

St. Matthew Parish

Religious Education Office

221 S. 28th Ave.

Wausau, WI

(715) 842- 3148

Family Handbook 2023-2024



Religious Education

Pastor: Rev. Sebastian Kolodziejczyk

Associate Pastor: Fr. Isaac Pecha

DRE: Mrs. Joy Orozco

(715) 842-3148

Joydre@stmatthewausau.org

Welcome to our 2023~2024 Religious Education Program!

The mission of St. Matthew Parish Religious Education is to support parents in their role as the primary catechists of our children: teaching and forming their child in their knowledge of our Roman Catholic faith and participation in the Church's sacramental life. It is our hope to raise up a new generation of disciples for Jesus Christ. We believe this can best be achieved by both educating our children and leading them into a loving relationship with God!

Our Religious Education Program's mission is to help every member of the family become the future saints God has created them to be. We want the family to grow **together** in knowledge, faith and love with Christ and His Church.

Our catechists are generous gifts of self and example of great virtue!

...what we have seen and heard we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; for our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:3)

Kindergarten	Julia DeByle & Alyssa Straub
Grade One	Ava Sukanen & Hannah Seidl
Grade Two	Kathy Lobner & Kathryn Waldvogel
Grade Three	Andrea Koser
Grade Four	Jasmin Ahles
Grade Five	Kristin Widmar
Grade Six	Nevaeh Nelson
Grade Seven	Kim DeByle
Grade Eight	Fr. Isaac Pecha & Michelle Lewis
Grade Nine	Joanna Boornazian and MarieBurish
Grade Ten	Joy Orozco

Parents Please:

- *Attend Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation as a family
- *Make prayer a part of your daily lives.
- *Participate in parish life with your child(ren).
- * Commit to be the Faith leader of your family

***Financial Obligation~** The Religious Education program is maintained solely by the tuition we collect. It is important that each family take this financial responsibility seriously to maintain the quality of our program.

Student

- *Show respect for priests, other ordained ministers, catechist, and classmates.
- *Be open to learn and grow in your faith.
- *Participate, pay attention in class and turn in required homework.
- *Have an active prayer life. Make sure you invite Jesus into all the things you do; from the moment you wake up in the morning to the time you lay your head down for the night.
- *Dress and act in a way that reflects your dignity as a child of God / modestly

Family Formation is for families whose children are in Kindergarten – 6th grade

Usually, on the first Wednesday of each month (September – May) at 5:30pm, **families of students in grades K-6th** will come to St. Matthew's and we begin with a dinner which will be provided for you. We will meet in the school's cafeteria. After dinner, at 6:00pm, the students will go to their classroom and parents will stay behind. Students will work with a catechist who will present the month's topic and teach the first lesson. Fr. Sebastian or a guest speaker will present the same to parents. Before you leave at 7:20pm, you will receive a packet of three weekly lessons. These lessons bring the whole family together to learn and then apply the teachings to their day-to-day family life.

For students in grades 7-10 we will provide instruction and particular teachings for their level and maturity and also in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation as well as work to be completed at home in a family setting.

Students in 7th grade will use One Faith, One Lord A Study of Basic Catholic Belief.

Students in 8th grade will use Theology of the Body for Teens

Students in 9th grade will use Altaration The Mystery of the Mass Revealed and Decision Point

Students in 10th Grade will use Chosen Your Journey Toward Confirmation

Students in grades 7, 8 and 9 will also meet the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00pm – 7:20pm. If your family is registered for the Family Formation program (k-6th) your children in 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th grades are also welcome to join us for dinner. 10th graders (Confirmation candidates) will be assigned to help catechists during class time.

Students in grade 10 will meet **usually** on the second Wednesday of the month with their catechist from 6:00 – 7:15. Please refer to the calendar to make sure of the month's class date. Classes will take place at the Parish Center.

Homework

Students in grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 will be assigned work to be completed at home. The foundation for the month's work will be laid by catechist on the first Wednesday of every month. The work completed at home must be turned in on the next class day. The work has been designed to be fun and engaging. It is highly recommended that parents, as the primary educators in matters of the Faith, be involved in the process. Homework completion is mandatory and necessary as part of Confirmation preparation. Homework will be given to the student in paper form but will also be sent home via email. Once homework is turned in, it will be checked and kept in the student's file.

FORMED is kind of like Netflix but all its content is Catholic. St. Matthew's covers the cost for all our parishioners to access this amazing resource. Here you will find and be able to download electronic books, movies, videos, documentaries, audiovisuals, music and much more. Please make sure you set up an account as soon as possible by going to www.Formed.org and follow the account set up directions.

Students in grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 will be asked to watch or read something from **FORMED** as part of their homework.

Inclement Weather

If public schools are canceled due to weather, the Religious Education at St. Matthew's will also be canceled. The school district, which we too follow, will contact families and staff through its mass notification system as early as possible. Check channel 7 or 9 and radio for last minute cancellations or those which might be announced after school hours. The materials will be available for pick up the following Thursday in the church.

Communication

Information and communication with our families is through e-mail. It is of the upmost importance that we have an email address on file for your family. Our church's bulletin is updated weekly with important information related to Religious Education.

Baptism certificates

If your child was not baptized at St. Matthew Parish, please provide us with a copy of his/her baptism certificate as soon as possible.

Discipline

Students are required to show respect to other students and catechist at all times and under all circumstances. If a child is having trouble practicing respectful and good behavior in class he/she will be taken to sit with parents. For older students, parents will be notified and will be asked to talk to his/her teen about showing respect to catechist, peers, and or

building. If teen continues to have trouble being respectful, we will call again to ask that you come to class with your child or keep him/her home. We would then provide you with the work they would miss as well as expected homework.

Electronics

Cell phones, iPads, tablets or other electronic devices will not be allowed to be used by students during class. Each classroom will have a container or organizer for the students to put their electronics in when they arrive.



Safe Environment

The Diocese of La Crosse Safe Environment Program is designed to protect children while they are in “care, custody or control” of any volunteer on behalf of the Religious Education Program. **ALL volunteers and parents are asked to comply with The Diocese of La Crosse policies and regulations on safe environment. This will make sure all our children are safe.**

Go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/safe-environment>.
To complete your training.

Your compliance will be reflected in our religious education department’s diocesan records. Please go through the training as soon as possible.

Sacramental Preparation

Sacraments are signs instituted by Christ, entrusted to the Church, and dispensed through the Church to give us the grace to live the life of a daughter or son of God. The sacraments sanctify us, make us holy, and build up the Body of Christ. They are living signs of God’s love and presence in our lives. They nourish and strengthen our faith.

The Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist – are intimately bound together and form a single initiation by which persons enter into the life of faith and more fully realize their role in the mission and ministry of the Church.

First Reconciliation and First Communion

- Students are prepared for these sacraments during 2nd grade. During the class on the first Wednesday of every month students come for the first lesson of that particular month. The next three lessons are taught at home.
- Student's family must be registered members of St. Matthew Parish.
- Students that were not baptized at St. Matthew are required to provide a copy of their baptism certificate.

Confirmation

- Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is during grades 9 and 10. Homework from grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 support the preparation.
- Candidates and their family must be registered members of St. Matthew Parish.
- Candidates must be baptized and have received their First Holy Communion.
- Candidates must have a regular religious and sacramental life where they attend Mass on Sundays, receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly, and lead a life of prayer and service to others.