

# **St. Maria Goretti Parish**

1601 Derstine Road, Hatfield, PA

## **Parish Religious Education Program**

**Handbook**

**2017-2018**





Dear Parents,

## **Welcome to the St. Maria Goretti Parish Religious Education Program!**

This booklet provides you with an overview of our Religious Education Program, its policies and procedures. This handbook is an agreement between the Religious Education Office of St. Maria Goretti Parish and the parents/guardians of children who participate in our PREP program. By signing your registration form you agreed to read it and support the provisions outlined in this handbook. Please discuss its contents with your children as appropriate.

Our goal is to provide a program of formal religious instruction to support your role as primary educator of your children. We have a dedicated group of volunteer catechists who work hard to prepare your child to learn about our Catholic Faith, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and encourage a personal relationship with Jesus.

The time your child spends here in class is important and is only a part of their religious education. Your example of living our Catholic Faith through prayer, reception of the sacraments and weekly attendance at Mass is critical to your child's faith formation. The seeds that you plant now on "rich soil" will bear fruit for a lifetime. You and your everyday actions are your child's first and most important teacher!

We hope that you will be a part of our program by participating in scheduled opportunities for the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Confession, Christmas and Forty Hours Devotions.

God Bless you,  
Rev. John C. Nguyen  
Pastor, St. Maria Goretti Church



## **St. Maria Goretti Religious Education Office**

1601 Derstine Road, Hatfield, PA 19440

### **Staff:**

**Mrs. Maria Richardson**

**Director of Family Faith Formation, Religious Education,  
and Parish Services**

**Mrs. Jo Ann Prahler**

**Administrative Assistant**

**Telephone:** 215-721-6559    **Fax:** 215-721-4320

When leaving a voice mail, please include your name, phone number,  
your child's name and grade.

Our office will be closed on Holy Days of Obligation and National and  
School Holidays.

### **PREP Schedule**

Grades 1 through 7.

Sunday Session – 10:30 AM to 11:45 AM

Family PREP meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays after the 9:30 Mass.

Monday Session 1 - 4:30 PM to 5:45 PM

Monday Session 2 - 6:15 PM to 7:30 PM

Tuesday Session - 6:15 PM to 7:30 PM

## PREP Calendar

The PREP calendar is available on both the parish website. Updates and changes will be announced in our parish Sunday bulletin. Please check the PREP Update section of the bulletin every week.

Our bulletin is also available on our parish website  
[www.stmariagoretti.net](http://www.stmariagoretti.net).

**Any important last minute changes are announced via e-mail. It is your responsibility to make sure that we have your current e-mail address. More than one per family is recommended.**

We do not share e-mail addresses.



# Religious Education

## Registration

Registration forms are available on our website under PREP.

**Classes are filled on a first come, first served basis.** Please be sure to register early. It is the right of the Religious Education Office to close any class in any session due to class size. Only completed registration forms will be accepted.

### \*Registration Fee:

One Child	\$230.00
Two Children	\$330.00
Three or more Children	\$430.00

These fees are determined by the Parish Business Office and the Parish Finance Council.

No child will be denied a Religious Education at St. Maria Goretti due to financial hardship. Fee plans and fee waivers for PREP fees can be made available. All requests must be submitted in writing with your registration form and all inquiries of this nature will be kept completely confidential.

The fee charged for our PREP serves to defray the cost of running our program including each student's text book, classroom supplies, art supplies, audiovisual purchases, resource materials, catechist training and the police and child abuse clearance fees for our catechists as required by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. A replacement fee will be charged for lost books or Bibles. The cost is as follows: Textbook - \$20.00, Bible -\$7.00.

The St. Maria Goretti Religious Education Program does not discriminate on basis of race, sex, and national origin, physical or mental challenge.



## SCRIP

The SCRIP Program of St. Maria Goretti Parish is a way for PREP parents to reduce the fees of the program. SCRIP is gift certificates or gift cards from local stores sold to you at face value. Purchasing SCRIP enables you to earn credit toward your PREP fees. SCRIP is sold in the narthex of the church after all Masses on Sunday and in the Parish Center Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. SCRIP may be used to pay Kohl's credit card bills. Check the store for more details.

A portion of your purchase is automatically credited to you and a portion of your purchase is credited to the parish. Everyone wins! Please exemplify stewardship by using SCRIP on a regular basis. Consider volunteering to sell SCRIP after Masses. Your help is appreciated. Contact the Parish Center for details.

SCRIP credits for each calendar year are issued to our office in February to be applied toward the next year's registration fees. Any discrepancy must be discussed with the SCRIP office as the Religious Education Office does not have access to the information.

Scrip is Fundraising While You Shop!™





## Role of Parents

- We must have information regarding Baptism and other Sacraments on file. A copy of the Baptismal certificate is required if your child was not baptized at St. Maria Goretti Parish.
- Attend Mass weekly with your child.
- Take responsibility for your role as your child's (children's) primary educator about faith.
- Collaborate with your child's catechist by sharing faith at home and helping with homework assignments, projects, test review, etc.
- Class attendance is required. Please bring your children to class on time. Late arrivals are very distracting to the teacher and class. Three absences per year are considered excessive by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Attendance records, including late arrivals and early dismissals, are kept as part of the student's permanent record.
- Your child's picture may be used according to the waiver that you signed at registration. If you have any problem or concern with this, please be sure to remind your child's teacher and administrator at each event.
- The law holds that parents do not cease to be parents when they no longer have custody of their children. The PREP office must be informed by the custodial parent of the rights of the noncustodial parent, including what information should be sent to the noncustodial parent and in what circumstances.





## **Parking**

All vehicles must be parked in a designated parking area upon arrival and dismissal. You may not stop or park directly alongside the Education Center regardless of whether safety cones are in place.

## **Arrival**

All children must enter through the main doors of the Parish Education Center. Children are not permitted to use the Drexel Hall doors or the side door. We ask that children do not arrive earlier than 10 minutes prior to their class time. If a catechist is not in the room, students must wait quietly outside the classroom.

## **Dismissal Procedure**

Parents/Guardians are asked to enter the Parish Education Center to pick up each child from the classroom no earlier than 5 minutes before the end of class. After Closing Prayer and announcements, parents may proceed to the child's classroom. No child will be allowed out of the classroom without an adult whose name is on their release form.

Students may not leave class early without a written note from a parent/guardian presented to the catechist prior to the beginning of class AND a Parent/Guardian must pick up their child at the classroom door. No student will be permitted to leave their classroom or the building early without an adult! Please note that sports practices or games do not constitute a valid reason for early dismissal from class.





## Inclement Weather Policy

**PREP classes will be cancelled automatically if the North Penn School District schools are dismissed early or closed due to bad weather.**

You may check the following for closing information:

- KYW News radio (1060 AM) broadcast number “2729”. Check for the number on [kyw1060.com](http://kyw1060.com) or call the KYW Newsradio School Closing line at 215-224-1060.
- E-mail and Website calendar notification/office voicemail greeting. We will make every attempt when possible.



Please do not call the Parish Center for class cancellation information. Please use your discretion if class has not been canceled and the road conditions have deteriorated in your area. Always decide to be safe.

## Calendar

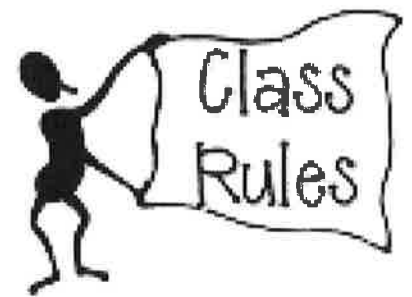
It is the responsibility of each family to make sure they have a copy of the PREP calendar. It is available on the parish website. Its purpose is to provide families with an overview of the activities planned for the catechetical year. We look forward to seeing you for the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Confession, Christmas Pageant and Forty Hours Devotions.



## PREP Rules and Responsibilities

Rules can be stated in the context of our call to follow the words and example of Jesus to respect each person as a child of God and to be treated with respect, dignity and love. Students have the following responsibilities to be sure all have a safe and positive faith experience here at St. Maria Goretti:

1. Show respect to catechists, other students and adults involved in the program.
2. Treat all people and property with respect.
3. Be only where you have permission to be in the building.
4. Display appropriate classroom behavior.
5. Be respectful of the study/quiet time of others.
6. Use of, or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is strictly prohibited. Such items will be seized and both police and parents will be notified immediately. The child will be immediately removed from the environment and will not be permitted to return to PREP classes.
7. Appropriate dress is required. No tank tops, offensive t-shirts, bare midriffs, cutoffs or short shorts.
8. The personal use of cell phones during class is strictly prohibited; this includes text messaging as well as phone calls. If your child carries a cell phone it must be turned off during class time. Any cell phone being used during class will be held by the catechist until the end of the session.
9. Gum chewing is never allowed in the Parish Education Center.
10. Food and drink are not permitted in the classrooms.



## Class Disruptions

In order to provide a meaningful learning experience and make the most of the short amount of time we have to teach our Catholic Faith we have a Zero Tolerance Policy for class disruptions. Any child causing class disruptions will be sent to the Religious Education Office where a parent will be called to discuss the situation and ask for assistance in resolving this matter. Please discuss with your child(ren) the importance of paying attention, following the rules and being respectful of others during PREP class.



## Protecting God's Children

In compliance with the mandate of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People that in order to maintain a safe environment for all God's children, education and awareness are key to the prevention of child sexual abuse. Therefore, under the requirement of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia all children will be receiving the "**Keeping God's Children Safe**" lessons that contain age appropriate information to keep them safe. You will be notified of the date in advance and you may review the lesson plans in the Religious Education office. If at that time you do not want your children to participate, you are required to sign a form which can be obtained at the Religious Education Office and must be returned prior to the scheduled lesson.



## Catechists

All Catechists at St. Maria Goretti provide Criminal Background checks and Child Abuse clearances. All Catechists are required to be trained by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in the “Safe Environment Program” to keep our children safe and any other programs as designated by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia including the addendum which covers appropriate behavior concerning technology and also Mandated Reporter training. They are also committed to their own continuing education and formation in our Catholic Faith.

All Catechists are volunteers and spend many hours per week preparing for and teaching your child’s PREP class. Please remember our dedicated team in your prayers.



Children may have homework each week. Good study and work habits formed in the home contribute to a child’s religious development. Daily prayer and examination of conscience fostered in the home also have a significant role in your child’s faith formation.



## **Sacramental Preparation**

Children preparing to celebrate the sacraments enter into an intense period of formal preparation in Grade 2 where they will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. Other children of an appropriate age who have completed 6 years of religious education prepare in 7<sup>th</sup> grade to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation. A series of Parent Nights, Parent/Child Workshops and/or Parent/Child Retreats are a required part of this preparation.

## **Final Note**

St. Maria Goretti Parish reserves the right to amend this handbook. In the event of any changes during the year, parents will be given notification of those changes.

Thank you for all you do for your children. God bless you!

## Weekly Mass and Reconciliation Schedule

All students in the PREP program are expected to participate in Sunday Mass. Religious Education classes cannot and do not substitute for the Sunday Mass. The commitment to attend Mass every Sunday is important to the faith life of your family.

### Weekend

Saturday Vigil..... 5:00pm  
Sunday..... 7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am  
Vietnamese Mass..... 2:30pm

### Weekday

Monday thru Saturday..... 8:30am  
Summer months Monday through Friday at 8:30am  
Lent Monday through Friday..... 7am & 8:30am

### Holy Day

7:00pm Vigil, 7:00am, 8:30am, & Noon

### Reconciliation

Saturdays 3:30pm – 4:30pm or any time upon request.

Call the Parish Office 215-721-0199