

St. Mary's Church
Niles, Michigan



Registration Information

2023-24

Please Note:

This booklet contains important information about Faith Formation classes including policies, schedules and registration information. Please keep this information in a safe place for future reference. Thank you.

2023-2024 FAITH FORMATION SCHEDULE (tentative)
Kindergarten—Confirmation

<u>Month</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Time</u>
September	24	1	10:00-11:15 AM
October	1	2	10:00-11:15 AM
	8	3	10:00-11:15 AM
	15	4	10:00-11:15 AM
	22	5	10:00-11:15 AM
	29	6	10:00-11:15 AM
November	5	7	10:00-11:15 AM
	12	8	10:00-11:15 AM
	19	9	10:00-11:15 AM
	26	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING BREAK
December	3	10	10:00-11:15 AM
	10	11	10:00-11:15 AM
	17	12	10:00-11:15 AM
	24	NO CLASS	CHRISTMAS BREAK
	31	NO CLASS	CHRISTMAS BREAK
January	7	NO CLASS	CHRISTMAS BREAK
	14	13	10:00-11:15 AM
	21	14	10:00-11:15 AM
	28	15	10:00-11:15 AM
February	4	16	10:00-11:15 AM
	11	17	10:00-11:15 AM
	18	18	10:00-11:15 AM
	25	19	10:00-11:15 AM
March	3	20	10:00-11:15 AM
	10	21	10:00-11:15 AM
	17	22	10:00-11:15 AM
	24	23	10:00-11:15 AM
	31	NO CLASS	EASTER
April	7	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK
	14	24	10:00-11:15 AM
	21	25	10:00-11:15 AM
	28	26	10:00-11:15 AM Last Day



Welcome to St. Mary's Faith Formation!

We are happy to offer classes for the children of the parish in Kindergarten through the Sacrament of Confirmation. Classes will be held on Sunday mornings from 10:00—11:15 am in the school according to the schedule on page 2 beginning on Sunday, September 24, 2023. Please see page 6 for additional information.

Sacrament Preparation

First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, Confirmation

Students must complete at least one year of Faith Formation prior to enrolling in a Sacrament Preparation class.

In order to be prepared for reception of sacraments at St. Mary's, you must be a registered member of St. Mary's or have written permission from your pastor to be prepared and/or receive the sacrament here. **If your child was not baptized or did not already receive First Holy Communion at St. Mary's Parish, Niles, Michigan, please provide a copy of your child's baptismal certificate along with your registration form.**

Class and Mass attendance are critical in preparation for reception of the Sacraments. Please make every effort to attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation.

First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion

The typical age for reception of these sacraments is age 7/8 or second grade. If your child is in second grade, but has not completed one year of Faith Formation classes, he/she will be enrolled in our first grade class this year and in the sacrament prep. class next year. If your child is elementary school age beyond second grade and has completed at least one year of Faith Formation classes he/she will be enrolled in the sacrament prep. class this year. If your child is beyond second grade but has not completed one full year of Faith Formation, he/she will be enrolled in the appropriate grade class this year and in the sacrament prep. class next year. Middle school students will be enrolled in their grade level class supplemented by a sacrament preparation class.

We are using the "Blessed" series from Dynamic Catholic for First Reconciliation and First Holy communion. This is a high quality video based program that makes it easy for you to journey along with your child. Please go to our parish webpage (stmarysniles.org), click on the Faith formation tab, and click on the link under *Blessed* to watch the videos with your child so you can reinforce those lessons at home every day. We will be focusing on Reconciliation during the fall with **First Reconciliation on December 9, 2023 at 10 am** and Communion in the winter and spring with **First Holy Communion on May 5, 2024 at the 11:30 Mass. PLEASE SAVE THESE DATES!**

Two-Year Preparation for Confirmation

Traditionally, the sacrament of Confirmation is conferred in our parish at the end of the ninth grade or about age 15. However, this two-year program is open to any student eighth grade or above who has been enrolled in Faith Formation classes but has not yet been confirmed in the Catholic Church.

Confirmation 1 classes will meet in St. Mary's School. Confirmation 2 classes will meet in St. Mary's Parish Center.

Each student and his/her parent/guardian will be asked to sign a Confirmation Covenant. This covenant says that the student and the parent have read and understand the requirements for Confirmation.

Requirements for Second Year Confirmation Students

1. All Confirmation candidates **must** participate in a retreat. When information about the retreat becomes available, we will notify you as soon as possible. If this retreat conflicts with your schedule, you will need to make arrangements for another retreat experience for your child.
2. Each student is expected to perform some service in preparation for Confirmation. This service may be completed in the parish and/or in the community as a group or by the individual. Service to the parish as an altar server, usher, etc. may be considered a portion of the service requirement. A service log is provided and a description of how the service relates to the works of mercy and God's presence is required.
3. Each student is also required to research at least three saints and complete a Saint Report form for each. These forms may be found in the student confirmation folder as well as on the Faith Formation page of the Parish website (stmarysniles.org) and must be turned in by March 24, 2024.
4. Each candidate must also choose a sponsor. The sponsor must be at least 16 years of age, be confirmed in the Catholic Church, be an actively participating Catholic, may be the candidate's Godparent but may not be a parent of the candidate. Sponsor forms must be completed and returned by March 24, 2024.
5. Each candidate will write a letter to Bishop Bradley to introduce him/herself, tell him why they would like to be confirmed, and ask to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Instructions for the letter and a sample letter may be found on the parish website (stmarysniles.org). Letters are also due March 24, 2024.
6. Participate in an interview with Father Christian. The interview gives Father an opportunity to get to know the candidate and to assess his/her preparation to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. If the candidate has actively participated in class, he/she should have no difficulty with the interview.
7. Candidates should receive the sacrament of Reconciliation and be in a state of grace prior to receiving the sacrament of Confirmation.

The date of Confirmation is determined by the Bishop's office and is contingent on many things. As soon as we have been notified of the date, it will be announced in class and in the parish bulletin.

How to Register

Complete the enclosed registration form and drop it into the collection basket during Mass, or return or mail it to the Faith Formation Office as soon as possible. Additional paper forms may be printed from the webpage as well. Or you may complete the online registration form: go to the parish website (stmarysniles.org), click on the Faith Formation tab and find the link to the online registration form under the heading, "Registration." Please be sure to complete all sections of the registration form! **Note: All students must have a completed Faith Formation registration form on file prior to attending classes. Registrations WILL NOT be accepted before class on Sunday mornings!**

Program Tuition

Classes are open to members of the parish and non-parishioners; Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

- Children whose parents assist weekly as catechists in our program may attend at no charge in exchange for this service.
- Children who are St. Mary's School students have faith formation classes during their regular school day, but are welcome to attend Sunday classes, if desired, and may attend at no additional charge.

No child (parishioner or non-parishioner, Catholic or non-Catholic) will be denied an opportunity for Faith Formation at our parish based on an inability to pay the tuition!

Tuition Rates

First child	\$30.00
Second & Third child	\$25.00 per child
Four or More Children	\$100.00 per family
Catechist's Child	No Charge
St. Mary's School Student	No Charge

All rates are per year. Tuition is due in full at the time of enrollment. If you need financial assistance or to make payments, please let us know. We will be happy to help you in any way we can.

Emergency Cancellations/Closing/Restriction Notice

In the event that Faith Formation classes are cancelled or restricted in some way we will use **EVANGELUS** to notify you via text message or email. This will allow us to communicate with you quickly and efficiently in the event of an emergency or unexpected class change. If we must close due to inclement weather we will also place a closing notice on WNDU if time allows. Thank you!



Important Information

- The best Faith Formation begins at home within the family and is supplemented with classes offered each year by the parish. We encourage families to register their children for classes beginning with kindergarten and continuing through Confirmation (approx. 9th grade) and to practice their Catholic faith at home and beyond.
- Attend weekly Mass with your child(ren) and encourage those of sufficient age to participate in the sacraments.
- **Register your child(ren) for the program BEFORE classes begin. New students will NOT be accepted on Sunday mornings before class.**
- Notify us if your child(ren) has/have any special medical or learning needs.
- Please assess the health of your children at home prior to bringing them for class and keep them home if they are under the weather.
- Students should enter the building via the gym/Parish Hall. Classes will be gathered at 10 am and led to their classroom by their catechist.
- Each student will be assigned his/her own book, folder and class materials.
- Students are not be allowed to use school classroom toys, games, etc.
- Keep all electronic devices including cell phones, I-pods, personal game units, etc. at home. These devices may not be used during class without permission. Those being misused during class time will be confiscated and held until the end of class.
- Please come into the gym to collect your children after class. Please be sure your child(ren) have their belongings (hats, coats, boots, water bottles, etc.) as well as any assignments/handouts before you leave to go home.
- Your child(ren) should come home most weeks with a Family & Faith page from their book. Please use this to review and reinforce what was learned in class each week.
- Please also set aside some time regularly for family prayer and to help your child(ren) learn their assigned prayers .
- Assess and evaluate your child(ren)'s progress regularly.
- Support an atmosphere of respect and honesty in the classroom.

The Goretti Project

As always, we want your children to be safe. The Goretti Project, put together by the Diocese of Kalamazoo, provides information and lessons to assist you in discussing sensitive topics with your children at home. These lessons will help to give your child the tools to help to keep him/herself safe in our ever-changing world. You know your children best, and we would like to help to foster open lines of communication between you and your children on these often challenging, but important topics.

As a part of keeping all of our children safe, the Protect Young Eyes App is also available to you, the parents, at no cost. The app may be downloaded from the App store. This app gives parents the tools to keep abreast of apps and games marketed to young people and any potential cautions and tips about them so parents can make informed decisions as to whether or not to allow their children to use the apps and/or games. Download the app today! Our access code is: v9ewku

St. Mary's Parish Center
Faith Formation Office
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