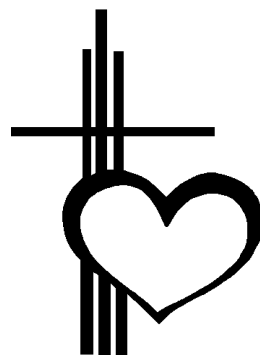
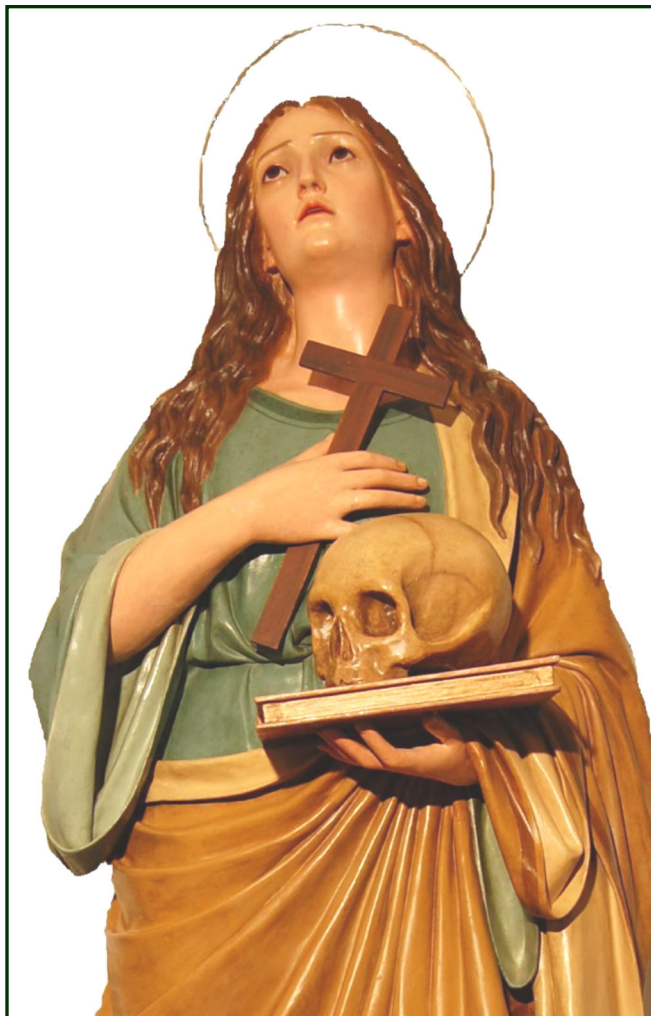


ST. MARY MAGDALEN
CATHOLIC CHURCH

RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
PARENT
STUDENT
HANDBOOK
2020-2021





**A
NOTE
FROM
OUR
PASTOR**

Dear Parents:

God bless you for enrolling your child in our religious instruction program. Religious instruction is not just preparation to receive the Sacraments but an opportunity for your child to grow in faith and more fully participate in the life of the Church.

Participating at Sunday Mass is an important part of our faith. Each week we prepare your children to understand the Scriptures that will be proclaimed in Church the following weekend. It is important that you attend Mass each week.

In addition, we urge you to participate in your child's religious education. Each week we give your child information to give to you so that you can continue your child's religious education at home.

Finally, the time of your child's religious education is also a good time to examine your own faith and participation in the church. There are also educational classes for adults who have not yet made their First Communion or have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation as well as help for those who wish to be married in the Catholic Church. This should be a time of personal renewal for the entire family.

Sincerely,

**Rev. Damian Flanagan
Parochial Administrator**

SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

These are important dates to place on your calendar. More specific information will be provided closer to time of event. **THESE DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

REGISTRATION BY EMAIL TO BE SENT TO PARISHOFFICE@STMMSIB.ORG

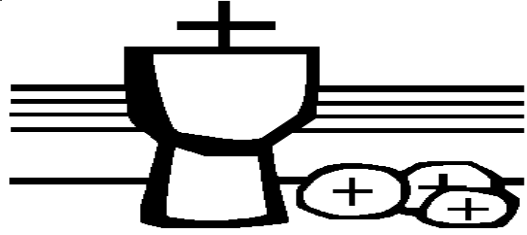
From September to Tuesday, October 13, 2020

Monday	September 21	First Communion Year 1 Class Begins
Tuesday	September 22	First Communion Year 2 Class Begins
Monday	October 19	All documents records are due today
Monday	October 12	No Classes — Legal Holiday (Columbus Day)
Tuesday	October 13	First Communion Year 2 Parent Meeting in the Parish Hall
Monday,	October 19	Virtus-First Communion Year 1 –Video
Tuesday	October 20	Virtus-First Communion Year 2 –Video
Tuesday	October 27	Virtus-Confirmation Year 1 & Year 2 –Video
Monday	November 2	No Classes — Due to Election Day
Tuesday	November 3	No Classes — Election Day
Monday	December 14	Last Class until New Year -First Communion Year 1
Tuesday	December 15	Last Class until New Year -First Communion Year 2 & Confirmation
Monday	January 4	Classes begin again
Tuesday	January 5	Classes begin again
Monday	January 18	No Classes– Legal Holiday (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
Monday	February 15	No Classes-- Legal Holiday (Presidents' Day)
Wednesday	February 17	Ash Wednesday: Students will attend 7:00 PM Mass
Tuesday	March 9	Parents Meeting First Communion Year 2 5:00 PM (in Church)
Tuesday	March 9	Confession: First Communion Year 2 5:00 PM (in Church)
Tuesday	March 16	Confession: Confirmation 5:00 PM & adult Confession (in Church)
Monday	March 22	Last Class until after Easter -First Communion Year 1
Tuesday	March 23	Last Class until after Easter -First Communion Year 2
Tuesday	March 23	Last Class until after Easter -Confirmation 1 & 2
Thursday	April 1	Holy Thursday: First Communion Year 2 & Confirmation students will attend Mass
Saturday	April 3	Holy Saturday—Easter Vigil—Baptisms
Monday	April 5	Classes begin again First Communion Year 1
Tuesday	April 6	Classes begin again First Communion Year 2 & Confirmation
Saturday	April 10	Confirmation 2 Retreat
Tuesday	April 13	Confirmation Rehearsal (Students & Sponsors) 5:00 PM (in Church)
Sunday		Confirmation Mass 11:00 AM (date will be decided by the Archdiocese of Miami)
Monday	April 26	Last Class First Communion Year 1
Tuesday	April 27	Last Class First Communion Year 2
Tuesday	April 27	First Communion Rehearsal (Parents & Students) 5:00 PM (in Church)
Saturday	May 8	First Communion Mass 11:00 AM

FIRST COMMUNION

YEAR 1: GRADES 1 - 5

“COMING TO GOD”



Monday, 4:45 PM to 6:15 PM

First Class: September 21

- Children in grades 1 through 5 will be assigned to age and language appropriate classes. Prepares students to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent, 2022 and First Communion May, 2022.
- Children must at least be in the first grade and 7 years old.
- Children should be baptized. Unbaptized children or children baptized into another faith tradition will receive special instruction and be baptized in Spring of 2021.

YEAR 2: GRADES 2 - 5: “BELIEVE”

Tuesday, 4:45 PM to 6:15 PM

First Class: September 22

- Children in grades 2 through 5 will be assigned to age and language appropriate classes. Prepares students to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent 2021 and First Communion Saturday, May 8, 2021.
- All students must be baptized, at least 7 years old, in the second grade, and have one year of formal First Communion religious education.

YEAR 2: GRADES 6-12: “COMING TO GOD’S LOVE”

Tuesday, 4:45 PM to 6:15 PM

First Class: September 22

- An intense special sacramental preparation program is available for students Grades 6-12 who have not made their First Communion, or have either not been baptized or baptized into a another faith tradition. According to each young adult’s situation, the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation and Eucharist will be available to them in Spring of 2021. (Confirmation will be on Spring 2022.)



CONFIRMATION: **GRADES 6- 12**



YEAR 1: Coming to Christian Maturity

Tuesday: 5:00 PM to 6:15 PM

First Class: September 22

- Catholic young adults in the 6th grade or higher who have made their First Communion but who have not had a year of formal religious preparation for Confirmation. Confirmation will be in the Spring of 2022.

YEAR 2: Coming to Confirmation

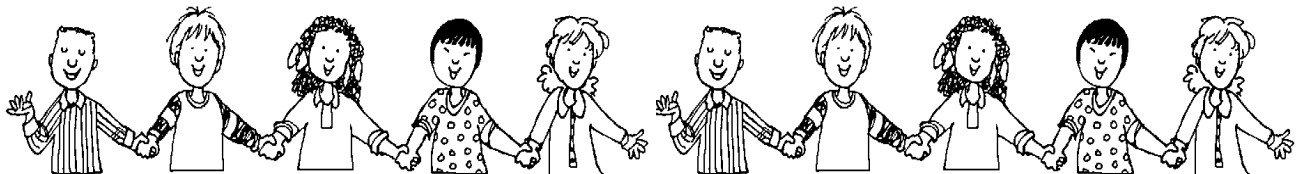
Tuesday: 5:00 PM to 6:15 PM

First Class: September 22

- Young adults who are baptized, received First Communion, practicing Catholics, at least in the 7th grade and who have received one year of formal Confirmation religious instruction in preparation for Confirmation.
- Confirmation date will be determined by the Archdiocese of Miami.

SPECIAL RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION NEED?

If you have a special religious instruction need or request, please contact Father Damian Flanagan or one of the religion teachers. We will try to be as flexible as possible to meet your needs or situations.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

A COMMUNITY OF FAITH

All families of children participating in the religious instruction program must be *participating* and *registered* members of St. Mary Magdalen Parish. Families who live outside of the parish boundaries must obtain a permission letter from their own parish in order for their child to attend religious instruction her.

PERMISSION TO RECEIVE SACRAMENTS

The Pastor's permission for your child to receive a sacrament depends upon: (1) copy of baptismal certificate; (2) regular, timely and active participation in weekly class; and (3) regular and active participation at Sunday Mass. Teacher attendance and parent sign-in sheets as well as teacher recommendation will verify class participation. Weekly sign-in book located in Sacristy of St. Mary Magdalen Church or church bulletin from another church will verify regular Mass attendance. Failure to meet these obligations may result in your child being delayed from receiving Sacraments.

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

For all students, parents must bring their child into the parish hall and sign-in each week before class. After class, parents must come into parish hall and sign-out. No child will be dismissed into the care of another person without proper authorization from parent.

Only students in Grades 6-12 will be granted an exemption from this policy upon written permission from parent for their child to arrive and leave class independently and determination by teacher of student's maturity to accept this responsibility.

REGISTRATION FEES

On-Time Registration

\$75 for each child.

2 or more children \$125

Late registration fee

(effective October 13)

\$100 for each child,

2 or more children \$150.

- All registration fees should be paid at registration unless payment plan is approved.
- No child will be denied religious education because of non-payment of a registration fee.
- If a parent is unable to pay the registration fee, the parent will be asked to meet with the religious education finance committee to review the situation. In some situations, parish volunteer service may be required as a substitute for the registration fee.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Call Parish Office - 305-931-0600 Monday-Friday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

First Communion Students

All students should provide a copy of a baptismal certificate by October 13.

Confirmation Candidates

Year 1

All students should provide a copy of their Baptism and First Communion Certificates by October 13.

Year 2

All students should provide a copy of their Baptism and First Communion Certificates by October 13.

All Year 2 Confirmation candidates should provide the name and required information about their Confirmation Sponsor by October 27.
(See Confirmation Sponsor eligibility requirements)

Any student not baptized into the Christian faith or not baptized as a Roman Catholic must meet with the Pastor to made plans for baptism. Any Confirmation candidate who has not made their First Communion will be placed in a special First Communion\Confirmation class.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR

Confirmation candidates are to submit the name, address and phone number of their Confirmation Sponsor. Confirmation sponsors will be give a *Confirmation Sponsor Affidavit* to sign, affirming their ability to serve as a sponsor. The Confirmation sponsor will take the Affidavit to their Church and have it signed by the Pastor. The Affidavit is then returned to the Confirmation teacher. The requirements are:

- 1. A member of the Roman Catholic Church.**
- 2. Received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion**
- 3. A practicing Catholic, attending Mass and receiving Communion regularly.**
- 4. In good standing with the Church. (Those Catholics whose current marriage was outside the Catholic Church or who are living with someone outside of marriage may not be godparents at this time.)**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICIES

MISSION STATEMENT

Religious formation is the core of the religious education program's educational mission. This formation is accomplished through the building of a community of faith within the religious education program and through instruction of the children in age-appropriate understanding of the Catholic faith. The Catholic religious education program should be one which respects the individual child, which provides personal support and a sense of belonging to each child.

ADMINISTRATION

The Pastor is responsible for the Religious Education Program in the Parish. He has appointed CARMEN COBAS to serve as the Director of the First Communion program and MICHAEL CARLSON to serve as Director of the Confirmation Program.

REGISTRATIONS

No person on the grounds of race, color, or national origin is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in receiving services at the religious education program.

It is the goal of the parish to provide religious education for every child in the parish. In rare cases, the parish may not be able to invite a student into the program because it does not have the resources to meet the special needs of the child. In such cases, the parish will assist the parents in providing catechesis for their child, especially in preparation for the sacraments.

In matters of admission to the program or to the reception of a sacrament, the pastor is responsible for a decision.

PARENTAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Persons with concerns about a catechist should first attempt to address the concern with the catechist. Only after such attempts have failed, should the parent contact the parish Director of Religious Education. If the parent continues to be dissatisfied, the parent should contact the pastor. Only after such attempts have failed should the Department of Religious Education of The Archdiocese of Miami be contacted.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Catechists will keep confidential information entrusted to them as long as no one's life, health or safety is at stake. In these cases, parents will be promptly notified of teacher concerns.

CUSTODIAL RIGHTS

In the case of divorced parents, the religious education program will interact with the parent who has legal custody of the child. The religious education program ordinarily will deal with the parent having legal custody in matters of absence, lateness, truancy, early dismissal, disciplinary issues, religious education program records, authorization to receive sacraments etc. Access to in-person conferences and the records and information pertaining to a minor child, including, but not limited to, religious education program records, may not be denied to a parent because the parent is not the child's primary residential parent. Full rights apply to either parent unless a court order specifically revokes these rights. In the latter case, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide evidence of such a court order.

HARASSMENT

The Archdiocese of Miami religious education programs are committed to providing a religious education program environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, our parish will not tolerate harassment of employee or volunteers, volunteers or students occurring in the religious education program or at religious education program-sponsored events. Such conduct is immoral and illegal and will not be tolerated.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, and/or visual, that is based on a person's protected status, such as sex, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status or other protected group status. The Archdiocesan religious education programs will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

If any employee or volunteer or student feels that he/she has experienced or witnessed harassment, that person must immediately notify her/his Director of Religious Education. However, if the Director of Religious Education is the individual who is believed to be harassing the employee or volunteer/student, then the employee or volunteer/student notifies the Pastor who will conduct an investigation. An appeal would be made to the Director of Religious education programs or the Vicar for Education. The Archdiocese forbids retaliation against anyone who has reported harassment.

CONDUCT, WHETHER INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

A student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside the religious education program, that is contrary to the moral code of the Church, may be asked to leave the program.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress appropriately when attending Religious Education classes. Clothing that is too short or too tight and underwear that is clearly visible is considered inappropriate.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are privileges given to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements.

Parents may always refuse to allow their child to participate in a field trip.

Students are required to bring a parental permission slip which releases the religious education program from liability to participate in a field trip. Students who fail to submit a proper form will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. Telephone calls will not be accepted in lieu of written permission. A copy of this form is found at the end of this booklet. If a child forgets to bring home the permission slip, a parent could copy the form from this book and complete it. This form could be faxed to the religious education program. Only the completion of this form satisfies the requirement of parental permission.

Archdiocesan policy not only discourages field trips that extend beyond religious education program hours for elementary religious education programs but also forbids overnight field trips for elementary religious education programs.

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

The administering of medicine to a child outside the doctor's office or a health institution is a parental responsibility and should not be delegated to religious education program personnel except under unusual circumstances. Parents should ask their physician if it is possible to prescribe medication so that it can be administered at home. Only when absolutely necessary is the religious education program willing to accept responsibility for administering medications, and then under the following guidelines:

The religious education program will never administer/dispense medicines (including over the counter drugs) to students without specific authorization by both a licensed physician and the parent of the students. An Authorization for Medication form must be completed and submitted by the parent. The name of the medication and dosage must be indicated on this form.

All medication must be brought to the office with a parent's authorization.

Only prescription medication can be brought to religious education program and must be stored in a religious education program office; no over-the-counter medication is allowed, unless a doctor's written authorization is submitted.

Prescription medication must be in the original bottle which must be labeled and must have the exact dosage.

The religious education program will not dispense medication, so students are responsible for their own medication.

All medications will remain in a secure location. (By exception, students who are asthmatic may carry a prescribed inhaler with them during the religious education program day.) A written log will be kept of dispensed medication.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the religious education program. The Church considers the parents to be the primary catechists of their children. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the religious education program administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

As part of this partnership, parents are expected to pay the tuition that is charged for the Religious Education Program.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The use or possession of illegal drugs or illegal mood altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over the counter drugs by any student on parish property or while attending or participating in any religious education program sponsored activity is forbidden. Transgression of this rule will result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from religious education program, even for a first offense.

Any student selling drugs on religious education program property or at religious education program functions will be immediately expelled. All Archdiocesan religious education programs are committed to a drug free environment.

WEAPONS POLICY

Weapons are not permitted anywhere on religious education program grounds. Students who bring weapons on religious education program grounds, who are in possession of weapons, or who threaten others with weapons or items used as weapons will be expelled from the religious education program.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM RECORDS

The following records are kept in the official file of the student: sacramental records, health records and an emergency information sheet. Only the contents of the official file will be forwarded to a new religious education program.

USE OF STUDENT INFORMATION AND PICTURES

The religious education program reserves the right to use student pictures in publications. Any parent who does not wish his or her child's picture used must notify the Director of Religious Education in writing prior to the beginning of the religious education program year.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

A child should never be released early without the knowledge of the parent/guardian. The Director of Religious Education will release the child only to the person who has placed the child in the religious education program. Any other person seeking the release of the child must have the approval of the parent with legal custody, which ordinarily shall be in writing.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

The Catholic religious education program promotes friendship, charity, kindness, love, and respect for self and others. However, inappropriate displays of affection, such as kissing or embracing which connote more than simple friendship, are not permitted in religious education program or at any religious education program event. The administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate behavior in a Catholic religious education program.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The Director of Religious Education or his/her delegate in our religious education programs has access to the lockers, handbags, desks, cars or any other object that is brought onto the campus of the religious education program, and may remove any object which is illegal or contrary to religious education program policy.

REPORTING PHYSICAL/SEXUAL ABUSE

Parents and guardians should understand that State law requires a teacher or administrator who has reasonable suspicion that sexual or physical abuse has occurred to report this to the Division of Children and Family Services. The teacher or administrator who fails to fulfill this responsibility can be charged with sexual or physical abuse, because the silence contributes to the crime.

COOPERATION WITH LEGAL AUTHORITIES

It is the practice of the religious education program to cooperate with any local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers that contact the religious education program in the course of any criminal investigation. The religious education program will attempt to notify the parents of any student sought to be interviewed in the course of a criminal investigation on the religious education program premises, unless directed by an investigator or law enforcement officer to the contrary, which is usually the case in investigations involving sexual or physical abuse. The religious education program will attempt as well to have a representative present during such an interview, unless this is not permitted by the investigators, which is often the case in investigations involving sexual or physical abuse.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The policy of the religious education program with regard to religious education program closings in cases of emergencies is to follow the decisions of the Public Schools in the county in which the religious education program is located. Parents should listen to broadcasts and keep their children home on days when the local public schools are closed.

INSURANCE OF STUDENTS

The Archdiocese purchases general liability insurance which covers the students in our religious education programs during the times that the students are involved in the activities of the program or are traveling on parish-arranged transportation.

SAFETY PLAN

The Parish intends to provide a safe environment for the children attending Religious Education Courses. For this reason, the Religious Education Program has developed a Safety Plan. A copy of this is available in the Parish Office where parent may read it.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM POLICY AND DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION'S RIGHT TO AMEND

Any student action that is not in keeping with the philosophy / objective of St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church's religious education program is subject to the review of the administration and may lead the parish to dismiss the student from the religious education program.

Since situations can arise that were not foreseen at the time of writing this Handbook, the religious education program reserves the right to initiate, change or modify the policies as needed. Parents and students will be notified of any amendments.

The Director of Religious Education and/or Pastor is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rules for just cause at his/her discretion.