

New Parent Policy Info

These are just a few of the more important things you should know – we also have all of our policies on the parish website, www.smmchurch.org. The calendar is on there too, we're always online!

Our classes are more than just classroom lessons – we have some field trips for older classes, and we use our family days to be sure everyone is involved. We know that we can count on you to be our partners in carrying the gospel home, and continuing the faith experience begun in the classroom. You are the domestic church!

General Information

We ask that all children pre-K through 4th grade be picked up at the classroom door by a parent or an older sibling. Sadly, with today's climate we have changed our security policy. When you are bringing your child to PREP, only the doors behind the building – the main school entrance by the gym – will be open on a regular basis. We will close the security doors by 10:05 and reopen them at 10:50 for you to enter for pickup; in the meantime, the lobby area outside the gym will be open. When there is bad weather (either heavy rain or freezing temperatures) we will send out a remind text (using our cellphone, text the message **@smprep** to the phone number **81010** to join our texting group) letting you know that the front doors will be open for entry; otherwise, you can always go OUT the front doors, you just can't come in them. If you need to pick up your child early for some reason, we do have someone who will sit in the office there to buzz you in after she checks your name against the list of students.

In order to be sure your student has really grasped the concepts for the year, we ask that you ensure that they attend at least **80% of the classes, 90% during sacramental years** (2nd and 8th grades). If you miss more than that, you can either make up the work missed, or stay back in that grade the following year.

All of our teachers are background-checked and cleared by the For the Sake of God's Children charter. The charter also mandates that we discuss at an age-appropriate level things like good touch-bad touch, keeping secrets, etc. You're welcome at any time to see what the diocese has developed as curriculum in these areas, just know that the diocese is reviewing the curriculum as well, as it has been in place for 10 years. I am attending a meeting October 17th at which they will be giving us an updated curriculum, so I do anticipate some changes; our curriculum has been the same as that for Catholic schools, who have many weeks of classes versus our 30 hours! I also have that available for anyone who would like to see it. Teachers are required to fill out a form for the diocese stating which curriculum items they have discussed, when they did it, and how many were present, so this is no small item!

Disciplinary Policy

All students are expected to behave in a way that doesn't interfere with any of the others being able to learn. That being said, we are an inclusive program, and have a number of children with special needs. We find that they generally do not interfere with other children's learning – it's those who choose to be disruptive that need a helping hand! Most students love the program, but if someone is disruptive, we'll try to deal with it in-house first, and if needed, contact you for help. If necessary, an incident report will be filled out and kept in the student's permanent file. We do all we can to attain the best possible learning situation at all levels.

Emergency Situations

We cannot administer any drugs or medications to your child, other than those of any emergency nature, like an epi-pen. We will call the number you give us should a need of any kind arise. If it is an emergency situation, we will also call 911, although we are also blessed to have a nurse as one of our catechists! Older students found with drugs or alcohol will be suspended and expelled from the program if the problem continues.

If we need to cancel the program for any reason, we will have it on WDEL news radio (1150AM) and on the answering machine in the office (652-7141). It's generally for weather, we did have one tornado! Again, we will use the remind texting system described under general information to save you the trouble of listening to the radio or calling in!

Sacramental Policies

Students need to receive two full years of preparation prior to receiving a sacrament. That preparation is in addition to classroom instruction. All information is given at a series of parent meetings beginning the year prior to the celebration of the sacrament. On occasion exceptions are made for those willing to do the entire year's work with their child, bringing them in to me for testing at the end of each unit. All previous year's work must be completed prior to the end of that year.

Instructional Materials

Our grades 1-6 PREP classes use materials from Sadlier. They also have a wonderful website, [Sadlier Connect](#). It will provide you with lots of great info in addition to what is done in the classroom. If you can't attend some weekend for any reason, it's a great resource to keep your student on track! Our 7th grade students use a lectionary-based program from Pflaum called Gospel Weeklies, as do our Pre-K and kindergarten. The lesson plans takes the Gospel for the week and bring it to life in a way that is very relevant to what's going on in their lives. Each week they'll be given the pamphlet from class. You can find more information about them online at [Gospel Weeklies](#) and there are pages there where you can find some fun things to do at home too! Additionally, there is a booklet that deals with general faith information; we'll keep that here for them to reference during class until the end of the year, when they will bring it home.

Some of our classes take place in other locations on the property, but there are also occasions when we will send a permission slip home for another experience. These are generally reserved for upper grades, and parents are welcome to attend all of them. They include an interfaith seder, a trip to the St. Veronica Giuliani Monastery, and a service trip. I will also use a signup genius with the link on the same page as the family days. We'll occasionally use speakers on different topics, and you are always welcome to join us!

Part of our program for grades 1-8 is a monthly 2-hour family day. We have seven (7) of them, and you will need to sign up for four (4) of them each year. You can find them on the parish website at [Family Days](#). Each topic is something all of the classes cover, and some involve a particular class (for example, whenever we do saints as a topic, our 7th grade are required to attend, since they research saints as part of their class.) **This enables you to have three (3) weekends "off" during the year. If you are not signed up for a particular family day, your child has no class that day.** Since many of our students have differing vacation times, especially in the spring, this is often helpful to them so that the children don't miss as much class time. And as we already noted, that's very important during a sacramental year!

If you want to see the full diocesan curriculum for your child's year, it's on the parish website at [Curriculum](#). Our [lesson calendars](#) and [newsletters](#) for each class are on there too, so you can see when we are teaching a particular class. Our textbooks have tear-out pages if you need to do a class at home, or are the gospel weeklies and can be given out ahead of time as well.

The 8th grade has begun a new program this year. As the youth ministry office has taken over Confirmation classes, and the bishop has moved our date forward, we have had to cut our 8th grade year short, so we have changed the curriculum to accommodate the shorter time frame. Confirmation classes are now taught in February through April of the 8th grade year on Sunday mornings from 9-10:45AM. As a result, our 8th grade classes run from September through the end of January, and those students are asked to attend **three family days** in that time period. The regular classes are video based from the same curriculum we use for Confirmation, a program from Ascension Press called **CHOSEN**. Students will watch a video clip on a topic while taking notes in a composition book; afterwards they will discuss questions in the classroom. For those in the 8th grade who have to miss a class, if you send me a request I am working on arranging for a Google classroom where the videos will be available; the questions will be emailed to you.

Our catechists always strive to give your child a real love of their faith. We appreciate all that you do to help us by reinforcing the lessons at home, and at Mass on weekends and holy days. God is so good to us, we all need to work together to be sure our children know!