

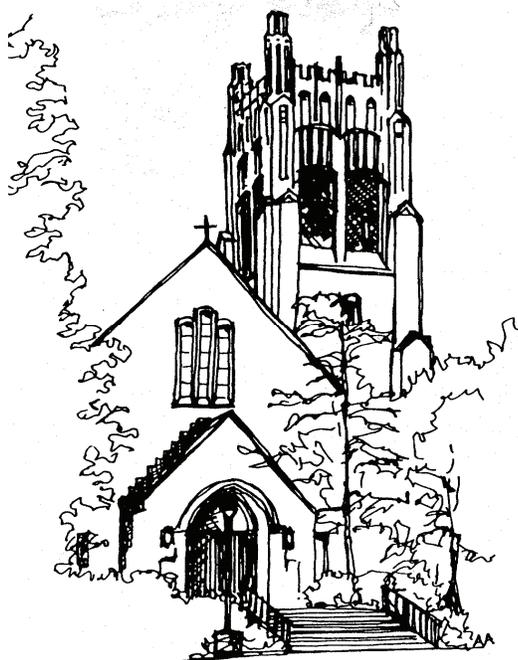
Saint Margaret Mary Religious Education

123 North 61st St.

Phone: (402) 558-9119

Fax: (402) 552-6644

Website: <http://smmomaha.org/learn-connect/school-age/>



Parents' Handbook

Table of Contents

Mission Statement.....	4
Family/Parish Partnership.....	4
Staff Contact Information.....	5
What You Need to Know When Coming to Class.....	6
Before and after class supervision.....	6
Absences and Tardiness.....	6
Early Dismissals.....	6
Religious Ed Memo.....	6
Dress Code	7
Building Security Procedures.....	7
Health and Snacks.....	7
Parental Concerns and Procedures	8
Volunteer Parents/Visitors	8
Communicable Diseases	8
Dismissal Procedure	9
Parking	9
Discipline	9
Suspension	10
Curriculum	10
Calendar	10
Circle of Grace	10
Resources	10
What You Need to Know in Case of an Emergency	11
Evacuation Procedures	11
Security Plan	11
Weather Cancellations	12
Registration Procedures	12
Admissions	12

Enrollment Policy12

Tuition13

Tuition Refunds13

Miscellaneous13

 Bicycles, Roller Blades, Skateboards13

 Field Trips13

 Rights of Non-Custodial Parents14

 Parent Nights14

St. Margaret Mary Religious Education Mission Statement



The mission of St. Margaret Mary Religious Education Program is to build a foundation of faith, in partnership with parents, from which our children will continue to learn about God and the Roman Catholic Church.

Family/Parish Partnership

The family is essential in passing down our faith. Here are some ways to do this:

- *You show your children you believe in God in good times and bad.*
- *You model loving others.*
- *You teach by example.*
- *You pray together.*
- You forgive and ask to be forgiven.
- You celebrate birthdays, weddings, births, deaths, family reunions, holy days and holidays to show the value of each other.
- You eat together as a family and share stories while doing so.
- You regularly attend Mass, as a family, when possible.

**SAINT MARGARET MARY
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE**

(402) 558-9119

123 N. 61st St.

(Northwest Side of School Building)

Parish Offices:	6116 Dodge St. Omaha, NE 68132 (402) 558-2255
Parish Priests (Parish Office):	Rev. Greg Baxter Rev. Vincent Sunguti
Director of Religious Education: L	Mrs. Linda Stryker lstryker@smmomaha.org
Religious Ed Administrative Assistant:	Mrs. Nan Tiedeman ntiedeman@smmomaha.org
Religious Education Grades 1-8 Sessions held: August 26-May 3	St. Margaret Mary School Building Wednesday, 6:30 - 7:45 PM
Sunday School – Ages 3-4-5	Conference Room B (lower level of church) Sunday, 10:20-11:30 AM
Coordinator:	Mrs. Jennifer Varner
Youth Minister (Parish Office):	Mrs. Jennifer Varner
Music Minister (Parish Office):	Mrs. Peg Lacy
Web Site:	www.smmomaha.org

What You Need to Know When Coming to Class

Before and After Class Supervision

Students should not arrive before 6:15 and are expected to leave not more than ten minutes after class ends. Use the first door on the Northeast side of the school building. It will be unlocked at 6:15.

Absences and Tardiness

To assure continued quality of religious education for your children, regular attendance is necessary. If you know that your child will not be able to participate in the Wednesday evening class, please call the office (402-558-9119) or email ntiedeman@smmomaha.org before 6:30 p.m.



*****If a student is reported absent from class, and we have not been contacted by a parent, a phone call will be made to the home to verify the absence. After three (3) consecutive absences without communication from home, the Director of Religious Education (DRE) will call to assess any assistance that might be extended. If there is a problem, such as transportation, please call the Religious Ed Office as we might be able to find a solution.

Early Dismissals

These are distracting to the class and should be done only in emergency occasions. But, if you need your child dismissed early, you must notify the catechist and the Religious Education Office prior to pick-up time, and you must come to the RE office entrance (northwest entrance of the school) to be admitted. You will then go to the child's classroom to get your student. No student may leave early unless supervised by a parent or adult approved by the parent.

Religious Ed Memo

The RE Memo is a newsletter that is emailed weekly to communicate Religious Education program information to families. Hard copies are available on request.

Dress Code

Ideally, a student's choice of attire and grooming should be left to the good judgment of the student and his/her parents or guardians and should contribute to a positive learning environment.



Maybe the policy on casual summer attire should have been a little clearer!



Building Security Procedures

- Students are expected to wait in the auditorium before class begins. *Students cannot be in a classroom without adult supervision at any time.*
- The auditorium door will be unlocked at 6:15-6:35 and again at 7:30-7:55. All other doors will remain locked.

Health and Snacks

Please notify the Religious Education Office and your child's catechist if your child has a health problem which might affect his/her routine or if they have any special needs that we should be aware of to better facilitate their religious education. This includes allergies, hyperactivity, diabetes, seizures, hearing problems, or medication. If your child has an action plan for a medical need, we should have a copy of it in the R.E. Office, as well as an epi-pen or anything else specified in the medical action plan.

We have an increasing number of students with serious reactions to foods, especially nuts. **Please do not bring any snacks with nuts or peanut butter.**



Any special situations that exist in your family such as pending or recently granted divorce, health problems of family members, visitation with absentee parents, or death of a parent or close relative should also be communicated to the Director of Religious Education. These special situations will be handled in confidence to provide a safe and protected environment for the child.

Parental Concerns and Procedures

A parent who has a question or concern regarding a situation involving a student is urged to follow these procedures:

1. Contact the student's catechist to discuss the situation and work with the catechist to arrive at possible solutions.
2. If the concern cannot be resolved with the catechist, the parent should then request a conference with the Director of Religious Education. After discussing the situation with both parties, the Director of Religious Education will act as a facilitator, making every effort to resolve the problem and initiate reconciliation between the two parties.
3. If resolution and reconciliation have not been achieved after discussion with the catechist and Director of Religious Education, and the parent still feels the issue has not been addressed, the pastor may be asked to assist in the resolution and reconciliation of the problem.
4. Every effort should be made to resolve questions, concerns and problems at the earliest possible stage in a manner appropriate for Christians.

Volunteer Parents/ Visitors

Visitors are always welcome and encouraged to visit in the classrooms. To ensure the safety of our children, we require each parent, volunteer or visitor to sign in at the R.E. Office.

Communicable Diseases

Students with a condition which may be passed on to others in the classroom must be excluded from attending Religious Education classes until no longer contagious.

Including but not limited to:

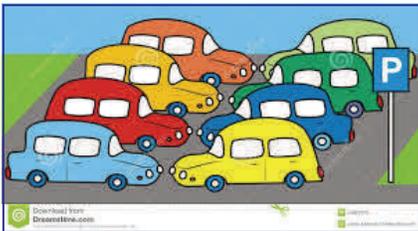
1. Chickenpox-students may return after pox has scabbed.
2. Fever-students should remain home until 24 hours after a fever breaks.
3. Infections-students should be kept home for a minimum of 24 hours after starting on antibiotics.
4. Vomiting-students should remain home until 24 hours after an episode.
5. Diarrhea-students should remain home until 24 hours after an episode.

Some conditions may require a doctor's attention and note before returning to Religious Education classes.



Dismissal Procedure

The dismissal bell will ring at 7:45 p.m. Students are to dismiss through the auditorium doors of the school building. Children in grades 1 and 2 must be met by a parent or other adult or sibling before leaving the building. *If a child is to leave with someone else other than the parent/guardian, the Religious Education Office should be notified.* .



Parking

Parents of grades 1 - 4 park in the east horseshoe drive. Parents of grades 5 - 8 park on the blacktop. This is safety procedure, which diminishes congestion and helps children find their parents easier.

Discipline

Students in the St. Margaret Mary Religious Education program are expected to follow these rules:

- Rule #1-Respect Yourself, Others, and Things.
- Rule #2-Contribute to the Learning Environment
- Rule #3-Follow Parish and Classroom Procedures

To help students learn how to choose correct behavior a student is given a verbal reminder to choose correct behavior. If the student misbehaves again, the catechist should confer with the student to help the student make better choices and become a working member of the class. The student can then rejoin the group.

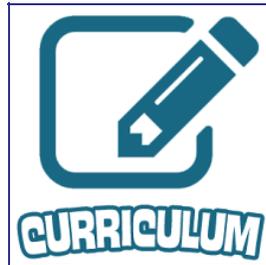
If a student chooses incorrect behavior a second time, the student is sent to the R.E. Office to conference with the DRE. If the student is sent to the office a second time in a year, parents of the student may be contacted and asked to attend classes with their child.

Some forbidden activities: smoking, possessing illegal drugs, alcohol, or weapons.



Suspension

St. Margaret Mary reserves the right to suspend in-class instruction to a student if there is reason to believe that attendance at class could place the student or others in danger of physical or emotional harm. Suspension will be at the discretion of the Pastor and Director of Religious Education and could be due to events that occur outside of class and/or off the premises. The student and parents will be supported with materials to continue the child's religious formation at home until the student is approved to return to class by the Pastor.



Calendar

The calendar is published annually in the RE directory, listing days of attendance, holidays, and activities. Dates and events may be subject to change as necessary. Timely notice of changes will be provided whenever possible. Calendar and program information is also on the St. Margaret Mary website.

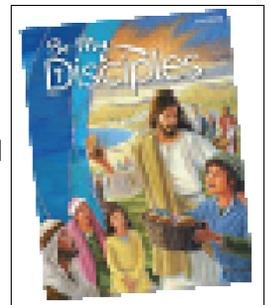


Circle of Grace

Circle of Grace is the curriculum developed by the Archdiocese of Omaha in response to the UCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. Circle of Grace is mandated to be taught yearly to all children in archdiocesan schools, religious education and youth ministry programs in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Resources

Religious Education uses a variety of resources to teach our faith. Grades 1-5 uses Be My Disciples from RCL Benziger. Grade 6 uses Encounter from Ascension Press supplemented with curriculum from Be My Disciples. Grade 7 uses Finidng God by Loyala Press. Grade 8's curriculum is from Chosen by Ascension Press.





What You Need to Know in Case of an Emergency

Emergency information is on file in the Religious Education Office. The information must be kept current at all times. If there is a change in your child's health information (allergies, medications, etc.) or contact information, please inform the RE Office.

In case of illness or injury, parents will be contacted by phone and are responsible for arranging the child's transportation home. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency phone numbers will be called to obtain necessary help for the child.

In the event of an emergency which requires immediate medical attention, the parent will be notified and the child will be transported by ambulance to the hospital, if necessary, at the parent's expense.

Evacuation Procedures

Catechists are given instruction to provide quick, safe evacuation of the students due to emergencies such as fire, severe weather or bomb threats. Evacuation procedures are posted in each classroom. During an emergency, parents will need to check with RE staff before any child can be released. Students cannot be released directly by the catechist during any emergency situation.

Security Plan

St. Margaret Mary parish does have a Security Plan in place that is designed to ensure the safety of all its members in the event of an emergency. Security cameras are installed at all entrances and other strategic places on our campus. There are specific Building Security Procedures that Religious Ed classes will follow if needed.

Weather Cancellations

Should icy or snowy weather occur, the Religious Education program observes the school closing policies of Omaha Public Schools. If OPS cancel classes or evening activities due to inclement weather, we will not hold Religious Education classes that evening.

***Occasionally, because of deteriorating weather conditions during the day, we will need to cancel RE classes late in the afternoon or early evening, even when OPS has held classes. You will be notified by email if this happens. Parents should use their discretion as to whether it is safe for their children to attend class. The safety of our children is always our primary concern.



Registration Procedures



Admissions

St. Margaret Mary Religious Education Program does not discriminate against students on the basis of race, ethnic background, religion or sex. We welcome members of other parishes and other denominations. It is our strong belief that as religious education is a support and not replacement for the parents as the primary catechists of their children.

Enrollment Policy

All youth in grades one through eight, who are living with a registered parishioner and do not attend a Catholic school, are expected to be enrolled in the Religious Education program at St. Margaret Mary. It is encouraged that three, four, and five year-olds also be enrolled in our Sunday School program. All parishioners are encouraged to utilize the parish's religious education programs to continue to develop their faith.

Youth not enrolled in a religious education program may be required to attend additional classes to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation upon the discretion of the Director of Religious Education.



Tuition

The pastor and Finance Committee set tuition and fees. Tuition can be paid in these ways:

- Payment in full at the time of registration
- Pay the deposit fee at the time of registration and pay the remaining fee in a timely manner.

Tuition Refunds

A full refund may be requested at any time prior to the beginning of the Religious Education Program year. Any withdrawals after the first class will have the following deducted from the original tuition payment: the price of instructional material, an administrative processing fee, plus a pro-rated fee for tuition for the classes attended before withdrawing. The pro-rated percentage is based on the number of quarters of class the student attended. No refunds will be given after March 1.

Miscellaneous

Bicycles, Roller Blades, Skateboards

A bicycle rack is located on the west side of the school. However, the parish accepts no responsibility for bikes parked on parish property. Bikes, roller blades and skateboards may be used for transportation only to and from the parish and are not to be ridden on the playground or parking lot, or stairs at any time. The students must adhere to the guidelines for entering and leaving the parish premises to ensure safety for everyone. Roller blades and skateboards should be left in the RE Office during class.



Field Trips

All students must have a written permission from the parent or guardian before attending any activity away from St. Margaret Mary. All Safe-Environment, Archdiocesan and Parish guidelines must be adhered to at all times.

Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

Non-custodial parents may submit a written request for their children's records and other program information, unless a court order prohibits them from doing so. Program administrators may assume the non-custodial parent has a right to the student's records and other program information unless a court order to the contrary has been provided. Court orders must be presented to the Director of Religious Education by either or both parents. Program administrators do not need permission from the custodial parent to provide records or program information to the non-custodial parent.



Parent Nights

Parents are invited for a special faith sharing night with each of their children's class(es). Each grade level has a separate night for this event. Children look forward to their parents attending with them. Please make every effort to attend this night with your child or find an adult significant in your child's life to attend in your place.

Other Special Prayer Opportunities for Parents

- ◆ *Mass of the Holy Spirit* on September 14
- ◆ *Living Rosary* on October 5
- ◆ *Advent Celebration* on December 14
- ◆ *Celebrate Life Prayer Service* on February 15
- ◆ *Ash Wednesday Mass* on March 1
- ◆ *Family Mission Night* on March 8
- ◆ *Stations of the Cross* on April 12
- ◆ *End of the Year Mass* on May 3