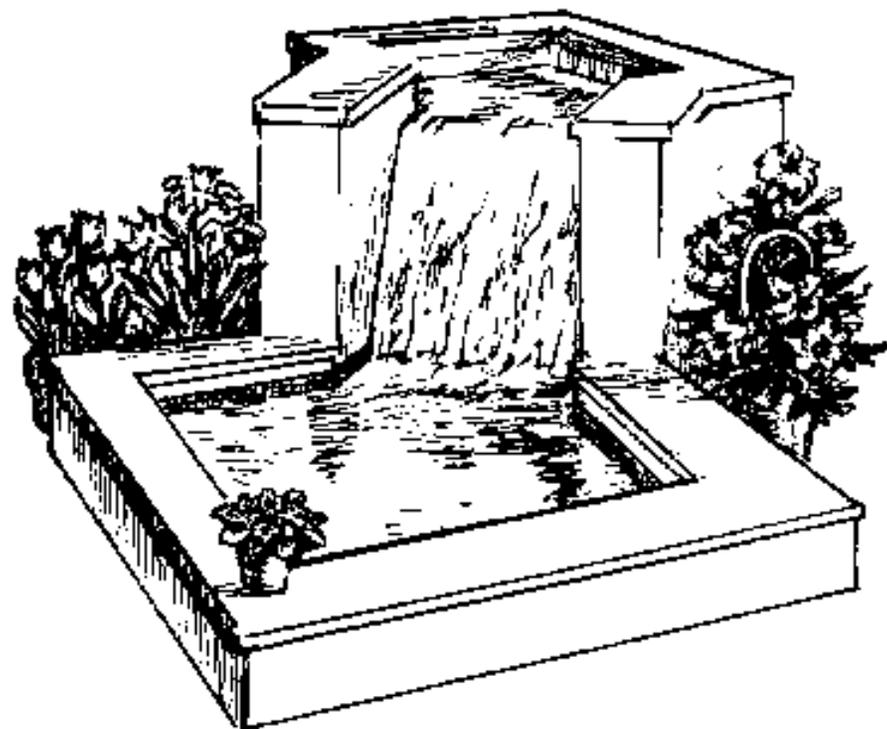


St. Margaret's Church
14 Copeland Ave
Homer, NY 13077-1619



St. Margaret's Church
14 Copeland Avenue
Homer, NY 13077

2015-2016
Faith Formation Handbook

FAITH FORMATION

Faith Formation, formally Religious Education, denotes more than knowledge of God and the tenets of our Catholic Religion, which are important. Faith Formation speaks of a continuing growth in our relationship with God and the Church-the People of God. It also includes prayer, worship, and a sense of service to each other. Faith Formation is life long and ongoing.

Celebration in Liturgy and service to others reinforces what is taught in the classroom.

ST. MARGARET'S CONTACTS

Christine Williams Director of Faith Formation

Fr Paul Alciati Pastor

Toni Williams Parish Office Manager

Phone Number: Parish office: 749-2542

Parish Office open weekdays
9:30 a.m. -4:00 p.m.

**PLEASE SAVE THIS
HANDBOOK FOR REFERENCE
DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR**

**We are grateful to the all of the
Catechists and Assistants for their
willingness to share their faith with
the children of
St. Margaret's**

Children's faith is first formed within the family. "The role of parents.... is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute" (Declaration on Christian Education #3-Vatican II). The Christian community assists you in this important role.

Being instrumental in your child's faith formation helps you grow in your own faith. To this end, we offer parent sessions, adult formation opportunities, and formation sessions for children. This handbook offers opportunities within our Faith Formation Process.

If you have experienced or are currently experiencing any sort of barrier or alienation between you and the church, please feel free to contact any pastoral team member so that together we might explore possible solutions.

The Faith Formation Process:

- proclaims and teaches *God's Word*
- is committed to enabling growth in faith and relationship to Jesus
- meets and follows the guidelines of the *General Directory for Catechesis* and the *National Catechetical Directory*
- uses texts that are in accordance with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

POLICIES FOR CHILDREN'S FORMATION SESSIONS:

A. Attendance:

- Faithful attendance is expected at all sessions and special events.
- Your child's consistent presence is important to the group as a whole and to the catechist.
- After two consecutive absences you will be called to see if there is a problem.

B. Time:

- Please see that your child is on time.
- Please escort younger children to and from their rooms.
- If your child is to be picked-up by someone other than a parent, please advise the Director of Faith Formation.
- Please pick-up your child on time.

C. Cancellation of Sessions:

- Notice of cancellation of sessions because of inclement weather will be made through announcements on the local radio station - WXHC-101.5 FM, or on Channel 3 or 5, Syracuse TV stations.
- Email notices will be sent out to all parents who have entered an email address on the registration form.

Breaking Out of the Ordinary

Faith formation programs for children are not effective without a strong adult faith community and the full and active involvement of parents. Parents are the primary educators in the faith. The parish as a whole supports what parents are providing in the home to help their children to know, love, and serve God. We all have gaps in our knowledge of God, Jesus and the Catholic Church. These meetings are a good place to "catch up" and fill in some of those gaps. Your ideas for topics, which will be presented, are needed and welcome. Please call (749-2542). Come for refreshments and relax with other adults.

Dates:

The Role of the Parent/Guardian

Children's faith is first formed within the family. "The role of parents... is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute" (Declaration on Christian Education #3-Vatican II). Parents/guardians thus have the primary duty of forming the faith of their children. Through faith formation programs and in other ways, the rest of the Christian community assists you in this important role. But, this only supplements the fostering of faith in the home; it does not and *cannot* replace it.

Being instrumental in your child's faith formation helps you grow in your own faith. Toward this end, St. Margaret's offers parent sessions, adult formation opportunities and formation sessions for children. This handbook details opportunities within our Faith Formation Process.

If you have experienced or are currently experiencing any sort of barrier or alienation between you and the church, please feel free to contact any Pastoral Team member so that together we might explore solutions.

POLICIES FOR CHILDREN'S FORMATION SESSIONS:

D. Fee:

- \$45 per child. An additional \$5.00/child enrolled for 1st Communion is required (2nd Grade) to cover extra expenses.
- If for some reason you feel you cannot pay the fee let the Director of Faith Formation know so that you will not receive a reminder notice.
- No child will be deprived of Faith Formation because of financial concerns.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Baptism: (children up to age 7)

- If you desire Baptism for your children you should be a participating, registered member of your Parish Community.
- Parents attend a session on the Sacrament of Baptism to insure understanding of the sacrament, the parental commitment it entails, and for help in preparing you for its celebration.
- Contact: Christine Williams at 749-2542

Baptism: (children age seven & older)

- Children's Catechumenate: for any child in the 3rd grade or older who has not received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Reconciliation or First Eucharist.
Contact: Christine Williams at 749-2542

First Eucharist:

- Your child should demonstrate a longing for the Sacrament through regular attendance at Mass.
- It is recommended that your child has completed a full year of Faith Formation or parochial school.
- Parent sessions are provided to help you grow in your understanding of this sacrament and to assist you in preparing your child.

Attention Musicians

We are looking for teen musicians (grades 6-10) to share their gifts with the community. We hope to feature both teen instrumentalists and vocalists performing contemporary Christian music, particularly for teen masses and grades 6-10 faith formation

We welcome all skill levels (even beginners-it's a great way to learn!) and are looking for:

Singers
Guitarists
Bassists
Drummers
Keyboardists
Any other instruments!!!

We are very excited about this group. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to minister to the Christian community.

First Eucharist (con't)

- Children *generally* prepare for the celebration of First Eucharist in the second grade.
- Please check the schedule for dates and times for sessions at St. Margaret's for you and your child.

First Reconciliation:

- This sacrament provides us the experience of God's loving mercy through confession of our sins to a priest.
- It is recommended that your child has completed a full year in Faith Formation or parochial school.
- Parent sessions are provided to help you grow in your understanding of this sacrament and assist you in preparing your child.
- Children *generally* prepare for the celebration of First Reconciliation in the second grade.
- Please check the schedule for dates and times for sessions at St. Margaret's for you and your child.

FIRST RECONCILIATION (2nd Gr.) IMPORTANT DATES

December 5, 2015 First Reconciliation Celebration

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is a step toward a deeper knowledge and appreciation of Jesus Christ and the Church. It is also the final step of initiation into full membership in the Catholic Church. The Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in the fall of eleventh grade. We do not assume all teens wish to be confirmed. The signs of readiness as determined by the Diocese of Syracuse are:

- a personal faith consciousness indicated by some type of personal prayer life & awareness of God in her/his life
- an appreciation of Scripture as a unique aspect of God's revelation & as an invitation to an ongoing relationship
- a communal faith consciousness-as indicated by participation in the faith community according to ability
- a sense of service-as indicated by participation in service within the parish and larger community
- a sense of Christian identity-as indicated by participation in the faith formation process or other faith opportunities.

Confirmation calls for a personal decision on the part of the candidate. Therefore, a Confirmation retreat provides the time necessary for the candidate to reflect on the process and the meaning of the Sacraments in their life. The retreat is mandatory.

**** SCHEDULE for GRADES 6 through 10 ****
Classes meet Sunday evenings from 6-7:30 p.m.

FIRST EUCHARIST - (2nd Gr.) IMPORTANT DATES

April 30, 2016	First Eucharist Rehearsal
May 1, 2016	First Eucharist Ceremony

Curriculum

7th Grade — The Story of Jesus

8th Grade — The Story of the Church

9th Grade — Understanding Catholic Christianity

10th Grade — Christian Morality

Teen Participation Masses (10:30am)

TBD

**** SCHEDULE for GRADES K through 4 ****
Classes meet Sundays 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

SEPTEMBER

September 20 CLASS followed by a blessing of all children and catechists at the **10:30 Mass**;
September 27 CLASS

OCTOBER

October 4 CLASS
October 11 NO CLASS (Columbus Day)
October 18 CLASS
October 25 CLASS

NOVEMBER

November 1 CLASS
November 18 NO CLASS
November 15 CLASS
November 22 CLASS
November 29 NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Wknd)

DECEMBER

December 6 CLASS
December 13 CLASS
December 20 CLASS
December 27 NO CLASS (Merry Christmas!)



Come and Join the Youth Choir
"To Sing Is To Pray Twice"

One of the ways to learn about our faith is through music (and it's more fun). Through music we:

- learn the Bible stories
- learn the parts of the mass
- learn to praise God
- learn to give our gifts through commitment to our parish family celebrations

Over the years, we have successfully incorporated music into our Faith Formation program. We have also tried to offer the opportunity for a grade 3 -6 youth choir. We have found that without strong parental support and encouragement it has been difficult to continue having a choir. Young voices are light and soft, so it is important to have at least 15 choir members.

In order to have a successful choir, we will need scheduled practices. The goal is to sing 4 times during the Faith Formation year. The rehearsals are usually after the 10:30 mass from (11:30 to 12:15), the 2 Sundays prior to the mass in which they sing.

In the fall children in grade 3-6 will receive a letter inviting them to join the youth choir. It will include dates and times. Parents, please encourage your child to join the youth choir.

Schedule of Mass Participation
Faith Formation
K-5

**** SCHEDULE for GRADES K through 5 ****
Classes meet Sundays 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

TBD

JANUARY

January 3	NO CLASS
January 10	CLASS
January 17	NO CLASS Martin Luther King Day
January 24	CLASS
January 31	

FEBRUARY

February 7	CLASS
February 14	NO CLASS
February 21	NO CLASS
February 28	CLASS

MARCH

March 6	CLASS
March 13	CLASS
March 20	CLASS
March 27	NO CLASS (Easter)

APRIL

April 3	CLASS
April 10	CLASS
April 17	LAST CLASS

MAY

May 1	First Eucharist
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CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD
(DURING MASS-LITURGY)

- Children are called forth from the assembly at the beginning of Mass.
- They proceed to a designated place to hear the readings of the day and a short homily which is age appropriate.
- This allows them to understand and relate to the Liturgy of the Word on their own level.

Children return to the main assembly after the Prayers of the Faithful.



SCHEDULE FOR LITURGY OF THE WORD
2015-2016

At the present time we are looking for more people to share the Word with our little ones on Sunday. Please call Christine Williams at 749-2542.