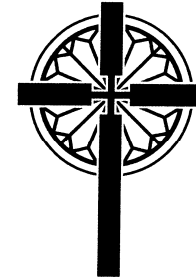


St. Maria Goretti Catholic Parish



2009 – 2010 HANDBOOK
for
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION &
GRADES 1-5 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Religious Ed Website

<http://stmariagoretti.org/SMG/ReligiousEdYM/Main.aspx>

<http://stmariagoretti.org>

Welcome to our Website!

The Parish has an excellent website that we improve and update often. The website contains information you wish to know about the parish, school and religious education programs. When you go to the parish site, click on “REL.ED/YM” to access the Religious Ed and Youth Ministry sections. From there, click on other links to find calendars, newsletters, special dates, forms and other information.

Registration forms are available on the website as well.

You can also find email links to staff, phone numbers and other information pertinent to our programs.

Communication is a vital part of our program. Our website is a great way to access the information you need at your convenience!

***St. Maria Goretti Catholic Parish
Mission Statement***

*Our parish family is called to grow in faith and love.
We desire to be in union with Jesus Christ and one another.
We will accomplish this mission through worship and prayer,
education and evangelization in our community and world.*

*With St. Maria Goretti as our patron,
we strive to follow her life of forgiveness and holiness.*

*May we pursue this mission faithfully,
encouraging others to join us in discipleship for the Lord.*



2009 - 2010 Early Childhood Calendar

Sunday mornings during the 9:00 Mass

September 20 – Open House Special time 10:15am

September 27

October 4

October 11

October 25

November 8

November 15

November 22

December 6

December 13

January 10

January 17

January 24

February 7

February 14

March 7

March 14

March 21

Last Class and Blessing March 28

Early Childhood Education

Our Early Childhood program is for children ages 3 through Kindergarten. Using the Diocesan Standards for Early Childhood Education, this faith development program is designed to lead youngsters to know and love God, who made them. The goal of the program is to shape attitudes in the children that will prepare them to be committed Catholics. The children are encouraged to discover and explore the wonders of God in the world around them, in themselves, their families and in the special gift of Jesus. Hands on activities focus on faith development through arts and crafts, language, games, and visual, motor and listening skills. Please consult the Early Childhood Education calendar for session dates. Sessions run from late September to March, 9:00-10:00 a.m. in the parish school building. *Up to date information is also available on the parish website. Click on the RE, then Early Childhood tabs.*

*Regular attendance providing consistency and routine is essential!

One absence need not be called in. However, if your child will miss more than 2 classes in a row, please do call the RE Office at 271-8081 to let us know.

*As parents, we are our children's *first and best* catechists. Each week, children will bring home a short "What We Did Today" newsletter, so families can review the concepts taught and discuss them together. Our hope is that as parents, our own faith will deepen as we share God's love with our children

***Parent involvement is expected.** Each parent is encouraged to assist as a "room parent" *at least* once per semester. Sign-up sheets are available at the Open House and at each classroom throughout the year.

*A year-end blessing of the children is celebrated on the last Sunday of classes, March 28, at the 9:00 liturgy.

Religious Education Calendar 2009 – 2010

Sept	14	NO CLASS Catechist Meeting 6:30 pm
	21	OPENING NIGHT - Family Night
	28	Class
Oct	5	Class
	12	Class
	19	NO CLASS
	26	Class
Nov	2	NO CLASS
	9	Class
	16	Class
	18	First Reconciliation Parent Meeting 7pm <i>Parish Ctr.</i>
	23	Family Thanksgiving Celebration & Pot Luck 6pm
	30	Class
Dec	7	Class
	14	Class
		Christmas Break Dec. 15 to Jan 3rd
Jan	4	Class
	11	Class
	18	No Class Catechist Meeting 6:30 pm
	23	First Reconciliation A-K 9am; L-Z 11 am – Church
	25	Class
Feb	1	NO CLASS
	8	Class
	15	Class
	22	NO CLASS
Mar	1	NO CLASS
	8	Class
	11	First Communion Retreat 6 - 8:15 pm, Church
	15	Reconciliation, Grades 2 to 5
	22	Class
		Easter Break March 23 to April 11
Apr	12	Class
	17	First Communion Rehearsal RE 8:45-9:45am; SMG 10-11am
	19	Class
	26	6:00 pm Closing Mass for Parents & students

First Communion: April 24-25 & May 1-2

Grades 1-5 Religious Education

This “basics of faith” 22 week program is offered Mondays from 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. and 6:00 – 7:15 p.m. late September through April, in St Maria Goretti School.

We use the **Faith First** text at each grade level, through which the Diocesan Standards for Religious Education are met.

The curriculum is divided into three parts:
Doctrine, Scripture, and the Liturgical Seasons.

The *doctrines* taught are based on the four pillars of the Catholic Church: **creed, worship and sacraments, morality, and prayer.**

Through *Sacred Scripture* young people will grow in their knowledge and love of God and His Word.

Learning about and celebrating the *Liturgical Seasons* helps children to enter into the Paschal Mystery and to take part in the seasons more fully.

Each student will receive a copy of the Faith First textbook on opening night. Please take time to ask your child what they talked about in class, discuss the concepts together and review those concepts whenever you have a chance during the week.

You are your child’s first—and best—catechist.

PARENTAL SUPPORT of the religious education program is essential. Many parents volunteer as teachers, aides, office help, or childcare providers. We are grateful for your assistance! The program can not function without parent volunteers. Please call the Religious Education Office to find out how you could be of most help if you have not already signed up to help.

RELEGIIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES HAVE A THEME each year. The 2009-2010 theme for grades 1 to 5 is “**The Mass**”. In addition to the Faith First textbook, we will learn about the parts of the Mass & how to participate in the Mass more reverently and more thoroughly.

THE ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK DINNER is held the Monday before Thanksgiving. All family members are invited and strongly encouraged to attend. The purpose of this evening is to build community between Religious Education parents and children and to give glory and thanksgiving to God for the many gifts we receive from Him. It’s a wonderful opportunity to visit with other St. Maria Goretti families and a chance to thank Catechists for their hard work and devotion.

OUR CLOSING MASS is an important celebration which your children plan and participate in. They use what they have learned about the Mass and liturgy, and their enthusiasm is inspiring. Please plan to come with your relatives and friends as your children demonstrate that *We Are the Church, Happy To Be the Children in God’s Family!*

We Really Need You, Parents...

Please share your time, energies, gifts and talents with our Parish Education program.

We depend on the support and involvement of our parish families in the full life of the parish.

It is a privilege to partner with you in the development of young hearts and minds for Christ.

SACRAMENT PREPARATION

First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion are celebrated with baptized children in the second grade. Children attend religious education sessions after school or during their Catholic school day. For children who are 3rd grade or older, special religious education sessions are offered to help prepare them for these sacraments.

- Parents are asked to provide the RE Office with the child's baptismal certificate.
- Children should be enrolled in religious education at St. Maria Goretti, or attend St. Maria Goretti School or Edgewood Campus School

FIRST RECONCILIATION

Preparation begins the first semester of *second grade* with classroom instruction and at-home activities. A parent meeting is held in November to provide an overview of the process. First Reconciliation will be celebrated **Saturday, Jan. 23rd at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.** Students whose names end in A-K attend **with** their families at 9a.m. and students whose names end in L-Z attend **with** their families at 11 a.m.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Preparation begins the second semester of second grade with classroom instruction, at-home activities and a parent-child retreat which is **March 11 at 6 to 8:15 pm. Every child is expected to attend with a parent.** First Holy Communion will be celebrated on the weekends of **April 24/25 and May 1/2** during the Saturday 5:15 and Sunday 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. masses. Each family will have the opportunity to sign up for a mass time preference at the Parents' Meeting in November.

CONFIRMATION

Preparation begins in 9th grade. Confirmation is celebrated in the spring of the sophomore year of high school. Refer to the Youth Ministry Handbook for more information on the preparation process for Confirmation. **Edgewood students should register & attend both freshman & sophomore years.** Questions? Call 298-2098.

Children who have not yet been Baptized:

Children in first grade or older who have not been baptized should participate in the religious education program at their grade level. In addition to the regular religious education class, children will participate in some specially scheduled small group instruction and some additional home instruction to prepare for the sacrament of Baptism.

Please call the Religious Education Office at 271-8081 to begin the process.

Children older than 2nd Grade who have not yet received their First Reconciliation and/or First Communion:

Children who are above 2nd grade and have not received these sacraments should participate in the religious education program at their grade level. In addition to the regular religious education class, children will participate in some specially scheduled small group instruction and some additional home instruction to prepare for these sacraments.

First Reconciliation is celebrated in late January.

First Communion is celebrated during the Easter Season, usually the last weekend of April or the first weekend of May.

Please call the Religious Education Office at 271-8081 to begin the process.

Parish Religious Education Policies and Procedures

► Attendance ◀

Regular attendance in religious education class is an important factor in deepening our understanding of our triune God through the study of Scripture, prayer, Church teaching and community.

We ask that every effort be made to **limit absences to no more than two classes in the course of a semester** unless health conditions or family circumstances warrant otherwise. Frequent absence does affect a child's religious education and impacts on the entire class. In the event of two consecutive, unexcused absences a representative of the parish education program will be in touch with the parent(s)/guardian.

1st through 5th grade student absences are to be called in to the Parish Education Office (271-8081) prior to class time. A voice message can be left, indicating the child's name, grade, parent name and reason for the absence. If there is no notification of absence by a parent, a phone call is made to the parent home by the attendance volunteer. **Early Childhood absences need not be called in.**

Late arrivals are discouraged, as they are disruptive to the class. Those arriving more than 5 minutes after the start of class time will need to check in with the attendance aide, located in the Parish Education Office.

► **Traffic Flow- Drop-off & Pick-Up Procedure** ◀

Please follow signs which will be posted to guide traffic for drop-off and pick-up of students. **Please do not park along the curb adjacent to the school building.**

Please do not drop your child off more than 10 minutes before the beginning of the session. Please be prompt and pick up your child/children on time.

Early Childhood parents should come into the classroom to sign their child in and out each week. Your promptness is appreciated.

► **Custody Issues** ◀

In the event of a divorce or separation it is assumed by the Religious Education and Youth Ministry Offices that each parent has been awarded equal rights in regard to access to their children. If there are special circumstances such as sole custody, limited access or restraining orders, copies of these court documents must be on file in the RE/YM office.

► **Health Concerns and Medication** ◀

Catechists and parish education personnel are not allowed to dispense medication to students. If there is a need to make a policy exception, please contact the Religious Education Office to obtain a form authorizing the administration of medication.

► **Special Events and Fieldtrips** ◀

On occasion, special events of a social/recreational nature, service activities, or retreats may be scheduled off-campus. Participation of students in such events will be with the written consent of parents and with the supervision of at least two of the following: a program coordinator, catechist or designated adult.

► Communications ◀

The weekly parish bulletin serves as our official means of communication, and is available electronically through our parish website (www.stmariagoretti.org). In addition to the bulletin and this handbook, program-level and class communications will routinely be sent home with your child. (For grades 1-5, please check the student folder weekly for parent notes!)

Progress notes, providing a written report of your child's experience within the religious education program, are completed and sent home once a year for those in grades 1-5. Any serious matter or concern will be brought to parental attention immediately. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions please feel free to share them with your child's catechist or call the Parish Education Office.

► Snacks for Special Occasions ◀

Students in the grades 1-5 classes may have snacks each week or as part of a group activity at the discretion of the catechist. Snacks should be Peanut/Nut/Peanut oil free as well as user and room-friendly: easy to eat and easy to clean up. When providing a class snack, individual servings are appreciated.

► Food Allergies ◀

Parents should notify the religious education office and the catechist if their child has any food allergies. Children in that classroom will be encouraged to bring snacks that are appropriate for all children, so as not to put the allergic child at risk. Please avoid providing snacks that contain peanuts, peanut oil or tree nuts. There are children in our school who can go into shock from even the most minute exposure to these products.

► Cancellation of Classes ◀

Inclement weather or other circumstances may require the cancellation or early dismissal of classes. When MADISON schools close due to bad weather, we will automatically cancel classes. When weather conditions deteriorate after school dismissal resulting in the cancellation of classes we will take the following steps to inform registered families:

1. We will contact local radio stations with an announcement of cancellation.
2. We will call all program teachers and aides, requesting they call as many homes of the students in their class as possible with the notice of cancellation.
3. We will place a voice message on our phone answering system.

Should weather conditions deteriorate during class time, we ask parents to use their discretion in coming early to pick-up their children. We will follow emergency procedures as required by the situation (tornado, flash flood, etc.). Parents bear the responsibility for being informed regarding cancellation and for making decisions about class attendance under questionable conditions. If you are concerned about road conditions because of weather, please do not bring your children to class. We serve numerous school districts and each one may reach a different decision about school cancellations due to weather!

RADIO STATIONS

1310 AM/101.5 FM WIBA	1191 AM/102.5 FM WNWC
1070 AM WTSO	92.1 FM WMAD
96.3 FM WMLI	104.1 FM WZEE

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

In accordance with classroom rules established by each class on opening day, the following consequences for rule infractions are to be observed:

FIRST INFRACTION: A verbal warning is issued that a rule is not being followed. Depending on the seriousness of the infraction and the teacher's judgment, the student may be asked to go immediately to the Religious Education Office to see the program coordinator (or the program coordinator may be asked to come to the classroom). Parents will be called as determined by the program coordinator.

SECOND INFRACTION: Student will be escorted to the Religious Education Office for a conference. Parents will be called and will be asked to sit in on the next class with their child.

THIRD INFRACTION: Student is escorted to the Religious Education Office. Parents are called and a conference is held to determine programming alternatives.

The intent of these consequences is to assure that a safe and orderly classroom environment conducive to both teaching and learning is maintained. Appropriate and respectful behavior is expected. To assist our volunteer staff in the parish religious education program, classroom management techniques are part of the INITIAL ORIENTATION provided each fall and will be addressed throughout the year.

