

# SAINT MARTIN of TOURS CATHOLIC PARISH

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*Religious Education*



## PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK 2015-2016

## **Personnel:**

<b>Pastoral Leader:</b>	<b>Deacon Mike Grzeca</b>
<b>Religious Education Coordinator:</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>Parish Secretary:</b>	<b>Linda Clark</b>
<b>Parish Office Phone Number:</b>	<b>715-745-6681</b>
<b>Parish E-Mail:</b>	<b><a href="mailto:stmartin_cecil@frontiernet.net">stmartin_cecil@frontiernet.net</a></b>

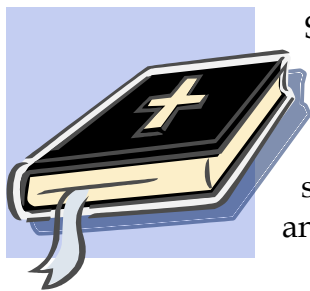
## **Catechists:**

<b>First Grade:</b>	<b>Karen Schneider</b>
<b>Second Grade:</b>	<b>Michelle Bunker &amp; Theresa Marquette</b>
<b>Third Grade:</b>	<b>Sue Wallrich</b>
<b>Fourth Grade:</b>	<b>Pat Pawlak</b>
<b>Fifth Grade:</b>	<b>Sharon Riehl</b>
<b>Sixth, Seventh &amp; Eighth Grades:</b>	<b>Lynn Schaal</b>
<b>Ninth Grade:</b>	<b>Karen Welcing</b>
<b>Tenth Grade:</b>	<b>Dcn. Ken Banker</b>

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# SAINT MARTIN PARISH MISSION STATEMENT



St. Martin of Tours Parish is a family oriented community in Cecil, WI in existence since 1898. We are centered within the Catholic faith, social justice and worship. We are committed to fostering the spread of the Gospel of Jesus and growing the Catholic faith in our families and the surrounding community through religious education, outreach to the needy and modeling Christian virtues.

## PHILOSOPHY

Religious Education is a process that is initiated by the grace of the Triune God to draw a person into the love God has for each of us through an intimacy with Jesus Christ. This process is begun by the examples and teachings of parents at home, and continued through the example and teaching of catechists, priests, deacons, religious, and grandparents and godparents. It is promoted by knowledge of the Catholic faith, moral formation, prayer, and doing good works.

By learning about the faith in a structured setting, the community of believers is brought to a greater understanding of faith by interpreting the meaning of their everyday experience as a creature of God, in the light of God's revelation. Thus, a goal of this religious education is to learn to follow Christ and to think, judge and act like him, and to trust in and rely on the Father of us all as he invites us to, so that Christ may be followed throughout the world.

### Goals and Objectives (taken from the National Directory for Catechesis - NDC)

As Saint Pope John Paul II wrote in his apostolic exhortation *Catechesi tradendae*, "Catechesis is an education in the faith of children, young people, and adult which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way, with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life." All catechesis should provide students with the opportunity to journey with Christ through the stages of his Paschal Mystery (NDC p.116). We do not supplant, but rather *assist* families by:

Promoting knowledge of the faith - by presenting the Word of God, as expressed through the Doctrines of our Catholic Faith and in Sacred Scripture, and Sacred Tradition.

Liturgical Education - explaining how the history of salvation is celebrated in the sacraments and in Christian liturgy, the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed. We must make sacramental symbols and liturgical gestures known and loved so that families are lead to a true understanding of liturgical life.

Moral Formation - leading families to understand and accept the dignity of all people as being created in the image of God.

In Christ, we see the authentic meaning of human freedom and meaning: to love God and to serve our fellow human beings in need of our help and love.

Teaching them how to pray - using traditional and spontaneous prayer types and drawing from the rich tradition of the lives of the saints, we will try to draw families into a life of prayer and union with God.

Community Life - fostering the growth of relationships and community life by prayer, social, and educational gatherings, we will encourage families to cooperate actively in building up the Church and its work of evangelization.

The Evangelizing Spirit - equipping individuals and families to understand how to take Christ into their school, professional, cultural, and social lives through practical and respectful methods. In this way, Christ is announced to the world by word and deed, and the world aided toward full reception of Christ.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Registration

Registration as a participant in our religious education program begins on the weekend after Labor Day and ends the last Sunday prior to the start of R.E. Online registration for the fall is available on our parish web site:



[www.stmartin-cecil.org](http://www.stmartin-cecil.org) It is our policy to have a fair and open registration process for all. The online registration helps make that possible and helps the parish by reducing administrative and material costs.

As a part of participating in religious education registration at St. Martin's, if not already members, the family is asked to register as a family unit. Even if another parish is your primary parish, we ask you to register with us so that we can better maintain contact with you. Parish Registration is completed in the Parish Office, at 407 S. Warrington St., Cecil, WI 54111. *A copy of your child's Baptismal certificate is required upon entry into the religious education program.*

### Class Times

Liturgy of the Word for Children .....9:00 am (During Sunday Mass, October through May)

Religion Education (Grades 1 through 8) Wednesday .....6:15pm – 7:30pm

Confirmation Classes (Grades 9 and 10) .....6:15 pm to 7:30 pm, Wednesdays

## Calendar Dates

Confirmation classes start Wednesday, September 16, 2015

All other R.E. classes start Wednesday, September 30, 2015

Liturgy of the Word for Children starts Sunday, Oct. 4, 2015 at the 9:00 Mass

## Class Locations

Unless otherwise indicated, all class sessions will be in the parish hall.

# Faith Formation Programs at St. Martin's Parish

### Liturgy of the Word for Children

While parents and older children listen to the readings at Sunday Mass, children between the ages of about 3 to 7 or so, who wish to partake, will come up to the altar just before the First Reading begins, with an adult facilitator. Deacon Mike will lead us all in blessing them and then they will all go into the parish hall or a nearby classroom, for stories based on that Sunday's readings, at their level. At the time of the Offertory collection, they will re-enter church to sit again with their families. This program is dependent upon adult volunteers, who are *Virtus*-certified.

### Elementary Grades (1 through 5)

This program is for all children in Grades 1 through 5 who are seeking to learn about the Catholic faith. A key point here is that **it is the parents who must be the motivating factor** in educating their children in the faith. While religious education is important, without the backing of parents who actually model for their children that being a Catholic is important, the children will see it as an empty gesture. These classes are filled with teaching about many aspects of the faith, games, prayer and sharing. Parents are encouraged to review at home the lessons from class.



### Middle School (Grades 6 through 8)

This program is designed for the Middle School years and the energy of these students. There is a three year cycle of subject areas. The first year focuses on the Old Testament (also called the Hebrew Scriptures).

The second year focuses on Jesus Christ and the New Testament and the third year focuses on Church History. The 3 grades are taught as one, so that by the time a 6th grader completes the 8th grade, they have completed the cycle.

### Confirmation Preparation

Confirmation preparation is a two year program, beginning in the 9th grade and ending with Confirmation in the 10th grade. The 9th grade will lay a foundation for Confirmation by teaching elements of the Creed, and Morality. This will carry over into the 10th grade,

where there will be more of a focus on the Sacrament of Confirmation, its meaning and effects on the student. There will be a Confirmation Retreat, and, as with all students, there will be required service hours.

### **Adult Faith Formation**

Adult Formation sessions provide those over 18 with greater knowledge and understanding of the Church's teachings and wisdom. They help show us how our Catholic traditions form part of our daily lives. Adult Faith formation sessions can involve Scripture Study, Small Christian Communities, Book Discussions and similar activities. Since the enrichment of parents is so important, participating in Adult Faith Formation is recommended for all parents who have enrolled their child in Religious Education.

### **Parish Retreat**

In most years, towards the end of summer, the parish offers a half day retreat for the adults of the parish. The idea is to get away to a quiet place of natural beauty to pray, listen and reflect on who we are, how we treat others and who is God for us. There is time for solitude, for food, and for prayer. The day concludes with Mass and a meal.

### **Cana Dinner**

On a Sunday before Lent begins, we have a Cana Dinner for married couples. We begin in the parish hall with a presentation on a topic relevant to the married life. Following the presentation, we all go to a local restaurant for a couples' dinner. All parish married couples are invited – it's a great night out!

### **Family Nights**

Family night will occur twice this year, on Wednesday, September 26, and Wednesday, April 10. On those evenings, parental attendance is mandatory and the children will not attend their regular Religious Education Classes.

Rather, the entire family attends on these evenings together. We will begin the evening with a short presentation by Dcn. Mike and an activity for parents and children together. Following this, there will be some food, an activity and fellowship. These two sessions usually last about one hour, till 7:30 pm.

## **Sacramental Preparation Programs at St. Martin's**

**First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion** Generally, this process begins when the child starts the first grade. Completion of the First grade at St. Martin's is generally required to be enrolled in the Second Grade. It is a two-year preparation program that assists parents in readying their child in the reception of these two sacraments.

Religious understanding, not chronological age or school grade, will determine a child's readiness to encounter Christ in a sacramental celebration.

This decision of readiness rests with the parents and the child in dialogue with the teachers and pastoral leader. Many factors enter into a child's readiness to receive these



sacraments. The child may be unable to understand sufficiently about either of the sacraments.

We are all on our own faith journey, and this journey becomes easier when families 1) talk about God and faith at home, 2) pray as a family, 3) celebrate Saturday/Sunday Mass regularly, and 4) help one another with their Religious Education lessons. If, instead, a child is not hearing about God or Jesus at home, seldom prays, or attends Mass infrequently or not at all, his/her faith journey will be much slower even though attending religious classes. Parents know their child better than we do. However, we can identify concepts in class that might be giving a child difficulty. The teacher will inform parents in this case, so that the parent can give extra assistance at home.

### **Confirmation**

**We envision providing a Confirmation process that will empower teens to:**

Have an opportunity to encounter the Holy Spirit and have a conversion experience and enhance their spiritual development.

Understand and love the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Live out a sacramental life through prayer, fellowship/community, charity, and attending Mass on a weekly basis.

Stay involved in the activities and worship of St. Martin parish after their Confirmation.

### **Methodology of Grade 9**

Grade 9 will experience two of the four pillars of the Catechism: The Creed and Morality.

Through small group settings teens will share their feelings and will pray with their group. To ensure a welcoming environment, adult facilitators will guide the teens to experience small group discussions with the help of peer leaders.

Praise and Worship is a form of prayer when we sing to God, teens will experience the gift of praise at every session.

Grade 9's curriculum is based on the *Total Faith Initiative* series published by St. Mary Press, which is grounded in the content of the *Catholic Faith Handbook*. Two of the manuals: *Christian Morality and the Creed* will be the main focus, imparting a grounding in our Catholic beliefs and how Jesus taught us to treat other people.

### **Methodology of Grade 10**

During 10th Grade, candidates will be challenged to develop a "more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit – his actions, his gifts, and his bidding" (CCC 1309). The objective here is to impart to the candidates the tools to fully understand the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation, which is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and seek to implant the notion that faith formation is ongoing. Through catechesis, faith sharing, retreat, and social interaction, candidates will be formed into a more mature faith and voluntarily commit to being confirmed in the Catholic faith. After Confirmation, these students are dismissed and encouraged to attend adult enrichment programs.

### **Requirements of Grades 9 and 10**

**Service Hours.** Confirmation candidates are to complete 20 hours of service (for 9th grade, about three hours per month during the R.E. School Year, and for 10th graders until confirmed): consisting of some hours in the parish, some hours outside of the parish in the



community, and some hours of your choice. **Community** – This would be contacting a not for profit organization and scheduling a time to come in to volunteer.

Examples would be a food kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, tutoring younger students, etc. Be creative and try to find something unique and interesting to you.

**Church** – This would involve helping with one of our own parish ministries, for example, Food Pantry, helping to clean the church or tend the grounds, or helping one of our parish organizations. If you already are a minister at Mass, you are encouraged to serve in a *new* capacity. The candidate is encouraged to find a new area in the Church to help with rather than what they are already accustomed to doing. **Home** – Again this should be a service that the candidate doesn't already do on a consistent basis, and it may not be a service for an immediate family member.

### **Requirements of Grade 10**

**Retreat and Mass.** It is a requirement of receiving the sacrament of Confirmation that the candidate will attend a retreat to enrich their spirit and renew their faith as young vibrant Catholics. Therefore; missing this retreat is **not optional**. Mass is also a big part of this program; furthermore, it is a *requirement to attend weekly Mass*. If you cannot do that, how is it you are ready to be confirmed in your faith?

**Confirmation Study Guide.** Bishop Ricken has asked that all Catholics being confirmed know the elements of our faith contained in the *Confirmation Study Guide*. Please be sure you have a good knowledge of such things as the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, names of the 12 Apostles, names of the four Evangelists, the seven sacraments, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, the Beatitudes and the Commandments.

**Attendance and Interview.** Attendance at the Confirmation preparation sessions is required, since Confirmation students do not meet for the entire year. Therefore candidates will not be able to miss any session.

If something extraordinary occurs on the very day of a session, candidates will need to call the parish office and express the reasoning for their absence. At that time options will be presented for making up the missed session. In addition, there is a *required interview* with the Pastoral Leader sometime **before** the day of Confirmation. The date and time of the interview will be assigned and it will take place at the parish rectory.

### **RCIA**

This process is intended for Adults who are interested in learning about the Catholic faith leading to baptism or full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. It is for those that were baptized Catholic but never received their other Sacraments, those coming from other Christian faith traditions – baptized or un-baptized, those coming from non-Christian faith traditions or those coming from no faith background at all. This process involves both a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and instruction in the Faith. We typically meet once a week beginning in the summer with the first phase called *Inquiry*. This goes for about 12 weeks or so, until we begin the second phase, called the *Catechumenate*. The third phase meets during Lent, leading up to the Easter Vigil, the day before Easter Sunday. After Easter, there is a short period of assessment and reflection called *Mystagogy*.

# Class Content and Focus

## Liturgy of the Word

Liturgy of the Word attempts to focus the young children on the Sunday Scriptures. While comfortability with young children is needed, an advanced theological degree is not. Instead, the adult facilitator attempts to stay with basic ideas like God loves us very much and is happy when we are good to others.

## Elementary

Elementary classes usually meet each Wednesday for seventy-five minutes. We are here to share the Catholic faith with children and to develop their experience of Jesus. The more that His message is lived at home, the more your child grows spiritually. Family prayer is especially important, and so is the need to take time for each other. Each year our lives seem to become more hectic, and we should try to slow down and enjoy our family.

→ Sometimes family problems arise which greatly affect children such as divorce, separation, or death of a loved one, or the discovery that a child has special needs. It is important that parents inform us when these problems occur so that we can be more understanding, flexible, and patient with the child.

## **General Procedures for Elementary Religious Education Program**

The following guidelines are to help catechists and families know what is expected from each student in the elementary program.

- The traditional prayers of the Church are to be memorized by the student, as indicated below. In addition, we seek to encourage the child to pray in his/her own words and to see the need for prayer. Our faith is not lived in isolation. We are initiated into a community of believers at Baptism, and as members of this faith community, we share certain basic truths that form the content of our faith. Our task, as catechists and parents, is to impart and explain those basic truths at levels age and grade appropriate.
- Each grade has a *focus* and *theme*. Each class has certain prayers and Bible stories they should be familiar with. Each class asks certain involvement from parents.
- Each class should begin each session with a prayer, either led by the catechist, or, by a volunteer student.

## **Grade 1**

Here the *focus* is on God's Love for Us. The *theme* is Jesus teaches us about God's love for us. Concepts to be covered include: Who was Jesus and who key people around him were, who followers of Jesus are, how our parish is like our family and how we celebrate our faith.

Students should become familiar with the Creation story in Genesis, the stories in Matthew and Luke leading up to Jesus' birth, stories in the Gospels from the life of Jesus and from the Passion and Resurrection.

*Prayers* the student should know include: The Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Sign of the Cross and the Glory be to the Father. Students should also be taught to say grace before eating a meal.

*Parental Involvement* includes leading the family in prayer at meal times, attending Mass regularly, and talking about God within the family. It is also very good to have some religious symbols (such as a crucifix, or religious-themed pictures) on display in the home.

## **Grade 2**

Here, the *focus* is on Jesus is Always with Us. The *theme* is Jesus is our best friend and will never leave us. Concepts to be covered include: How Jesus is with us always, why Jesus calls us to love and forgive others, why Jesus gives us himself in the Eucharist, and how we live our Catholic faith. Students should become familiar with Bible stories of God speaking to the people in the Old Testament, disciples following Jesus, Jesus healing and teaching others, the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, the Last Supper and Jesus washing the feet of the disciples.

*Prayers* the student should know include: those from first grade and the Act of Contrition. Students should be given a Catholic child's prayer book and Rosary for their First Communion.

*Parental Involvement* here includes the items from first grade above, and, attending various sacramental preparation sessions for First Reconciliation and First Communion. A First Communion banner will be made with a parent in attendance.

## **Grade 3**

Here, the *focus* is on the Church. The *theme* is that we live, celebrate and serve within the People of God, also called the Church. Concepts include: how and why the Church came into being, the Holy Trinity, the Church is a community of people who believe Jesus Christ is the only Son of God and came to set us free, and the concept of the sacraments of the Church. Students should become familiar with Bible stories of the early Church, the descent of the Holy Spirit, Jesus' compassion for all people and stories of God calling people.

*Prayers* the student should know include those from previous grades and the Apostles' Creed, the basic way of praying a Rosary and a form of a Morning Offering.

*Parental Involvement* here includes the items from previous grades and helping the child participate in some form of social justice or volunteering to help others. Also, showing and modeling forgiveness is strongly suggested.

## **Grade 4**

Here, the *focus* is on morality. The *theme* is growing in Jesus Christ by following the Commandments and the Beatitudes. Concepts include: God gives us free will and a conscience, the Commandments and beatitudes help us to love and respect other people, human life is sacred and we are called to act with justice, and God calls us to be holy. Students should become familiar with Bible stories such as Adam & Eve's sin, the 3 temptations of Jesus, the Good Samaritan, the Rich Young man, the Sermon on the Mount, the Prodigal Son and the story of Thomas the Apostle.

*Prayers* the student should know include all from previous grades and the Stations of the Cross and the Prayer of St. Francis. Reinforcing the prayers and method of the Rosary are also called for.

*Parental Involvement* here includes the items from previous grades and encouraging the child's familiarity with a Catholic Bible by reading stories together and giving the child his or her own children's Bible. We can suggest some good choices if need be.

### **Grade 5**

Here, the *focus* is on the Sacraments of the Church. The *theme* is Jesus shares his life with us through his Church and the sacraments. Concepts include: Jesus gave the Church seven sacraments, Jesus teaches us to pray, Jesus calls us to conversion, and the Church has various seasons throughout the year to celebrate God's love for us. Students should become familiar with such Bible stories as: the story of Joseph and his brothers, God leading the Hebrew people out of Egypt, Samuel hearing God calling him, the Baptism of Jesus, Peter the Rock, the miracle at Cana, the story of Pentecost and the Christian Community.

*Prayers* the student should know include all from previous grades and the specific mysteries of the Rosary, and the people's responses at Mass.

*Parental Involvement* here includes the items from the previous grades and helping their child identify ways the child can use personal talents to help the needy. Another excellent example is teaching the child to offer up wrongs or setbacks in silence, for the Poor Souls in Purgatory.

## **Middle School**

### **Grade 6**

Here, the *focus* is on the Hebrew Scriptures, also known as the Old Testament. The *theme* is God enters into human history to begin the story of salvation. Concepts include: an understanding that the Old Testament is necessary and foundational to our faith, that many of the concepts of faith we hold, such as sin, forgiveness, mercy and obedience, are found in the Old Testament, how the Catholic Bible is set up, that many sacraments and sacramental actions originate in the Old Testament, and that God continually calls us to love him, just as he did long ago with the Prophets.

Students should become familiar with Bible stories such as Cain and Abel, Abraham and Sarah, the call of Moses, Jeremiah and Isaiah, the stories of David, Amos, Jonah, Elijah and Ezekiel. It is also good to introduce some of the Psalms.

*Prayers*, in addition to the previous grades, should include the Beatitudes and Psalms such as Psalm 8 and 62.

*Parental Involvement* includes the items from the previous grades along with helping the child identify causes of violence and injustice in our world.

### **Grade 7**

The *focus* here is on the New Testament. The *theme* is the Good News of salvation comes from Jesus Christ.

Concepts include: the Gospels are faith testimonies and not biographies, Jesus is both fully human and fully divine, Jesus is more than a wise and loving teacher; he is the only Son of God, disciples apply the moral teachings of Jesus, and that the mission of Jesus continues

today through his Church and through us. Students should become familiar with Bible readings such as some of Paul's letters to Christian communities, the Acts of the Apostles, the Woman caught in adultery, the Transfiguration, Peter's three denials and the Lord's three times of forgiveness of him and the differences between John's Gospel and the Synoptic Gospels.

*Prayers*, in addition to the previous grades, should include learning about novenas and learning the Nicene Creed.

*Parental Involvement* includes the items from the previous grades along with encouraging the young person to take a more active role in church involvement and youth activities.

### **Grade 8**

The *focus* here is on the Church and its History. The *theme* is the Church as the People of God and the Body of Christ. Concepts include: the definition and origin of our Church, the six precepts of the Church, the four marks of the Church and the story of the Church's high and low points throughout its history.

Students should become familiar with Bible readings such as the Woman at the Well, the story of the Institution of the Eucharist, the road to Emmaus, the first Church Council at Jerusalem and the last words Jesus spoke on earth (Matthew's Gospel).

*Prayers*, in addition to the previous grades, should include learning the Confiteor, the Jesus Prayer, and the Memorare.

*Parental Involvement* includes the items from the previous grades along with encouraging the young person to lead family prayer and helping the young person to appreciate the gift of Christian sexuality.

### **Confirmation Classes**

#### **Grade 9**

The *focus* here is on the Creed and on Morality. The *theme* is Maturing in the Faith.

Concepts include: key doctrines of the faith such as the two natures of Christ, the Trinity and Sin, The forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body, Mary's place in the Church, understanding and integrating into our life Jesus' moral vision, and our relationships with other people.

Students should become familiar with Bible readings such as the Sermon on the Mount, Romans, ch. 12, Philippians ch. 2, and 1 Peter ch. 2.

*Prayers*, in addition to the previous grades, should include learning about Eucharistic Adoration, the three theological virtues and the four cardinal virtues and what is a litany.

*Parental Involvement* includes the items from the previous grades along with encouraging their young person to participate more fully in the activities of the parish, especially helping with Mass.

#### **Grade 10**

The *focus* here is on preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. The *theme* is understanding the role of a confirmed Catholic.

Concepts include: who is the Holy Spirit, why Confirmation is only received once, Christian Prayer, what are the effects of Confirmation, Living as a Disciple, and what happens during the rite of Confirmation.

Students should become familiar with Bible readings such as Acts ch. 2, the Book of Job, Isaiah ch. 2, and John ch. 15 through 17.

*Prayers*, in addition to the previous grades, should include learning about the Psalms and the Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity.

*Parental Involvement* includes the items from the previous grades along with helping their young person prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation, including considering a patron saint's name and choosing a sponsor.

## Miscellaneous

### Arrival and Departure Procedures

Students are to be in their class, ready to begin the session, at 6:30 p.m. Students may be dropped off at the door at the end of the ramp, at the back of church. Otherwise, the parent should walk young children into the parish hall. Upon arrival, the students are to go to their classroom, or other designated place.

Only a parent or guardian, or an adult designated by the parent and listed with the student's teacher, may pick up the student. Parents who need to pick up their child early from class must first let the teacher know. Otherwise, there will be no early departure.

### Attendance

Parents are to call the Parish office *in advance* of your child's absence whenever possible. If a child is absent from class without a call, the office will contact the parent to ask why.

#### **A Student is excused from the class for the following reasons:**

- Illness of child or the person who brings the child to Religious Education,
- Lack of transportation,
- Family vacation (Please notify the catechist in advance whenever possible,)
- Parent is required to work late and cannot bring the child to class, or
- Doctor or dentist appointments.
- Assignment of excessive amount of homework or school project.

#### **A Student is NOT excused from the class for the following reasons:**

- Extracurricular activities
- Sporting events
- Birthday parties
- Lack of interest

If a student misses *three* classes due to unexcused absences, the parent or guardian will be called. If a student misses *four* classes due to unexcused absences, he/she may be removed from the R.E. program. There will be no refunds for students who have been removed from the program due to unexcused absences.

### Attendance at Weekend Mass

Attendance at Weekend Mass will be taken for students in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade. *If there is some difficulty in parents getting their children to Mass, please call Deacon Mike* and discuss this. If a student misses *three* weekend Masses and has no excuse for this, the parent or guardian will be called. R.E. is not merely an academic exercise; it is intended to reinforce the growth of faith in the student. This is not done to impose any sort of penalty,

but instead, is a way of gently asking students and families why are we sending our children to R.E. in the first place? Weekly Mass attendance speaks volumes to your children, as does consistently skipping Mass.

#### **Carpool and Photo Release**

All parents were required to fill out the photo and/or carpool release forms during the registration process. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES may a minor be photographed without written permission from the parents on file in the Parish Office. No student will be allowed to enter a private vehicle for transportation to any St. Martin parish function without written permission from their parents on file in the Parish Office.

#### **Catechist Preparation**

Catechists should have lesson plans prepared, designed to complete as much of the material as is feasible. All catechists are encouraged to attend Adult Faith Formation events and pursue continued education. All catechists will comply with the Diocesan policy on teacher-catechist certification, once it is finalized. Catechists, as proclaimers and faith filled people, should be attending Mass weekly, and praying daily.

#### **Christmas Program**

Each December, the students will participate in their individual classes, in a program or event designed around the theme of the Nativity of Our Lord. Parental involvement and attendance is important to this type of program.

#### **Classroom Visitors**

In order to better maintain the safety of our children and volunteers, the following guidelines are required for visitors to the classroom.

- Parents are welcomed and encouraged to sit in on classes in which their children are students.
- All Parents/Visitors who wish to sit in on a class must be 18 years of age.
- All Parents/Visitors must check with the catechist in charge before entering a class.
- Any Classroom guest speakers must be approved by the parish director prior to speaking to the students. An outline of the subject matter must be submitted no later than one week prior to the class they will be speaking at.

#### **Discipline Policy**

Parents can support catechists by ensuring that their children understand some basic rules:

- Attend class weekly unless they have an approved excuse,
- Refrain from “horseplay” in the hallways, classrooms, or in the church,
- Do not abuse bathroom breaks,
- Turn off all mobile devices during class time,
- Respect each other both in and out of class,
- Respect their catechist and follow their directions,
- Avoid abusive or vulgar language, and
- Respect materials, supplies, tables, chairs, and all other items.

## **Discipline Policy Steps**

- Step One: A verbal communication by the catechist as to what they have done wrong.
- Step Two: The student will be removed temporarily from the activity and the catechist will counsel with the student about his/her actions and how those actions affect the safety and feelings of others.
- Step Three: The student will be removed from the class and sent to the Pastoral Leader. The Pastoral Leader will again counsel the child. The child's return to the classroom at this point is up to the discretion of the catechist and the Pastoral Leader. The student will be told that if there is another problem, the next time the parents will be called.
- Step Four: The student will be removed from the class and sent to the Pastoral Leader. The student's parents will be notified. The parent/guardian will be required to meet with the Pastoral Leader before reinstatement into the class. The Pastoral Leader will request that the parents work together with the student's catechist to eliminate the problem.
- Step Five: The student will be removed from the class and sent to the Pastoral Leader. The student's parent/guardian will have to sit in the classroom for the next two class periods, in order for the student to be reinstated into the class.

## **Doughnut - Mass Weekends**

Each class, from 1st grade through 10th grade, will participate in taking the roles of lector and gift bearers (and altar servers, if in that grade) at a weekend parish Mass. Also, once a month a grade or grades will prepare and serve sweet breads or doughnuts (or similar items) for those attending that Mass.

## **Fees**

Fees are paid to help offset the cost of providing religious education to our students. There is a two-track fee structure. The fees for children of *registered* parishioners is less than that for *non-registered* parishioners. The fee for the first child of a family to attend R.E. classes at St. Martin's is \$35.00. The fee for the first child of a non-parishioner is \$75.00. The fees for the second child of a family are: \$25.00 and \$50.00. The fees for a third or more children of a family are: \$15.00 and \$30.00. Fees are due in full *before* the first class. *Please note:* St. Martin parish will not turn away any child whose parent/guardian is financially unable to pay an R.E. fee. If a parent/guardian has a problem with paying a fee, please contact the Parish Director.

## **First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion**

The second graders will be prepared to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion during the second grade. These students will make their first confessions sometime before the Christmas Break, with their parents in attendance. The students will be taught a simple examination of conscience and the method of the sacrament, including the Act of Contrition.



The second graders will also be prepared to make their First Holy Communion, which normally occurs on the first Sunday in May. These students will be taught, at their level, about the *Real Presence* of Jesus in the sacrament.

They will also have a practice session the weekend before the first Sunday in May, to be attended by at least one parent/guardian of each student. Each student, along with a parent, will attend a Saturday morning session before the First Communion, to make a personalized communion banner, which will be hung in church for the First Communion Mass.

### **Health & Safety Issues**

A section is provided on the registration form for the parent to indicate any health problems, special needs, and/or special learning needs. Information in this section is kept confidential and communicated to the catechist only. Please note, that unless special arrangements are made with the Parish Director in advance, catechists may not distribute any medication to students.

### **Parent Participation**

Parent/guardian participation in the St. Martin R.E. program is *essential*. We cannot expect the teaching and efforts of the catechists to mean much if there is little or no follow up at home. Parents are expected to go over with their children:

- what was covered in class,
- whether there is any homework,
- whether any church-R.E. events are coming up,
- the report card sent home with the student.

Also, *parents must attend two family night sessions with their children*. The first session is held at the start of the school year, and the last session is held at the end of the school year. Parents are encouraged to participate in the class of their student by volunteering as an aide or a parish hall monitor. Parents are also expected to help with the doughnut-Mass weekend for which their student's class is serving. Parents are also strongly encouraged to attend the Christmas Program.

### **Penance Service**

Because of the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance), St. Martin Parish offers it for one half hour each Saturday morning from 9 to 9:30 am.

During the R.E. school year, we make the sacrament available at our annual Lenten Penance Service. All parents and R.E. students are expected to attend this service and also receive this sacrament. How can we model good behavior for our children when only the child is expected to receive this sacrament?

**As with all R.E. classes, there is to be respectful behavior during these services, which includes NO CELLPHONES OR MOBILE DEVICES on or in use.**

### **Report Cards**

We want our children to make progress in our faith as they attend Religion Education classes. One way to support this is to discuss aspects of the faith at home, to pray and to attend weekly Mass. Another way is to report on the child's progress. St. Martin's R.E. program will have a basic report for parents/guardians twice a school year.

The report card will review some basic categories, such as attendance, class participation, knowledge of material and suitability to advance to the next grade. Parents should expect the report card before Christmas and after the second last class.

*All aspects and requirements of the grade in which a student is placed, must be met before that student can advance to the next grade in our R.E. program.*

### **Safe Environment Policy**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has released a charter for the protection of children and young people. As a result, the Diocese of Green Bay (and most other dioceses around the country) has developed a training program and Code that ALL adults interacting in any significant way with minors in a parish, MUST be part of.

All volunteers and catechists working with minor children are responsible to adhere to the Diocese of Green Bay's Safe Environment Program. The program is outlined in the Policies on Appropriate Conduct of the Diocese of Green Bay, and these are available for review in the Parish Office. Safe Environment regulations require that all parish employees and all adult volunteers who have regular contact with children, complete a form authorizing criminal background checks, list personal references, complete the *Virtus Protecting God's Children Adult Awareness* training and sign an Agreement promising to adhere to these diocesan and parish policies.

In this day and age, thanks be to God, we are much more aware of the potential for abusing children. *Virtus* training is highly recommended for anyone who works with children or youth groups.

### **Service Hours**

St. Martin's R.E. program requires that *all* students perform some type of real service to others. The service hours are structured so that they are less at the younger ages and more for older students. There is also a form that will be available to properly record service hours. Service hours must be performed in three different time slots. Each time slot must have at least 1 service hour performed within it. The service hours can include summer camp service to others, but all service hours should be made up of some hours in the parish, some hours in the community, and some hours of your choice.

**Community** - This would be contacting a not for profit organization and scheduling a time to come in to volunteer. Examples would be a food kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, tutoring, etc. Be creative and try to find something unique and interesting to you.

**Church** - This would involve helping with one of our own parish ministries, for example, Food Pantry, helping to clean the church or tend the grounds, or helping one of our parish organizations. If you already are a minister at Mass, you are encouraged to serve in a *new* capacity. **Home** - Again this should be a service that the candidate doesn't already do on a consistent basis, and it may not be a service for an immediate family member.

All required service hours must be completed **before** the last class. Service hours must be approved in advance if it involves a special project or an unusual request - *check with your catechist first if there is any question.*

These are the St. Martin's parish service hour requirements:

### **First Grade**

First graders must complete 3 hours of service during the school year, before the last class. These service hours can be done for family members or neighbors, and should be done with the knowledge and approval of the parent/guardian. Examples can include helping an elderly person with chores, or helping your teacher with some project.

### **Second Grade**

Second graders must complete 5 hours of service during the school year, before the last class. These service hours can be done for family members, the parish or neighbors, and should be done with the knowledge and approval of the parent/guardian. Examples can include helping an elderly person with chores, helping your teacher with some project, visiting a nursing home, or helping the parish.

### **Third Grade**

Third graders must complete 5 hours of service during the school year, before the last class. These service hours can be done for family members, the parish or neighbors, and should be done with the knowledge and approval of the parent/guardian. Examples can include helping an elderly person with chores, helping with our parish Food Pantry, helping your teacher with some project, visiting a nursing home, or helping the parish.

### **Fourth Grade**

Fourth graders must complete 7 hours of service during the school year, before the last class. These service hours can be done for family members, the parish or neighbors, and should be done with the knowledge and approval of the parent/guardian. Examples can include all of the above.

### **Fifth Grade**

Fifth graders must complete 10 hours of service during the school year, before the last class. These service hours should be done outside the immediate family, or for the parish or neighbors, and should be done with the knowledge and approval of the parent/guardian. Examples can include all of the above.

### **Middle School Grades**

Middle school grades (6th, 7th and 8th) must complete 12 hours of service during the school year, before the last class. These service hours should be done outside the immediate family, or for the parish, the community or neighbors, and should be done with the knowledge and approval of the parent/guardian.

### **Ninth and Tenth Grades**

Ninth and tenth grades are also preparing for Confirmation, so their service hours are greater. They must complete 20 hours of service during the school year (10th graders before Confirmation), before the last class. These service hours should be done outside the immediate family, or for the parish, the community or neighbors, and should be done with the knowledge and approval of the parent/guardian. Service at this level should really extend beyond family and neighbors – there should be an attempt to go outside the student's zone of familiarity to accomplish real good in our parish, our community and our world.

**Snow Days**

In case of inclement weather, including possible snow days, we will follow the same procedures as the Bonduel School District. If they cancel classes for bad weather on an R.E. evening, then the R.E. is also cancelled that evening. Check with local radio and T.V. stations for information.