



# St. Martha Parish Religious Education Handbook

**St. Martha Parish  
Religious Education Program  
1100 West Grand River Ave.  
Okemos, MI  
(517) 349-1763**



*“Living the teachings of Jesus  
by performing the corporal works of Mercy”*



Dear Parents:

*Welcome* to a new year of Religious Education at St. Martha Parish. We are very excited to be able to share with your children our sense of awe and wonder, our knowledge and our deep commitment to the love of God in Christ Jesus.

This handbook is designed to help familiarize you with the programs, practices and policies of our parish religious education program. We hope you will keep it handy as a quick reference throughout the year.

As family and church, we seek to help nurture the faith that parents, the child's *primary educators*, are endeavoring to develop. Our aim is to teach as Jesus taught. We ask your prayers, participation and your continued support throughout the year.

Please feel free to call us at any time with questions or concerns you may have about the program, 349-1763.

Jackie Rosalez

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### ***Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary (Mondays and Saturdays)***

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of Jesus
4. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
5. The finding of Jesus in the Temple

### ***Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary (Tuesdays and Fridays)***

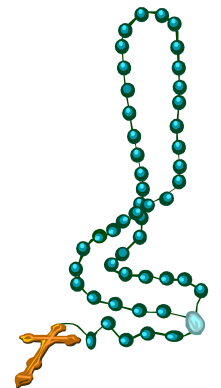
1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

### ***Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary (Wednesdays and Sundays)***

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Holy Spirit comes upon the Apostles
4. The Assumption of Mary into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Mary in Heaven

### ***Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary (Thursdays)***

1. The Baptism in the Jordan
2. The Miracle at the Wedding at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist



## ***Corporal Works of Mercy***

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



## ***Spiritual Works of Mercy***

1. Help sinners.
2. Teach the ignorant.
3. Give advice to the doubtful.
4. Comfort those who suffer.
5. Be patient with others.
6. Forgive injuries.
7. Pray for the living and the dead.

## ***Precepts of the Church***

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.  
Do no unnecessary physical work on those days.
2. Fast and abstain on the days appointed.
3. Confess serious sins at least once a year.
4. Receive Holy Communion during the Easter season.
5. Contribute to the support of the Church.
6. Observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage.
7. Join in the missionary spirit of the Church.

The Parish Education Commission is a consultative body to the Pastor in matters pertaining to the St. Martha Parish religious formation and education of all members. While the responsibility for the catechetical formation of adults and children belongs to the entire parish community, the Education Commission has the duty of making the entire parish aware of its' catechetical mission and see that formal education in the teachings of the Gospel is made available to all members of the faith community.

The ministry entrusted to the St. Martha Education Commission is to identify and address the total Religious Education needs of the Catholic Community it represents. This ministry will be performed by recommending and formulating policies and promoting programs that call youth and adults to a life based on the Gospel and will nurture the faith formation and spiritual development of all members of our faith community. The responsibilities will be fulfilled under the direction of the Office of Education and Formation of the Diocese of Lansing and in accordance with the framework established by the St. Martha Parish Pastoral Council.



Sunday: 10 a.m. Preschool & Kindergarten  
9-9:50 a.m. Gr. 1-6  
6-8 p.m. Gr. 7-12 (1st & 3rd Sundays)  
6-8 p.m. Youth Group (2nd & 4th Sundays)  
There are sometimes exceptions noted due to the Public School calendars.

Wednesday: 4:30-5:45 p.m. Grades 1-5  
6:30-7:45 p.m. Grades 1-5

Parishioners may register their children, preschool through grade twelve, by completing and returning the Religious Education Registration Form available in the Education Office. Classes will be assigned on a “*first come, first served*” basis. If it becomes necessary due to enrollment numbers to re-assign students, parents will be notified.



### **Registration Fees**

The Religious Education Program registration fee for children whose families are **parishioners** of St. Martha Parish are as follows:

**Parish rate:** With a minimum \$5 weekly contribution to the Sunday Collection.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Preschool                | One PreK-Kdg Student = \$50<br>Two PreK-Kdg Students = \$75.00 |
| Grades 1-8:              | \$105.00 for one child   |
| High School:             | \$80.00 for one child  |
| Family Parishioner Rate: | \$160.00 for two or more children (1-12)                       |

### **Non-Parishioner Rate**

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Preschool & High School: | \$340.00 for one child            |
| Grades 1-8:              | \$365.00 for one child            |
| Grades PK-12             | \$420.00 for two or more children |

This non-parishioner rate reflects a \$5.00 minimum weekly contribution to the Sunday collection that parishioners are required to make.

### **Parishioners**

Parishioners are defined as those who are ***registered, participating and contributing*** members of St. Martha Parish.

*Please note: No student will be denied registration because of financial reasons*

### **Student Conduct (Policy #5131)**

Students in the various educational programs of the Diocese of Lansing are expected to act in such fashion that their behavior will reflect the values and principles of the Christian Gospel and the teachings of the Catholic Church. They will show consideration for all persons who are members of the educational community and contribute to the creation of an atmosphere conducive to learning. To accomplish this, all students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with the regulations established by the local governing body.

### **Mistreatment to Minors (Policy #5142)**

In accordance with state law, administrators and other diocesan employees shall be required to report immediately any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect involving a student under the age of 18 to the proper authority. The Director of Religious Education Catechesis shall be notified, in writing, of the reporting of the suspected case of child abuse or neglect.

### **Vandalism (Policy #5131.5)**

Students and their parents shall be financially liable for any damage to property under the jurisdiction of this board as may be intentionally inflicted by such students. This liability applies to items such as, but not limited to, books, supplies, equipment, building and grounds.

### **Alcoholic Beverages (Policy #5131A)**

No alcoholic beverages shall be carried onto, purchased, sold or consumed by students on any property under the jurisdiction of this board or at events or activities carried on under its auspices. Nor shall any student who is under the influence of alcoholic beverages be present on such property or at such events or activities. Violations of this policy render the student liable to immediate expulsion.

### **Narcotics (Policy #5131B)**

Narcotics (controlled substances) as defined by law, shall not be carried onto, purchased, sold or consumed by students on any property under the jurisdiction of this board or at events or activities carried on under its auspices. Nor shall any student who is under the influence of such narcotics be present on such property or at such events or activities. Violations of this policy render the student liable to immediate suspension or expulsion.

### **Weapons (Policy #5131C)**

No weapons or explosive devices of any kind shall be carried onto any property under the jurisdiction of this board or at events or activities carried on under its auspices. Violations of this policy render the student liable to immediate suspension or expulsion.

## *Sacramental Preparation*



St. Martha Parish requires all students preparing for sacraments to participate in the Religious Education classes one full year before the sacramental preparation year. It is also important that the student understand the “community aspect” associated with the preparation for these sacraments. We feel that this is best achieved through classroom participation. If for extenuating circumstances your child is unable to participate in the classroom setting they will be required to be interviewed by the director of religious education, parish deacon or Fr. Jon prior to reception of the sacrament to certify the quality of their home schooling.

**Baptism:** School age children who have not been baptized, and wish to be baptized, are required to participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children (RCIC) Process. Parents should contact the Director of Religious Education for more information regarding this process.

**Reconciliation:** Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation takes place in the second grade. Parents of these students are expected to attend a parent meeting in order to best help their child prepare for the reception of this sacrament. There will a special opportunity for these students to celebrate the sacrament for the first time. Parents of older students who have not prepared for and celebrated the sacrament should contact the Director of Religious Education.

**Eucharist:** Students are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Eucharist in the second grade. Parents are expected to attend a Parent Meeting in order to best help their child to prepare for the reception of the sacrament. Solemn First Communion will take place on the date specified in the spring of each year. Any questions should be directed to the Director of Religious Education.

**Confirmation:** Students in grade eight will be preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Bishop sets the date for this celebration yearly. In addition to attending a retreat, writing a letter to the Bishop, and choosing a sponsor (a participating Catholic with whom they can discuss and share their faith), confirmation candidates are required to perform fifteen hours of community service in preparation for receiving the sacrament. Any questions should be directed to the Director of Religious Education.

**Delayed Sacraments:** If your son/daughter has missed the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion or Confirmation, please contact the Office of Religious Education at 349-1763. We will be able to schedule your child for the preparation and celebration of the needed sacrament.

### **Leaving Early**

If it is necessary for a student (grades 1-12) to be excused during class time, parents are asked to come to the Education Office to sign their child out. Children may not be outside unattended while waiting to be picked up. This step is taken to ensure the safety of the children. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance will be taken in class. If your child is not able to attend a session, please call the Religious Education Office at 349-1763. Class time is important and every minute is valuable. Please make sure your child(ren) arrive a few minutes early so they are ready when class begins.

### **Illness**

Parents or guardians will be notified in the event that their child becomes ill in class. Sick children will be cared for in the Education Office until a parent or guardian can provide transportation home.



### **Medications**

Religious Education personnel are not permitted to distribute medication (i.e. aspirin, etc.). Students should not bring medications to class. Exceptions should be cleared with the appropriate Director of Religious Education or Youth Minister.

### **Concerns /Questions**

It is requested that all concerns or questions regarding an individual class be taken to the catechist directly. Concerns and questions regarding the overall program should be directed to the appropriate Director of Religious Education or Youth Minister.

## Parent Newsletter

Please be sure to look for letters, notes and classroom paperwork that will be placed in your child's folder or (with the older students) in their possession. There are also updates and notes published in the parish bulletin regularly, as well as, calendar information on a weekly basis. Don't forget to check out the on-line site for more information, forms and newsletters. [www.st-martha.org](http://www.st-martha.org)



### Safe Exit Entrance and Exit Plan

For the safety of all the children in grades one through eight, the exit and entrance plans have changed. We have been concerned with the safety of our children and hope this helps. This is very similar to the plan the school uses.

**Entrance:** This is only for children grades 1-6. Please park your car and walk your child to the door. We will have the cones up blocking the area in front of the church doors. This is a no traffic zone.

St. Martha has been reminded that the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code does not allow for parking or standing in a fire lane at any time.

**Exit:** This is for all children in grades 1-12. All Cars must enter from the East Entrance. Parents are asked to park their cars in the parking lot and walk to the sidewalk where their children are required to remain, and then escort their children to their parked cars. Parents are not to call from their cars for their children to cross the parking lot\_unescorted.

## Youth Ministry Programs

The Office of Youth Ministry offers a number of opportunities for Middle and High School teens with the goal of creating community among the young people of St. Martha and the parish as a whole.



High School Youth Group meets the second and fourth Sunday of each month from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. We combine fun and games with prayer and solid Catholic teaching on a variety of topics. Sessions are planned and led by teen and adult leaders and include service projects, fun nights, special guest speakers and more. Additionally, we also offer larger events like weekend retreats, Cedar Point, the Diocesan Jamboree and a ski trip. All youth ministry programs and events are open to all high school youth in public and private school and friends are always welcome. Each student in the parish is already a member of the Youth Group, so come and check it out (no registration required)!

Middle School Ministry activities will be held throughout the year, including the Diocesan Middle School Rally in March. Watch the bulletin or our website for more details.

For more information on Youth Ministry programs, call Pete Fiero at 349-1763 or email [parishyouth@st-martha.org](mailto:parishyouth@st-martha.org).

## Youth Choir and Orchestra

**Calling all musicians!** This group is open to all high school and college students who love music to share their talents with St. Martha Parish. The group plays at the Sunday 5 p.m. mass. This activity offers an opportunity to help bring more contemporary music and youth involvement to St. Martha Parish. Call the parish office for more details.



## High School Curriculum

The high school program meets at 6:00 pm on the first and third Sunday of each month. We are using the *Horizons Program* which is a very hands on, interactive program that really challenges our youth to think about their faith. There is no student text, so don't look for a lot of written work. This is a time for these young adults to think, discuss, and explore their beliefs, which will enable students to grow and maintain their faith through high school, college, and adulthood.

Each class will be involved in some type of service project throughout the year.

**Grade Nine** Freshman year is mainly divided into two main sessions; *Jesus, His Message and Mission* and *Growing in Wisdom, Age, and Grace*.

**Grade 10** The Sophomore class focuses on *The Church: Its Wisdom , Works and Worship* and *Called to Live the Gospel*.

**Grade 11** The Junior class takes a much closer look on *The Challenge of Discipleship, Paul, The Man and the Message*, and *Encounters with Jesus in the Gospels*.

**Grade 12** The Seniors main objective is to learn to go forth and continue living a Catholic, Faith-filled life. Their lessons include: *Moving On: Embracing the Future, Young Adult Faith, Stewardship: Creating the Future*, and *Life-giving Relationships*.



## Tornado Warnings

In the event of a tornado warning or other severe weather conditions, class will not be dismissed but will be kept in the building until the administration is reasonably certain the students can be transported home safely.

## Fire Drill

To ensure their safety and preparedness, students will participate in a fire drill practice during the school year.

## Class Cancellation

Weekdays: When the Okemos Public Schools are closed due to severe weather conditions or classes are dismissed early because of the weather, religious formation classes will be cancelled for that day. If severe weather has developed later in the day, the following radio stations will be asked to carry bulletins regarding the cancellation of classes: WFMK(99.1), WJIM (97.5), WITL(100.7), Q106, WKAR (AM90.5).



## Emergency Information

Emergency information is a vital part of the registration process and must be completed at the time of registration. It is imperative that a parent, guardian, or other designated adult be reached should an emergency situation arise with your child. Please update this information as needed by contacting the Religious Education Office with any changes.

## Lost and Found

Lost and Found articles will be placed in the bins under the table outside the chapel. Articles not claimed at the end of the school year will be given to a charitable organization.



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

**Preschool and Kindergarten:** This program takes place during the Sunday, 10:00 am Mass, so it is based on the Liturgy of that weekend. We gather as one to hear God's word taken from the Children's Lectionary. During this time we pray, sing, and listen in a format very similar to that of an adult Mass, only at a child friendly level. We then take time to learn a lesson from the readings and Gospels and learn a memory verse to take home and share with our families. The goal of this program is to give children and parents a common lesson of the day in order to initiate conversations about God at home.

**First through Sixth Grade:** Our elementary program uses Sadlier Publishing's, *We Believe* as its primary text. This program uses a spiral approach to learning our Catholic faith. They base their lessons on the four pillars of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*- Creed, Sacraments, Morality, and Prayer. As children progress through the grades, they will build on these main themes. This ensures that the beliefs of our faith are introduced to and reinforced for the young people as they grow, develop, and mature spiritually.



Students in our elementary Religious Education Program are also asked to memorize specific beliefs and prayers of the Church. The memorization for each grade is:

**First Grade-** *Sign of the Cross, Glory Be, and The Hail Mary*

**Second Grade-** *Our Father and Act of Contrition*

**Third Grade-** *Nicene Creed and The Sacraments*

**Fourth Grade-** *The Ten Commandments and Hail, Holy Queen*

**Fifth Grade-** *Sacraments by group (Healing, Initiation, and Communion of Service), Mysteries of the Rosary, and the 4 Marks of the Church*

**Sixth Grade-** *Beatitudes and 10 Commandments*

We know that parents are the first and primary educators of their children, so we hope that by your example, the children will take this task to heart and be proud that they can recite the prayers of our Church.

**WE BELIEVE** also offers a website for parents, students and catechists. It offers lessons, activities, stories and games integrated with the materials offered in the weekly lessons. Be sure to check it out [www.webelieveweb.com](http://www.webelieveweb.com).

**Middle School (Grades 7-8):** This program takes place on the first and third Sunday of each month at 6:00 pm. The text for this program is from Sadlier Publishing. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum is based on Old Testament and is full of stories that show the history of our ancestors and all they went through to prepare for the coming of Christ. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade continues with this by learning about Jesus and His example to us on how to live and practice our faith and love for God and others. 8th grade wraps up with the history of the Catholic Church. This background and history is very important in leading into the preparation for Confirmation. If the students do not know about their religion, how can they commit to it? The students learn how to grow in faith, use their faith, and share their faith with others.

These students are required to memorize certain beliefs and prayers. The memorization required for each grade is:

**Seventh Grade-** *The Holy Days of Obligation and The Beatitudes*

(The repetition of prayers from elementary is caused by this not being required in the past, so these students have not yet memorized these.)

**Eighth Grade-** *Gifts of the Holy Spirit and The Prayer to the Holy Spirit*

Remember, parental support is crucial to our programs, you lead by your example.

The website to go to for 7th and 8th grade ideas and activities are [www.weliveourfaith.com](http://www.weliveourfaith.com).

*Eighth Grade*      **Confirmation**

Along with the curriculum eighth grade students are expected to participate in fifteen hours of community service and a retreat. There will be a required prayer service in October for the students and their parents that will begin the year of preparation into a spiritual focus. It is also meant as an opportunity for both the parents and students to make a commitment for their year long preparation.



A required retreat will be held in late winter. Confirmation takes place in the spring. The date will be announced when we receive the information from the Bishop's office.

Throughout the year, there will be opportunities for more involvement for our middle school students. Look for information to come home with students, in emails, in our weekly church bulletin, or on our website – [www.st-martha.org](http://www.st-martha.org).