



Mary Queen of Heaven

2024/2025 Parent Handbook

442 N. West Avenue, Elmhurst, IL 60126

630-832-8962

re@maryqueen.org

Welcome

Parents and/or Guardians,

My name is Mary Glaudell, and I am the Director of Faith Formation here at Mary Queen of Heaven. Heather Raffe is our Faith Formation Assistant. We are both here to help you in your role as parents and as your child(ren)'s primary catechist.

For each Baptized Catholic, faith formation is a lifelong journey, and that journey begins with you, as parents and guardians. Faith formation is a partnership between the parents and the Church.

"The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute." (CCC, 2221)

Whether part of the Family Faith or Traditional Weekly option, attending Mass as a family is a key part of faith formation.

Through the Mass we receive Christ through the Word of God and through the Eucharist. All families should practice a faith filled family life through regular prayer, Mass attendance, service and focus on gospel values.



Parents are the first catechists of faith. Active participation in your child's faith is essential to their spiritual growth. Your child's book includes family-based activities. Go over your child's book and keep up to date with the syllabus. Review the family pages together. For older children and those in Confirmation Prep, ask your child about their faith and what they are uncovering in our sessions.

Parents are welcome to participate in special events such as our Saint Celebration, Learning the Rosary, and Reconciliation. Mary Queen of Heaven also engages in many family friendly events. Look for these in the bulletin, email, and announcements at Mass.

Faith Formation Office Hours:

Monday & Tuesday: 9 am to 4 pm

Wednesday*: 11:00 am to 8:00 pm

Thursday & Friday: 9 am to 1 pm

* Please note that the office will be busy during session times. Unless reporting an absence or there is an emergency, please call or stop by when class is not in session.

All students MUST have a Baptismal Certificate on file in our office if not baptized at Mary Queen of Heaven Parish. **Contact the Church of your child's Baptism and request a copy if you do not have one.**

Every child in the Mary Queen of Heaven Faith Formation program **MUST** have a **Authorization Form** on file in the office that is updated each year. This form is included in the registration packet. The Authorization Form should be returned with your family's registration.

Faith Formation Options

Family Faith Formation (Kindergarten – 6th grade):

- 8 monthly sessions meet once a month Sept – April*. Usually the first Sunday. *See attached calendar for exact dates.*
- **Parents and children begin together** with the Family presentation.
- Children are sent with their catechist and peers for grade level formation with an introduction to the scheduled unit.
- Active parent participation and monthly attendance is essential. Parents should guide their children through the syllabus' monthly unit. Your child's book includes family-based activities.
- **Family Faith begins 9 am – 10:30 am followed by family participation at the 10:30 am Mass.**

Family Faith Formation Confirmation Preparation (7th & 8th grade Confirmation Prep I & II*):

- 8 monthly sessions meet once a month Sept – April*. Usually the second Sunday. *See attached calendar for exact dates.*
- Confirmation Preparation is a two-year process and usually begins in 7th grade. Since these are the critical years for Confirmation Preparation, attendance and active participation is expected for you to be ready for Confirmation at end of second year.
- **NEW for Sunday Confirmation Prep this year!** Since the children are preparing for Confirmation, the Sunday once a month option will be **2 hours of catechesis plus Mass. The session will begin at 8:30am followed by the Sunday 10:30am Mass.**

Weekly Wednesday Formation

- Weekly sessions meet Wednesdays Sept – April*. *See attached calendar.*
- Children meet with their grade level.
- Parent participation in faith formation is encouraged. Parents are welcome to participate in special events such as Reconciliation.

Session 1: Grades 1 – 5 at 3:15 to 4:30 pm
Session 2: Grades 1 – 6 at 5:00 to 6:15 pm
Session 3: Grades 6 – 8 at 6:45 to 8:00 pm

Faith Formation

As partners in faith formation with our Mary Queen of Heaven families, we want to assist and encourage you in developing your children in our Catholic faith. Our Faith Formation program is designed to give your family the resources to get to know the wisdom of God's spirit and what that means for us each day. Our program is steeped in the 4 pillars of the Catholic Church.

1. **Creed** – We profess the Nicene or the Apostle's creed at each Mass. The creed is a profession of our faith: we believe in one God, in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, the communion of saints, and life everlasting.

2. **Prayer** – Prayer is a way of deepening our relationship with God. Just like our closest friends, we must communicate with God to have a friendship with him. There are many ways to speak and listen to God: we can use our standard/traditional prayers, spontaneous prayer, Scripture, or song. It is said that in singing you are praying twice. Spontaneous prayer, or using one's own words, is a good way to pray for personal intentions and for general needs for the world.



- each child's book includes the standard prayers and more
- each family will be given: Catholic Prayer for Catholic Families

3. **Sacraments** – The role of the catechist is to supplement faith started within the family and strengthened by participation in the Sacraments especially the celebration of the Eucharist in Mass. **“The Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life.”** (*Lumen Gentium, 11*) As a broader Catholic Church, we are celebrating the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist with a Eucharistic Revival. Christ in the Eucharist unites us to Jesus' divinity – we are one with Christ and are nourished to be His hands and heart for the work of God's kingdom.



During the Mass, we also celebrate the **Scriptures**. God is revealed to us through the Holy Scriptures in the Bible. Through the Old Testament stories, we find God's covenant and mercy in the stories that form the foundation of our salvation history. In the New Testament, the Paschal Mystery in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus is revealed in the Gospels and the epistles of St. Paul and the authors of letters to the early Church community. The Scriptures are an important piece of our faith formation. For more information go to:

<https://www.eucharisticrevival.org/learn-resources>

4. **Morality** – Through Jesus’ message in the Gospels, the Ten Commandments, our Virtues, and the Beatitudes Catholic social teaching gives us guidance to love God and our neighbor. The way to God’s kingdom is by living the moral life we are called to.

These are not only the pillars of our faith, but they are the foundation of our program, and we want to help you make them a part of your family life. Each year of formation builds upon the former so that our families have a solid foundation in our Catholic faith and heritage.

Sacrament Preparation

Sacrament Preparation is a two-year formation process at Mary Queen of Heaven. In the 2nd year of preparation, there are separate requirements in addition to the monthly Family Faith Formation or weekly Traditional program. Dates and times for all events will be listed with the calendar in the back of this handbook.

<i>2nd Year Confirmation Prep Requirements</i>		
September 25 th	Confirmation Enrollment/Commitment	Parents, Sponsors, Candidate
November 6 th or 10 th	Saint Presentation	Candidate
January 8 th	Confirmation Personal Interview	Parents, Sponsors, Candidate
February 1 st	Confirmation Retreat	Candidates Only
February 26 th	Small Group Interviews	MQH Leaders & Candidates
March 21 st	Letter to Pastor	Candidate
April 2 nd	Theology of the Body	Parents, Sponsors, Candidate
TBD	Confirmation Rehearsal & Ceremony	Sponsor/Candidate (& Family)
Service* 20 Hours Minimum (due in March)	25% Parish <i>for example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacation Bible School • Fellowship Sunday • Senior Dinner • First Communion Retreat 	25% Community <i>for example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feed My Starving Children • PADs or other Soup Kitchen • Nursing Home Volunteer • Special Olympics
❖ Information on specific service opportunities will be sent out throughout the year		

<i>Reconciliation & First Communion 2nd Year Requirements</i>		
January 11 ^h or 18 th	Reconciliation Retreat	Parent(s) & Child
February 8 th	First Reconciliation	Child & Family
February 15 th or 16 th	First Communion Retreat I <i>Includes attending Mass</i>	Parent(s) & Child
March 9 th or 10 th	First Communion Retreat II <i>Includes attending Mass</i>	Parent(s) & Child
April TBD	First Communion Rehearsal	Parent(s) & Child
May TBD	First Communion	Child & Family

Faith Formation Sessions

Arrival: Participants will enter at the Parish Office door and check-in in Mary's Gathering Space. Sunday Family Faith (K-6th grade) participants will go directly into Barrett Hall after check-in. All other Sunday and Wednesday participants will line up by grade level in Mary's Gathering Space and catechists will take their group to their room. Only participants, volunteers and approved guests are allowed in the classroom area. If you would like to visit or volunteer in your child's classroom, please contact the Faith Formation office.

Absences: Please call the Faith Formation Office (630-832-8962 x102) if your child will be absent. If you do not contact us regarding an absence, we will call or e-mail you if your child is not in attendance as expected.

Please notify the Faith Formation Office ahead of time for any late arrivals and early dismissals.

THE DOORS WILL BE LOCKED 10 minutes after the scheduled start time.

In the Classroom:

Once the session starts, only one child will be allowed out of the room at a time. Parents, please make sure your children use your bathroom before coming to Faith Formation minimize time out of the room.

What should your child bring?

We will supply:

- **A Faith Formation book**
- Crayons, markers, and/or pencils
- Glue and/or glue sticks
- Scissors
- Most craft materials



Each session your child should bring:

- **Their Faith Formation Book**
- **A Good Attitude**
- **Good Listening Skills** – children should listen to and obey the directions of staff and volunteers.

Session 1 Wednesday (starts 3:15 pm) ONLY

- Children coming straight from Emerson will be given an opportunity (about 5-10 minutes) to have a snack before the session begins.
- **Mary Queen of Heaven will not provide any snacks or other food!**
- **No sharing of food is permitted.** 😞
- **All food brought on-site must be nut-free!**
- All food must be consumed, put away, or thrown away before going into classrooms.

All other Sessions - NO FOOD!

Children may bring a water bottle with their name on it. **Any unnamed items left behind will be put in our lost and found. Any food left will be tossed.**

Behavioral Expectations

Respectful Christian behavior is expected at all times. This includes entering and leaving the building as well as time spent in classrooms, halls, and bathrooms. All children will be respectful toward each other, the catechists, other volunteers, and the property of Mary Queen of Heaven. The key word is **RESPECT**.

Bullying and other aggressive behavior will not be tolerated. Also, inappropriate language or gestures are not allowed.

To limit distractions and issues, **leave at home: all valuables and electronics; toys including sports balls and skateboards; and food.** Any items that are dangerous to your child or others are not allowed. For the safety of all, distracting or dangerous items will be confiscated and given to the parent. **Students may have cell phones, but the phone should be silenced and put away during faith formation.**

Our catechists are volunteers dedicated to sharing our Catholic faith with ALL children. Please support your child's catechist and encourage appropriate behavior.

Unacceptable behavior will first be handled at the catechist level and may include temporary removal from the classroom. If the problem persists, the student will meet with the Director and the parent will be contacted. In an extreme case, the parent will be immediately contacted to pick up their child. If deemed necessary, a family conference will be set up with the Director and possibly, the Pastor.

Dismissal:

Children will be dismissed as a classroom with volunteers escorting them outside to the sidewalk before the parking lot area.

All children in Grade 1 and Grade 2 must be dropped off and picked up from Mary's Gathering Space by a designated person.

Early Dismissal: To pick up a child early, **please come into Mary Queen of Heaven so that we know you are here.** We will not release a minor without a designated adult present. Prior notification when possible is preferred.

Safety First

The safety of your children, our catechists, and other volunteers is one of our highest priorities. In addition to our normal safety practices, we will follow the guidelines established by the Diocese of Joliet to address health and safety of everyone in our parish.

General Health Concerns

If your child has allergies or medical issues, please notify the Faith Formation Office and indicate any issues on the Medical Authorization form.

For the safety of all our students with allergies, **no food is permitted inside Mary Queen of Heaven classroom space**. Food may be consumed with wrappers appropriately disposed of prior to entry into the classrooms.

Currently, **facial masks are not required**. Protocols from the Diocese change based on guidelines from the CDC and state health authorities. Any changes will be communicated to you via email and posted on our website.

Severe Weather and Other Emergencies

In case of severe weather or other emergencies, we will email you if possible and post any closing with the Emergency Closing Center. Closings will be posted on-line and with the major news outlets (WGN, CBS, NBC, ABC, & Fox). The on-line link is: <https://www.emergencyclosingcenter.com/>

You can search for: MARY QUEEN OF HEAVEN-RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (CCD)

If a weather or other emergency occurs while Faith Formation is in session and children are onsite, we will contact you as soon as possible via email or phone with pick-up instructions. **It is imperative that we have your current contact information and emergency pick-up person(s) on file.**

Safe Touch

Parents will receive the following approved by the Diocese of Joliet via email:

- “Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors” *updated 2023*
- “Understanding and Preventing Child Sexual Abuse”
- “Parent Guide: Internet Safety for Children and Teens”
- Acknowledgment Form

ALL parents or guardians must sign and return the acknowledgment form indicating that you received both the Behavioral Expectations and the above documents.

The Acknowledgement Form is due PRIOR to the start of your child(ren)'s first session.

All documents are also available on-line at: <https://mqhelmhurst.org/> under the Faith Formation tab.

Communication

Parent Correspondence – the primary form of communication will be via e-mail. Please let the Faith Formation office know if you do not want to use e-mail. Also please ensure that our records have accurate phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail information.

Cancellation of Classes – In case of inclement weather or emergency closing, parents will be notified by e-mail that classes will be cancelled. If time permits, we will also list any closing with the WGN and other media emergency closing services. *Refer to the Severe Weather Information in the prior page.*

Communication with Catechist – Please let us know if you contact your child's catechist regarding attendance or classroom activities. If you call a catechist, please inform us regarding the call. Also, **copy the Faith Formation Office on any e-mails or written correspondence at re@maryqueen.org.**



Mary Queen of Heaven Faith Formation 2024/2025 Schedule

**Family Night: All families must attend the Family Night
September 4th at 6:30 pm.**

Month	Family Faith Formation K – 6 th grade 9 – 11:30am	Family Faith Confirmation Prep I & II 8:30 – 11:30am	Weekly Faith Formation 1 st – 8 th grade 3:15 – 8:00pm
September	8 th	15 th	11 th , 18 th , 25 th
October	6 th	20 th	2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th
November	3 rd	10 th	6 th , 13 th , 20 th 27th No Classes
December	1 st	8 th	4 th , 11 th , 18 th
January	5 th	12 th	8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th
February	2 nd	9 th	5 th , 12 th , 26 th 19th No Classes
March	2 nd	9 th	5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th
April	6 th	13 th	2nd No Classes 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd

I am looking forward to another fantastic, faith-filled year with you and your children. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at the Faith Formation Office: 630-832-8962.

*Blessings In Christ,
Mary Glaudell
Director of Faith Formation*