

Saint Matthew Parish

Christian Formation



“cu@MASS”

Parent & Student
HANDBOOK

Grade 1- Grade 8

“cu@MASS”

Jesus calls each of us to himself – to experience the love of God and to share that love with everyone we meet. Our common mission as Christians is to bring Christ into the world. When we fulfill our mission, we make a difference in those we touch. Christ challenges us to build up the Body of Christ in our homes, our schools, our workplaces, and our community.

This year our parish is holding up the theme “cu@MASS” as the focus of all parish activity. In worship, education, outreach, and shared activities we hope to grow and enrich the gift of faith we have been given and, in doing so, make a difference in the life of our community – the People of God.

Parish GIFT sessions will focus on the revised Roman Missal and understanding the MASS and why as Catholics, we do what we do! They are part of the normal curriculum and attendance is taken.

Pledge to renew your life and spirit:

- **by strengthening the prayer life of your family**
- **by actively participating in community worship each week**
- **by reading and coming to know the Word of God in scripture**
- **by discussing and sharing your faith within your family**
- **by sharing your time and talents through service to others**
- **by acknowledging and enjoying the gifts God has given you**

Saint Matthew Parish Mission Statement

We follow Jesus as a welcoming Catholic community of believers, fostering a life of active prayer and worship, sharing God's word through education and action, and reaching out in service to those in need.

Religious Formation Philosophy

St. Matthew Religious Formation and Youth Ministry, in cooperation with the Christian home, gives the students a sound foundation for a future vocation and assists them in discovering their own worth as Catholic Christians in community through service to others.

Goals

To carry out our philosophy we need the assistance of both students and parents. We need to work together. Therefore, our goal is mutual cooperation between the Religious Formation Program and the Christian home environment. Total Christian Formation is realized through knowledge but also through God's graces. We encourage the children and parents in our program to participate in weekly Eucharist and the sacraments. Personal example is the greatest teacher.

Grade Overview

The Religious Formation program stresses basic concepts of the Catholic faith. The concepts are presented at a level that the children can appreciate and grow with. Special highlights are the parent/child participation in liturgies, Parish GIFT sessions, and special prayer services, (i.e. Stations of the Cross, May Crowning, etc.)

Program Content

The program we use at St. Matthew's encourages your child to be involved in the church and community by giving service. It also includes global awareness. There are activities in the textbooks and/or handouts to work on at home.

The entire program is organized around the following goals:

1. To proclaim the message of Jesus
2. To foster community
3. To participate in prayer and worship
4. To motivate service to the community

Our Responsibilities

For our part we will:

1. Be in **regular communication** with you.
2. **Pray** together and **plan** the lessons thoroughly.
3. Attend workshops and classes in Scripture, Theology, and Teaching Methods in order to become Certified Catechists or to maintain our certification.
4. **Teach** the lessons to the best of our ability with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Parental Responsibilities

We ask that *you*:

1. Be an “Active Parishioner” which is defined as “one who **regularly worships** with St. Matthew Parish community and regularly shares time, talent, and treasure with the parish to the best of his/her ability.”
2. Have your children attend all the classes unless illness prevents them.
3. Attend all scheduled parent meetings, special class sessions, and/or special liturgies.
4. Keep in close communication with the coordinator, the catechist, or director especially if family situations change during the school year.
5. Discuss what we are working on during our time together. **Pray and read scripture** with your children.
6. Be sure your children are prepared for class each week. Be sure your **CHILDREN HAVE THEIR BOOKS** each week. If **HOMEWORK** has been assigned, be sure it is completed within the allotted time.
7. **ADDRESS YOUR CONCERNS** regarding the program to:
Carol Daun, Director of Child and Family Formation
Shelly Madden, Director of Youth Ministry

Parent Service Hours

All parents are expected to fulfill a minimum of 5 hours of parent involvement somewhere in the parish. You may fulfill this in any area of Parish ministry. If you need any information regarding service opportunities, please ask Carol Madden, Shelly Madden, or contact the Religious Formation or Parish Office. It is your responsibility to keep us informed of your parent involvement in the parish. For those families who have children in both the parish school and the religious formation program, meeting the requirements of the parish school will fulfill your service hours.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to:

1. Comply with all the Religious Formation guidelines.
2. Act as good Christians by practicing good manners and self-discipline, respect, and being sensitive to others.
3. Be in their place when class begins and not to leave until class is dismissed.
4. Dress appropriately.
5. Complete homework assignments in a timely manner.
6. Be responsible to bring books and folders to each class.
7. Prepare for tests.
8. Participate in outreach activities.

Students should avoid:

1. Bringing money or valuables to class.
2. Bringing distractions such as cell phones, ipods, etc.
3. Bringing gum, candy, etc.
4. Running or being noisy in hallways when entering or leave the building.

Procedure and Discipline

Appropriate Christian attitudes and conduct are expected from all who participate in the parish Christian formation programs. Our catechists prepare and create a learning atmosphere for all students. Students who disrupt this atmosphere will be asked to leave class.

Absenteeism and Tardiness

If students are to benefit from the continuity of the religious education program, their regular class attendance is absolutely necessary. Classes will begin promptly:

Grades 6 – 8 10:30 am Sundays or 6:30 pm Mondays

Grades 1 - 5 6:30 pm Monday

Preschool 9:30 am Sunday

Families of Faith 9:00 am Sunday

When there are **GIFT sessions, they are for ALL will follow the 9:30 am on Sunday or 6 pm on Monday.**

In case of illness parents are requested to call the Religious Formation Office (762-4200 ex14) prior to class time. **In case of tardiness**, please check in at the Religious Formation Office with your child before he/she goes to class.

Leaving During Class

Students must bring a note from a parent and take it to the office where it will be approved, then delivered to their catechist.

Entrances and Exits

Please use the WEST ENTRANCE whenever possible.

Students should be dropped off and picked up at the classroom door by the parent/guardian. Children should not be dropped off more than 10 minutes before the start of classes. Members of the same family or car pool should use the same entrance.

Snow Days / Emergency Closings

When local public schools are closed due to weather conditions, Religious Formation classes will not be held. We follow the Oak Creek- Franklin School District #1 decision regarding school closings.

If the weather looks threatening during the day, listen to radio station WTMJ (AM-620), or TV stations WISN 12 or WITI 6 for Cancellation announcements. If possible, the Oak Creek and South Milwaukee schools will be called to announce the cancellation prior to their dismissal.

PART II

Prayers and Curriculum Guide by Grade Level

This guide has been prepared for families to assist parents in the task of passing on the faith to their children. We hope that it will provide a valuable supplement to the instruction and reading your children receive at home and in our parish's religious formation programs.

Essential Prayers for Catholics

(All students should know)

***The Sign of the Cross**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(All students Grade 1 and up should know)

***The Lord's Prayer**

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. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. 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.

***Glory be to the Father**

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.

***Angel of God**

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom His love entrusts me here, ever this day, be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

***Prayer Before Meals**

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

***Prayer After Meal**

We give You thanks for all Your benefits, O Almighty God, who lives and reigns forever, and may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

(Grade 2 and up)

***Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; **and** in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; **who** was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended **into hell**; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of **God**, the Father **almighty**; **from there** he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

***An Act of Contrition**

O my God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you who I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior, Jesus, suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.

or

O my God, I am sorry for my sins because I have offended you. I know that I should love you above all things. Help me to do penance, to do better, and to avoid anything that might lead me to sin. Amen.

(Grade 3 and up)

***Morning Offering**

Almighty God, I thank you for your past blessings. Today I offer myself - whatever I do, say, or think - to your loving care. Continue to bless me, Lord. I make this morning offering in union with the divine intentions of Jesus who offers himself daily in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and in union with Mary, his Virgin Mother and our Mother, who was always the faithful servant of the Lord. Amen.

(Grade 4 and up)

***Prayer of St. Francis**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

(Grade 5 and up)

***Nicene Creed**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all **things visible and invisible**.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only **Begotten** Son of God,
born of the Father **before all ages**. God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, **consubstantial** with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, **and by** the Holy
Spirit **was incarnate** of the Virgin Mary and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried, **and rose again on the third day** in
accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the
right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son **is adored** and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the
resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Other Catholic Prayers

Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone
who fled to your protection, implored your assistance or sought your intercession,
was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins,
our Mother; to you I come; before you I kneel, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of
the word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer
them. Amen.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To
you we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, O most gracious
advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us
the Blessed Fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin
Mary, pray for us O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the
promises of Christ.

Basic Knowledge of the Faith

The following are truths, teachings, and scriptural materials which all students on specific grade levels should know. These objectives are based upon the scope and sequence of our curriculum and guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. These beliefs and practices are life-long experiences; students in upper grades should continue to know and practice the foundations of the lower grades.

On each grade level we have listed the basic teachings that are part of our curriculum. Our hope is that parents will review and reinforce this material at home. The scripture passages are part of a developmental growth in faith. The Church strongly encourages families to read and pray from the Bible. Our hope is that, during each year, parents will read or tell these scripture stories to their children.

Grade One

1. Knows the Two Great Commandments (Love God and Love my neighbor)
2. Can discuss the basic signs which happen in Baptism, Eucharist, and Reconciliation.
3. Celebrates rituals (Advent Wreath, Christmas Crib, Lenten Ashes) which express our beliefs.
4. Begins to pray basic prayers (Holy Holy, Alleluia, Our Father, Lord Have Mercy) and responses (“and also with you”) at Mass.
5. Experiences prayer as listening and talking to God.

Scripture:

Recognizes the Bible as the story of God's people.

Becomes familiar with the following stories:

- Creation (Genesis 1:1-2:6)
- The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-39)
- Christmas story (Luke 2:8-18)
- Jesus and the Children (Matt 19:13-15)
- The Last Supper (Mark 14:12-26)
- The Easter Story (John 20:1-20)

Grade Two

1. Prays everyday.
2. Expresses belief in God as Trinity.
3. Talks about the Church as followers of Jesus.
4. Has a basic knowledge of the Ten Commandments.
5. Understands that Jesus forgives us through Reconciliation.
6. Experiences forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
7. Retells stories of some of the saints.

8. Recognizes the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.
9. Regularly participates in community Mass.
10. Recognizes basic items used in liturgy.

Scripture:

Knows that God speaks to us through the Bible, especially in the Liturgy of the Word.

Becomes familiar with the following stories:

Nativity (Luke 2:8-18)

Call of the Apostles (Matthew 4: 18-22)

The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-24)

The loaves and the fishes (John 6:1-13)

The Last Supper (John 17:1-26)

The washing of the feet (John 13:1-17)

The Crucifixion (Matthew 27:33-37)

The Easter Story (Luke 24:13-35)

Grade Three

1. Describes Jesus and the Kingdom of God.
2. Knows the meaning of the Creed.
3. Identifies the Pope and the bishops as leaders in the Church.
4. Tells about the Apostles.
5. Can tell the story of at least 5 saints.
6. Understands Mary as the Mother of Jesus and as our Mother.
7. Names and briefly describes the Seven Sacraments.
8. Can explain the liturgical seasons of the Church year.
9. Celebrates activities related to Feasts and Seasons (Home Blessings, Way of the Cross, Blessings with holy water)
10. Names the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.
11. Gives evidence of living as a disciple of Jesus (acts like a peacemaker, practices good stewardship, is concerned with justice).

Scripture:

Knows the difference between the Old and New Testaments.

Can tell stories of Jesus birth, death, and resurrection.

Knows the story of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41)

Tells the Emmaus story (Luke 24:13-35)

Knows and can give an example of parables.

Knows and can give examples of Jesus' miracles.

Grade Four

1. Believes in the goodness of Creation and human beings.
2. Understands that the Church is a community of believers who gather for worship, service, and witness to the life of Christ.
3. Sees the Holy Spirit as our helper and guide in life.
4. Has developed a good sense of conscience and forgiveness.
5. Has an understanding of the difference between temptation and sin.

6. Distinguishes between serious (mortal) and lesser (venial) sins.
7. Describes sin as a personal choice not to act in a loving way toward God, others, and self.
8. Expresses sorrow for sins.
9. Explains the consequences for making wrong choices.
10. Experiences God's forgiveness in Reconciliation.
11. Participates regularly in Eucharist on Sun days and Holy Days.
12. Knows the Beatitudes.
13. Begins to practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.
14. Can talk about several saints as models of Christian life.

Scripture:

Understands scripture as experiences of God's love for us.

Has the ability to find passages in the Bible.

Knows the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20: 2-17)

Can discuss the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 1-12)

Can understand basic lessons of the Prodigal Son, Good Samaritan, and other parables.

Knows the temptations of Christ (Matthew 4: 1-11).

Grade Five

1. Knows and lives the belief that all life is sacred.
2. Explains the Communion of Saints.
3. Can speak of the lives of saints who are role models.
4. Identifies ways in which the Church carries on the work of Christ.
5. Knows the names, symbols, and meanings of the Seven Sacraments.
6. Prays with understanding both, the Apostles and Nicene Creeds.
7. Recognizes the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and in the Church.
8. Can talk about the liturgical year.
9. Recognizes the importance of the Sacred Triduum (Three Days-Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday)
10. Understands that the reality of sin in the world is the heart of "original sin" into which we are all born.
11. Acts on the belief that Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy are an essential part of following Jesus.
12. Practices forgiveness and peacemaking.

Scripture:

Is able to locate, read, and explain the following stories in light of the Sacraments:

Nicodemus (John 3:1-21)

Baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9-11)

Samaritan Woman (John 4:4-42)

Anointing at Bethany (Mark 14:3-9)

Jesus, the Bread of Life (John 6:1-58)

Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)

Forgiving 70 times 7 (Matt. 18:21-22)

Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11)

Service to others (Mark 10:44)

Grade Six

1. Explains the relation between Body of Christ and the Church.
2. Can explain the difference between being Christian and Catholic.
3. Expresses belief in Jesus as Messiah and Son of God.
4. Can tell the difference between the Bible and Tradition.
5. Knows the origins of the Catholic Church.
6. Is able to explain Incarnation, Redemption, and Resurrection and is able to connect them to Church Feasts and Seasons.
7. Sees Mary and the saints as models of holiness.
8. Prays daily and actively participates in Sunday Mass, Reconciliation, and seasonal rituals of the Church.
9. Connects the Seven Sacraments with basic life experiences.
10. Is able to relate how the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes form the basic foundation for Christian life.
11. Demonstrates a positive attitude toward life, others and self.
12. Shows respect for life.
13. Articulates how prejudice and injustice are social sins.

Scripture:

Recognizes the importance of the Old Testament.

Recognizes different literary forms in the Bible (fables, parables, law, poems, hymns, prophetic writing, faith-history).

Is able to identify literary form of scripture from previous grades.

Is able to discuss the meaning of covenant, exodus, and prophet.

Is able to identify and discuss the following:

Abraham/Sarah (Genesis 12:1-17, 21:1-6)

Moses (Exodus 2, 3, 12, 20)

Amos (Amos 5, 8)

Jeremiah (Jeremiah 19:3-4)

Joseph (Genesis 37-45)

David (I and II Samuel)

Isaiah (Isaiah 1, 3)

Grades Seven and Eight

1. Connects the Creed with life experiences
2. Recognizes major periods in biblical and Church history.
3. Describes the major traditions of our faith (marks the Church, Hierarchy, Tradition).
4. Describes the contributions of saints and other holy people to the life of the Church (Examples: Francis and Clare of Assisi, Thomas More, Vincent de Paul, Kateri Tekawitha, Isaac Jogues and the North American martyrs, Thomas Merton, Pope John XXIII, Pope John Paul II, Mother Theresa, Elizabeth Ann Seton, Mother Cabrini).
5. Can identify holy people of other faith traditions.
6. Names the Seven Sacraments and associates them with life experiences.
7. Articulate the value of ritual and prayer as it touches every level of life, especially in the context of the family.
8. Experiences a personal and communal prayer relationship with God.

9. Is active and regular in participation in Sunday and Holy Day liturgies.
10. Can discuss how the Commandments, Beatitudes, and Works of Mercy are the guidelines for a happy life and how they are a regular part of their daily life.
11. Understands the difference between personal and social sin and sees the connections between them.
12. Identifies and is beginning to live virtues of Christian life.
13. Shows respect for body, self, and others.

Scripture:

Explains the relationship between the New and Old Testaments.

Uses Scripture as a source of prayer.

Connects Scripture with life issues:

Rich Young Man (Matthew 19:23-26)

Justice (Micah 6:8)

Eucharist (I Corinthians 11:17-26)

Self image (Psalm 139)

Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17)

God's Mercy (Luke 15: 11-32)

Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:21-45)

