding teachable moments throughout the year. We also encourage parents to strengthen their knowledge of the faith and the curriculum by attendance at the Adult Faith Formation classes offered at our parishes and throughout the Diocese, by checking out materials from the Family Resource Library in the Catholic Faith Formation Center and the Bishop Grellinger Resource Center in the vestibule of St. John's Church and in the back of St. Mary's Church, by picking up books at the library and Catholic bookstores and by participating in any of the Adult Faith Formation opportunities being offered at the Catholic Faith Formation Center.

The elementary portion of our program is designed to help your child grow in the knowledge and love of their faith. Each grade level builds to extend and deepen a child's faith and the love of Jesus.

Be My Disciples by RCL Benzinger is the curriculum that was chosen for Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. There are 6 Units in each grade level. Each of these Units has 4 Chapters. Be my Disciples have unique lessons that invites, teaches and challenge. Each chapter: 1. Begins with Life, 2. Grow in Knowledge, 3. Connect Faith with their Experience, and 4. Practice the skills of Discipleship.

Grades 1-5

Be My Disciples, by RCL Benzinger

Units are, 1. We Believe Part One, 2. We Believe Part Two, 3. We Worship Part One, 4. We Worship Part Two, 5. We Live Part One and 6. We Live Part Two.

Grade One will also learn the Glory Be, Hail Mary, The Lord's Prayer, The Sign of the Cross, the sacraments, and parts of the Mass.

Grade Two will review the Glory Be, Hail Mary, The Lord's Prayer, The Sign of the Cross, the sacraments, and parts of the Mass that the children learned in 1st Grade.

First Reconciliation by RCL-Benzinger – Will be completed at home with the parents and reinforced at class.

First Eucharist by RCL- Benzinger. – Will be completed at home with the parents and reinforced at class.

These are the texts that will be used in class for direct preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Eucharist.

The material covered will help the students to study what Jesus taught us about forgiveness. In addition, the Mass will be a focus in preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Eucharist. The parents should teach their children, the Apostles Creed and the Lord's Prayer. They will learn The Act of Contrition and the Ten Commandments in class and at home.

Grade Three, will review and learn The Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Apostles Creed, Act of Contrition, Sacraments, The Ten Commandments and parts of the Mass.

Grade Four will review their prayers, the sacraments, the Ten Commandments, learn about the church liturgical year, learn about sacramentals, about personal prayer, and communal prayer.

Grade Five will review the Lord's Prayer, the Mass, personal prayer, silent meditation, sacramental, and communal Reconciliation.

Middle School and High School Curriculum

The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers, published by Saint Mary's Press, is our textbook for students in Grades 6, 7, and 8. According to their website, it:

"...offers great guidance and aims to help young teens learn about all the central aspects of the Catholic faith, including God, revelation, faith, Jesus the Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church, liturgy and sacraments, Christian morality and justice, and prayer."

The book contains many special features and sidebars, including

- *Live It!: suggestions for putting faith into action*
- *Pray It!: short, inspiring prayers*
- *People of Faith: profiles of inspiring, faith-filled people*
- *Think About It!: questions to ponder or discuss with friends and family*

Plus

- *A collection of prayers*
- *A glossary of key words*
- *A handy, brief summary of Catholic beliefs and practices*

The Catholic Connections Handbook for Middle Schoolers is a great tool for study, but it is more than that. It offers excellent guidance for praying and living the Catholic faith".

<http://www.smp.org/ItemDetailAlt.cfm?ItemNum=2150>

Grade Six – The focus for Sixth Grade will be:

1. "God, Revelation, and Faith," which will teach the students about each person of the Trinity, Faith, and Salvation History,
2. "The Eucharist," which will teach the students about Liturgy/Mass, with special instruction on Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist, and a special emphasis on being Christ to one another and sharing His love with one another.

Grade Seven – The focus for Seventh Grade will be:

1. "Jesus the Christ," which will teach the students about the story of Jesus in the Gospels
2. "Sacraments and Prayer," which will teach the students about each of the Seven Sacraments and also about prayer, especially the Lord's Prayer.

Grade Eight – The focus for Eighth Grade is:

1. "Christian Morality and Justice," which will teach the students about moral decision making, the Ten Commandments, and working for justice for all people
2. "The Holy Spirit and the Church," which will teach about the Holy Spirit, Grace, Gifts of the Spirit, Pentecost, structure of the Church, and Heaven and Hell.

High School – Our High School Textbook, **Catholic Essentials**, published by Ave Maria Press, will be used for Grade 9, Grade 10, and Grade 11.

Catholic Essentials, is the FIRST Handbook of Faith written to the U.S. Bishops new curriculum framework! Catholic Essentials: An Overview of the Faith is a source of knowledge about Jesus, the Holy Trinity, the Catholic Church, the Sacraments, and ways those who believe in Jesus Christ live out their faith. Organized around the new U.S. Bishops' High School Curriculum Framework, this book is an essential resource to

accompany a full study of Jesus Christ. Catholic Essentials provides an in-depth overview and synthesis of the eight courses of a high school theology curriculum.... Several essential prayers, glossary terms, and the frequently asked questions named in the framework are included in the text. This text has been found in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/13825972/Catholic-Essentials-An-Overview-of-the-Faith-Student-Textbook>

Grade Nine - 9th Grade curriculum from Catholic Essentials, will focus on, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture” and “Who is Jesus?”. Students will also participate in a program called, *The Teen Timeline*, which is a beginner’s Bible study. *Parents are invited to attend and/or all of these sessions with their children.*

The Teen Timeline—or *T3*—is the teen version of the revolutionary *Great Adventure Bible Timeline* learning system that hundreds of thousands of Catholic adults have used to learn the Bible. Dynamic teen presenter Mark Hart makes the Bible come alive for Catholic teens by unpacking God’s Word in a way they can relate to. *T3* teaches teens the Bible by showing them the “big picture” of salvation history. When young students of the Bible first understand the “story,” they are eager to learn more. The net result: teens begin to wrap their minds and hearts around the Scriptures. They come to see the Bible as a relevant part of their lives. <http://www.ascensionpress.com/shop/scripts/prodList.asp?idCategory=74>

Grade Ten- The 10th Graders will participate in, “The Church: Christ’s Mission Continues in the World Today”, and, “Paschal Mystery: The Mission of Jesus Christ, from Catholic Essentials and then will participate in *Theology of the Body for Teens*.

Theology of the Body for Teens, written by Brian Butler and Jason and Christalina Evert, and published by Ascension Press is:

Based on Pope John Paul II’s teaching on Theology of the Body to “provide a beautiful vision of human sexuality. Theology of the Body for Teens answers questions such as:

- *Why did God give us our sexual desires?*
- *What is the difference between love and lust?*
- *What does our sexuality teach us about God?*
- *Can Christ bring healing to me if I’ve already “messed up”?*
- *What is the “language of the body” and how do I “speak” it?*
- *How can I discover my vocation?*
- *How far is “too far”?*
- *How can teens remain pure in our oversexed culture?*
- *Does waiting for sex make marriages stronger?*
- *Is there any hope for overcoming lust and pornography? ...and many more.*

Using a great mix of stories, real-life examples, activities, prayers, and references to the culture that teens understand, this program takes the two hottest topics on the planet—God and sex—and “marries” them through Pope John Paul II’s compelling vision for love and life. Pope John Paul II’s revolutionary Theology of the Body is changing lives around the world through its positive portrayal of our sexuality as a good and essential part of love and life... “John Paul’s Theology of the Body...enables everyone to rediscover ‘the meaning of the whole of existence, the meaning of life.’” <http://www.ascensionpress.com/shop/downloads/tobteensflyer.pdf>

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend any classes with their children.

Grade Eleven – Includes - sessions from **Catholic Essentials**, published by Ave Maria Press– “The Sacraments of Christ and “Our Life in Christ”.

After the sessions from **Catholic Essentials**, our Faith Formation 11th Graders will join together with 11th Graders from St. Mary Central High School for Confirmation preparation classes.

Confirmation Sacramental Preparation – The Confirmation curriculum “**Receiving the Gift of the Spirit Confirmation**” is from Pflaum Publishing Group.

This Confirmation curriculum consists of a series of eight units. It offers a solid review of essential Catholic teachings and then is very specific to the Sacrament of Confirmation. To quote their brochure, each lesson will, “...lead candidates to strengthen their relationship with Jesus as The Way, The Truth, and The Life...Prayer, sacraments, and service are explored in depth as the framework for a Catholic lifestyle.” It is vitally important that Parents and Sponsors communicate regularly with their Candidate throughout this process and to frequently pray for their Candidate. Sponsors are also strongly encouraged to attend as many sessions with their Candidates as possible to strengthen their relationship with one another and to be deeply involved in the Candidate’s preparation process.

Once students are confirmed, they should be encouraged by parents and sponsors to officially join a parish. They should also register for “**Senior Seminar**” for the following Faith Formation Year, as well as continue to be involved in parish life, including volunteer opportunities.

Grade Twelve – They are encouraged to become involved with the parish, and join at least one of the FF opportunities offered at their parish.

FORMAL PRAYERS LEARNING SCHEDULE -

An important part of our Catholic heritage is memorized, formal prayer. Young people will find it easier to memorize these prayers if both parents and catechists work together with them. We propose this plan for memorization:

Grade One: The Sign of the Cross, the Glory Be, and the Hail Mary

Grade Two: The Our Father, The Act of Contrition, The Ten Commandments

Grade Three: The Apostles Creed

Grade Four: The Rosary

All other grades will review all the prayers, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and Church Precepts (laws) each year.

The children’s textbooks have the prayers for their grade level to be used for home study. The catechists will encourage the children to recite the memorized prayer in class. Please work with your children on their prayers, Commandments, Church Precepts, and Sacraments. Please discuss the Sunday Scripture readings with your children.

Copies of common Catholic prayers, the Commandments, Beatitudes and Church Precepts have been included in this manual for your reference.

Safe Environment Class: It is a diocesan requirement that each year all students will be attending a “Protecting God’s Children Class” during one of the Faith Formation classes during the year. It will be included on the Faith Formation Calendar. If your student misses this class, information will be sent home for parent/s and guardian/s to provide this information to their children.

PARISH INFORMATION

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Individual Reconciliation is scheduled at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday before 4:00 Mass at St. John's and at 5:30 p.m. before 6:00 Mass at St. Mary's, before daily Mass at both parishes, or anytime by appointment. (subject to change, watch the bulletin or call)

RCIA – Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

This process prepares adults who desire initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, First Eucharist) or full communion with the Catholic Church. Adults who have never been baptized, adults who have been baptized in another Christian faith and adults who were baptized Catholic but did not receive formal instruction in the faith or the sacrament of Confirmation are welcome to become a part of this process. This process lasts about nine months. If you have a friend or relative who is interested in inquiring about the Catholic faith, please invite them to contact Deacon Rick Dvorak or Joanne Vanness at 725-7714 for more information.

ADULT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Family Resource Library - "Take a Look and Stretch Your Soul"

Books, magazines, pamphlets, and Catholic videos are available for use by all parishioners. These items are located in a few places. The Bishop Grellinger Resource Center is located off the side of the vestibule area of St. John's Church and contains adult and children materials. There is a resource site in back of church at St Mary's. There are Pamphlet racks in both church vestibules. There are also other items that can be found in the Family Resource Library in the Catholic Faith Formation Center. Feel free to "Take a Look and Stretch Your Soul" at any of these places. You may borrow any of these items and return them when finished.

Adult Faith Formation Opportunities:

Watch the weekly bulletin, check on-line at our parish website <http://www.menashacatholicparishes.org/> and watch for flyers to come home with registration information!

FOR PARENTS – “Wednesday Nights are not just for kids anymore”

We will also be sponsoring adult studies and videos, on different topics on the nights your children have FF. Watch for details in your “Family Faith Formation Newsletters” or the message board at the entrance of the CFFC, or on the website! Is there a subject you would like to know more on? Let us know and we can accommodate that.

Returning Catholics

The process is a six to eight week series of sessions designed to update Catholics in their faith. Sessions are geared toward the needs of the participants. If you or someone you know has been away from the church for a short or long time, please call the Parish Office at 725-7714.

Youth Volunteer Program

Assistance with implementing youth activities, as well as serving on the Youth Ministry Team are needed. Please contact Parish Life Coordinator at 725-7714 to volunteer to help.

Community Perpetual Adoration

St. Margaret Mary and St. Pius Parishes offer Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration, day and night, 365 days/year. If you would like to adore Jesus at either of these sites, please call the parish at 725-7714 for more information.

Catechists

Our goal is to maintain a low student/catechist ratio. Each year parents and other parishioners volunteer to serve as Catechists and Co-catechists in our Faith Formation Program. They do an incredible job and we appreciate their commitment. Training and support is provided.

As a token of our appreciation, catechists with children in the program are offered tuition remission based on the following schedule:

- full remission for all Catechists participating all year.
- partial remission depending on number of weeks teaching.

If you are interested in serving as a catechist, co-catechist, or are currently a catechist or helping in another area of the program, please sign up on the registration form **AND** on your Stewardship Card. You need to do both in order to have your commitment properly recorded in your Parish Office. For purposes of planning, please fill out a Registration Form. If you have any other questions about the positions of catechist, co-catechist, catechist's aide or other volunteer areas, please call the Faith Formation Office at 725-7714.

Parent Volunteers

Our Faith Formation Program asks parents to help with the program by volunteering to attend at least one of your child's FF classes each year and to help out in various ways for the program. Parental involvement is very important to children's faith formation experiences. Some of the other opportunities are: teaching a class, serving as an assistant in a class or as a hall monitor, and helping set-up & clean up from special events. Other opportunities are attached with the student registration forms. If you have already registered but forgot to volunteer, and still want to, please call the Faith Formation Office and let us know how you can help.

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS -

Service Requirement for Students in Grades 6-12

It is our hope that each member of both St. Mary's and St. John's Parishes, including our children and young adults, realize they are an important part of our communities. It is important because we will someday pass these parishes and all of their legacies and responsibilities onto our children. We hope they will become active members as adults but they need to be exposed to some of the activities of church life now.

Menasha High School, Neenah High School, and St. Mary Central High School have Community Service requirements for graduation. We would be happy to work with your son or daughter to fulfill this commitment. Both parishes offer opportunities in liturgy, human concerns, parish events, etc., or let us help your child develop a specific project. We ask 6th, 7th, and 8th graders to complete 5 hours of community service each year. The 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th graders are required to fulfill 10 hours of service a year. Five of these hours each year should be for his/her parish.

Confirmation and Senior High School students can also volunteer to help in the FF program for community service hours, or just to volunteer. Please call the FF Office as soon as possible.

Please watch for your parish Stewardship of Commitment Drive and have your entire family fill out the Stewardship form at that time. If you have any questions concerning volunteer opportunities, contact St. Mary's and St. John's Parish Office at 725-7714.

Registration

Registration for current parish members and non-parish members students for the next faith formation year will be held in the spring and August. *Students must be registered prior to attending class.* **Registration Forms** are available in both Parish Offices and the Faith Formation Office.

Feed your Body and Feed your Soul

Looking for Volunteers!!



We would like to provide a light meal on Wednesday evenings before Faith Formation Classes. This happens by the generosity of volunteers. This is for any Faith Formation families who would like to come and share supper. Supper would be served from 4:50-5:50 PM, down in St. John's cafeteria. Food Donations, money and volunteers to help serve and clean up are gratefully appreciated. Children can come with or without their parents to do their homework or just visit with one another and grab a bite to eat before class. ***Please note: All this is contingent on volunteer numbers!! Watch newsletters for details!***

Parents and Children can “**Feed their Soul**” by stopping by St. John's Church for Adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Church will be open from 5:00-6:30 for adoration. Please remind children to be quiet as they pray before Jesus on the altar.

Tuition

The actual cost per student for Religious Education is approximately \$371.12. This cost includes all textbooks, materials, programs, salaries, light, heat, water, insurance, etc. The fee we charge reflects about 28% of the actual cost. The parish, through the Parish Financial commitment pledges that parishioners make to the parish, subsidizes the remainder. We ask you to honor your financial commitments to your parish and the Faith Formation program.

The Tuition fees are as follows:

- *\$110.00 for each student, **AND**
- *\$30.00 fee for First Reconciliation Retreat
- *\$30.00 fee for First Eucharist Retreat
- *\$40.00 Retreat fee for Confirmation Program

Money is never a barrier for participating in Faith Formation programs. Contact the Faith Formation Office if you have a problem with the fees. We ask that all families use SCRIP and we will give you information on using Scrip certificates to pay for your tuition.

***Out-of-Parish fee is \$150.00 for each student PLUS the \$110 tuition fee.**

****Registration for the Faith Formation Program DOES NOT register you and your family as parishioners of St. Mary's or St. John's Parishes.**

*****If you have not already done so, please join either St. Mary's or St. John's**

Parishes, and support your parish with your time, talent and treasure, which will eliminate this “Out-of-Parish” fee from your tuition bill.

PLEASE USE SCRIP TO PAY YOUR FF TUITION BILL!

SCRIP

If Faith Formation fees will be a hardship for your family, they do not need to be. All you need to do to pay for your Faith Formation fees and end up owing *nothing*, is to use SCRIP Gift certificates when you shop. Or if you would just like to help out your parish, please use SCRIP. You may not know or may be wondering, “What are SCRIP gift certificates?”

SCRIP is a national and local gift certificate program that many non-profit organizations buy gift certificates from. The SCRIP program purchases gift certificates from local and national merchants and vendors. All the Menasha/Neenah parishes in the TCCES school system order and purchase these certificates that are then for sale at the parishes and parochial schools. The SCRIP program gives back to each of these schools and parishes, including St. Mary’s and St. John’s Parishes, a percentage of the total money that was used to purchase the gift certificates.

3% of the total money *that you spend*, can then be applied toward your child’s tuition, and the rest of the refund will be applied toward the Parish general funds. By purchasing your gift certificates from St. Mary’s or St. John’s, you benefit our parishes. *If you have already paid your tuition, the credit will be applied to your tuition for the following year.* Please ask the person who is selling SCRIP, to apply that purchase to your family’s account, or you can fill out the order form with your child’s name on it and hand it to the person who is selling SCRIP. Please ask for a new order form each time you purchase SCRIP because if forms *are not* turned in, or your name *is not given* to the SCRIP person, credit cannot be given to your student.

We recommend and would really appreciate every family using SCRIP gift cards to reduce or completely pay for your Faith Formation tuition. If you use SCRIP store cards for your food, gas and medicine needs, you would owe very little, if anything, at the end of a year. Several of our families did not owe any tuition for this year and already have a credit towards next year's tuition. You *do not* need to buy SCRIP all at one time. Since all families buy groceries, we can all buy grocery store SCRIP gift certificates and use them the same as cash (such as Piggly Wiggly, Copps, and Pick ‘N Save). All of us who buy gas or go out to eat can at least buy and use SCRIP gift certificates for these expenses. Many of us get our drugs from Shopko, Walgreens or CVS Pharmacy and can pay for our drug purchases at these stores by using their SCRIP gift certificate cards.

Very seriously, if every family in the parish would regularly use SCRIP for all their food, drug and gas purchases, St. Mary’s and St. John’s would never be in debt. We have enclosed an order form with this letter so you can see the variety of merchants that we purchase SCRIP gift certificates from. Please remember – SCRIP gift certificates spend like cash, like any other gift certificate you might purchase or receive as a gift. There are no extra or hidden costs to purchase these cards. If the face value of the card says \$25, that’s exactly what it is worth and spends as - \$25.

Transfers of the money to your account will be done quarterly. SCRIP will be sold in the vestibule of St. John's Church before and after Masses on the weekends, and on weekdays from the Parish Office. They can be purchased at St. Mary's Parish Office during the week and after the 10:30 Mass. **SCRIP will be sold before Faith Formation class from 5:30-6:10.** PLEASE take advantage of this unbelievable offer from the merchants who are part of the SCRIP program.

So...we would like to encourage all families to use SCRIP. It only makes great common sense to buy and use these certificates. It costs us nothing extra in our budgets to buy and use them and it generates money to pay for our children's tuition, and it generates money for our Parishes. **It is a totally win-win experience.**



“HEART-TO-HEART PARTNERSHIP”

To encourage our appreciation and love for Jesus in the Eucharist at adoration and at Mass, we will be promoting **“Heart-to-Heart Partnership”**. This Partnership is a reminder of the same partnership all of us parents made with God, when we had our children baptized.

This partnership places God and His love for each member of the family, in the center of the family. God asks to be loved, honored and **purposely put at the center of the family's daily life, which includes attending Mass on weekends and Holy Days of obligation.**

In order to honor this partnership, we have designed a **“Heart-to-Heart Partnership” Family Page** for **ALL the students and their parents or guardians to read and sign.** When the students get to their classrooms they will be given a page to be filled out. The students and parents will hang all the Partnership pages on the walls in the hall in the front of the main level of the Faith Formation Center

The **Mass Review sheets** will be sent home every week. These sheets will help them to listen to the Gospel and Father's Homily. Each week after attending Mass, your child should fill out the Mass review sheets and return to their catechist. The catechist will hand them in and it becomes a chance to win prizes.

“Heart-to-Heart Parent Night” program will bring a variety of opportunities for parents to learn about their faith. Please watch in your newsletters about the up coming **“Heart-to-Heart Parent Night”** sessions during the Faith Formation year. Please let us know if there is a particular topic that is of interest to you.

Because **parents and guardians are the first catechists of our faith for their children** we would **encourage parent participation** in their child's Faith Formation. We ask parents and guardians to attend at least one of their child's classes. Also, on the calendar you will note the **family events** that are scheduled – like our Faith Formation Christmas celebration, Family night of Reconciliation, Family Ash Wednesday Mass, Tennebrae Prayer service, and of course Eucharistic Adoration. These are all part of Faith Formation. **Faith Formation is not just books and head knowledge - it is everyday lived faith.**

FAMILY PROMISE OF PARTNERSHIP

Date: _____

STUDENTS:

As a student in the Faith Formation Program, I promise to my parent/guardian and to the staff that I will:

- Treat others, classmates, older and younger students, and teachers, respectfully.
- Listen attentively, and be courteous to the teachers and others.
- Participate in activities, discussions, and experiences,
- Continue to seriously explore, develop, and learn about my faith, the best that I can.
- Do any homework given, and *attend Mass every weekend and Holy Day of Obligation.*

Student(s) signature(s)-----

PARENT/S, GUARDIAN/S:

As I enroll my children in the Faith Formation Program, I promise as a parent/guardian to assist them in their growth as Catholic Christians by:

- Praying together at home and worshipping together with parishioners during weekend Mass, and Holy days of obligation
- Listening and discussing what happened during Faith Formation classes, and check to make sure homework in completed.
- Participating in the family and parent activities of the program, (liturgies, Reconciliation, parent meetings, etc.)
- Keep informed by reading the newsletters sent home, or check the website for up-dated news!
- I will follow and help enforce the policies, student requirements, and guidelines of the program, which I have read in this handbook.

I fully understand and take responsibility for my role as the first and primary educator of faith for my children. Therefore, I understand the role of the Faith Formation Program to be one of *supplementing and enhancing my role.*

Parent/Guardian signature-----



STUDENT:

I will go with my parent/s to Mass every weekend and Holy Day of Obligation, to pray to God every day and to do my Faith Formation homework, so I can learn more about Jesus and His Holy Catholic Church.

Student Signature:

PARENT/S AND GUARDIAN/S:

I will take my children to Mass every weekend and Holy Day of Obligation, pray with my children, and make sure that they work on his/her Faith Formation homework, so he/she can learn more about God and our Holy Catholic Faith.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Parent/Guardian Signature:
