



Your child can join Christ & the Catholic Church in
SAVING THE WORLD
LEARN THE GOSPEL, SHARE THE GOSPEL.

2023-24

INFORMATION and REGISTRATION FORMS

***Faith Formation of Children and Youth
and Sacramental Preparation Information***

Divine Mercy Parish

St. Ann—St. Joseph—St. Michael—St. Peter

44 East Main Street Frostburg, MD 21532 - (301) 689-6767 - www.divinemercurymd.org

Divine Mercy Parish

44 E. Main Street
Frostburg, MD 21532 - (301) 689-6767

Administrator: Rev. Scott Kady

Coordinator of Religious Education for Children and Youth:

Sara Vance - sara.vance@archbalt.org

Director of Mission:

Margie Meyers - margaret.meyers@archbalt.org

The Catechetical Faith Formation and Youth Ministry programs of Divine Mercy are designed to connect people of all ages to life in the Church and the joy of faith in Christ. Through active learning, prayer and community connection, we share faith with each other to build the Kingdom of God in our world. Tied strongly to scripture, our sacraments, and the tradition of the Catholic Church, we hope everyone who participates in Religious Education at Divine Mercy will know the Lord and his love for each one of us. We partner with parents to add to the foundation of faith that begins and continues in the home. We commit ourselves to the importance of life-long formation and strive to provide opportunities that strengthen faith in everyone—child, youth and adult.

A brief description of the aspects of the Religious Education program that serve families with children and youth is included in this booklet.

For more information, please find us on the web:

<https://divinemercurymd.org/religious-education/welcome/>

Or on Facebook:

Divine Mercy Parish of Western Maryland Religious Education

GENERAL INFORMATION

Divine Mercy Parish strives to offer our parish family a safe and welcoming environment at our St. Joseph site for the Religious Education program of our community. Our catechists and volunteers value creativity, flexibility and fun in our Religious Education program so children, youth and adults will be engaged in and remember the important lessons of our Catholic faith. In each lesson, we strive to open hearts to the Love of God while helping those who come to learn and have confidence in sharing the joy of our faith.

This year's schedule will be a bit different because we continue to update and evolve our programs to better serve our families and our community. General session times and options for coming year are later in this booklet. The detailed calendar with a complete list of session dates is available here and online. If you are interested in volunteering for this year's program, please see insert and contact the Director of Mission or the Coordinator of Child and Youth Ministry for more information. And always, *Please pray for our catechists, all volunteers and staff as we guide and support the Religious Education ministries of Divine Mercy Parish.*

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

The Sacraments are the most important part of our Catholic Identity. The goal of our catechesis (Religious Education) is to guide everyone of all ages to a more conscious and active participation in Eucharist and to a fuller appreciation of the Baptismal call to discipleship. Together, we transform each other and, in turn, we transform the world into the Kingdom of God. Regular participation in Sunday liturgy is a crucial part of the Religious Education of every Catholic and especially those in preparation for the Sacraments.

Baptism

We are always so happy when parents bring their children to the Church for Baptism. If your child is ready to enter our Religious Education program and has not been baptized, please contact Margie Meyers, Director of Mission as soon as possible. Readiness happens at different times for different children and families. We welcome families and children of all ages in our Baptism prep.

Adults typically prepare for Baptism and/or Confirmation through a process called the RCIA or Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. If you have questions about how to enter this process, please contact the Director of Mission, Margie Meyers at margaret.meyers@archbalt.org or call (301) 687-6767.

Reconciliation and Eucharist

Typically, children celebrate the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion in their 2nd grade year. All children older than 2nd grade are welcome into the process if they have not yet experienced either Sacrament for the first time. Participation in a formal program of Religious Education in a parish program or Catholic school is required for a full year before Sacramental Prep begins. This means a child must be enrolled in our parish program or Bishop Walsh for First Grade to prepare for First Eucharist in Grade 2. Children can enroll in our program at anytime. Don't let a late start hold you back! The year of preparation for these two important Sacraments is an exciting and rewarding time for most families. Our program includes parent and family involvement in the home and in parish events along with regular and consistent Mass attendance. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW for our first parent meeting for Reconciliation & Communion Preparation will be Tuesday, October 17, at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.** If you don't hear directly from the parish about this meeting by the week before, please contact us to make sure we have your updated contact information. If your child was baptized a church outside of our Divine Mercy Parish, please send a copy of the child's Baptismal Certificate to the parish when preparation begins.

Confirmation

As Catholics, we know that Confirmation is **not** a graduation from faith, but, rather a renewed beginning to continue to live and learn how to be an active participant in the life of Christ, Our Lord. At Divine Mercy Parish, Confirmation is celebrated every two years for students in 9th grade and older. Preparation for the sacrament begins at Baptism and accelerates in 8th Grade. & 9th Grades. Our next celebration of Confirmation will be in 2025, and students who are the 8th grade or older for the 2023 school year, will participate in the preparation process, which includes attending Mass, actively participating in Religious Education either in the Parish Program or as a student at Bishop Walsh, and some form of Christian service. **An important Parent and Student meeting will be held on April 14, 2024 at the Parish Hall at St. Michael Frostburg after the Noon Mass.**

Confirmation candidates are required to participate in Religious Education for two full years before the celebration of the Sacrament. Confirmation candidates are also required to complete 15 hours of community service and the service hours can be done in the 2 years prior to Confirmation.

FOR FAMILIES INCLUDING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

We believe the Children and Youth of Divine Mercy who have Special Needs are very important to our parish family here. We welcome all students into the Religious Education and Sacramental Preparation programs and will work with parents to discern the best placement and method for each individual. If you are interested in registering your child or becoming involved, please contact the Director of Mission, Margie Meyers, as soon as possible. Everyone is welcome in all of our education events and programs and we will do our best to find the right path for each member of our church family to experience God's love in their own lives.



FOR FAMILIES OF BISHOP WALSH STUDENTS



The parish is an important part of the faith development of every child, youth and adult. We at Divine Mercy are happy to work in partnership with our Bishop Walsh Families in hopes that our BW students will have a rich and balanced faith, steeped in liturgical connection and discipleship. We want all of our children and youth to feel a sense of belonging and connection to their home parish. This sense of connection often takes a very intentional effort on the part of the parish and the Catholic School student's family. Of course, most important is the family's regular participation in Sunday liturgy at the parish. We encourage students to be involved in liturgy as much as possible. The ministry of altar serving is open to children in Grade 4 and older (and adults) and young servers are needed at all four of our local churches.

Because of the liturgical nature of our Sacraments, the connection to home parish is especially critical during the time of preparation for Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Both Bishop Walsh School and Divine Mercy Parish follow the policy of the Archdiocese of Baltimore that states that the immediate preparation for any Catholic Sacrament is parish-based. Following the policy of the Archdiocese, all Bishop Walsh students who are preparing for Sacraments such as Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are expected to participate in all of the parish-based Sacramental preparation process, which will include meetings and info sessions for parents, home preparation, separate workshops or retreats. We try to notify all families by email but that process is not completely dependable. Please watch the schedule in this booklet and regular announcements in the Parish Bulletin and on the Divine Mercy Religious Education webpage.

If your child is in 2nd Grade this year and will be preparing for Reconciliation and Eucharist, **please email the RE Coordinator, Sara Vance, by Sept. 30, 2023, to make sure your family's current email and phone information are on our Sacramental Preparation list**. See schedule for dates important for preparation for First Communion and First Reconciliation.

Bishop Walsh Students who are members of Divine Mercy **are always welcome** at any Religious Education event or program. While the Religious classes at BW do fulfill requirements of faith education, **being**

involved with peers in the home parish is an important part of being Catholic. We are excited about our programs for Middle and High School youth and hope BW students will participate. We suggest parents watch the bulletin and encourage youth participation in our Christmas Program (Dec. 18 at the Midland Fire Hall), and youth retreats, field trips and service projects that could be scheduled during the year.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition for Faith Formation is \$40 for one child and \$10 for each sibling. There is a \$5 discount for early registration, by Sept. 18. For sacramental preparation, First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, there is a fee of \$35 in addition to Faith Formation tuition. Please include tuition and fees when your registration (by form or online). If the cost of Faith Formation causes financial hardship for any family, scholarships, fee waivers, and partial payment plans are readily available. Please contact Sara Vance to make arrangements. While all fees do help support our program, we are committed to the policy that no student should be kept from any of our formation programs or events because of problems with cost. This year, students who are living with grandparents or other relatives because of family difficulty or hardship, will receive **automatic scholarships**. Just check the appropriate box on the registration form. There may be occasional fees requests for events such as activities, retreats or field trips which can be waived on request of the family.

FAMILY BASED FAITH FORMATION

Family faith interaction is important for children of every age, and this year, we continue strengthening the family component of for Pre-K through Grade 8 which will be family based or family centered. This year, planned parent involvement will be even more important than ever. Parents will be involved in an interactive opening and closing one session each month with everyone in the program. There will be a short separate parent formation session offered that same Sunday.

Each month, home based sessions will help encourage healthy faith discussions in the family which are crucial to faith formation in children and youth. These sessions will help strengthen the parents in their role as primary catechists of their children. Practically, these home based sessions allow us to cover more of our Faith Story without adding extra sessions and allowing for flexibility in the busy schedules of our families.

Regular contact between **catechists and parents** is very important. **Please make sure your contact information is always up-to-date with the Parish Office and the catechist(s) of your child/children.** Schedules are included in this booklet, but plans are incomplete for all events during the year and dates may change. Please remember to watch the parish bulletin for up-to-date information and keep in contact with the Catechist who is leading your child's class.

ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL FAITH FORMATION—PreK through Grade 8

St Joseph Site (Midland) First Session—Oct. 1 at 10:00 a.m.

2 Sunday mornings each month (See schedule for dates) from 10:00 – 11:30am

Children are in graded sessions with their peers and a catechist and aide for two Sundays each month.

Parent(s) must attend one Sunday morning each month. Please check the schedule for the sessions

that involve parents. See more information later in this booklet. Parents are asked to complete two home lessons with children during the weeks when no required sessions meet.

On the 3rd Sunday of each month, the 9:00 Mass will be a Family Mass . Children and parents are invited to participate in the ministries of the mass. Please encourage your children to volunteer and consider volunteering with them.

YOUTH MINISTRY—Grades 9—12

Senior High (Grades 9 and up)

SENIOR HIGH (Grades 9-12) - Various Locations

We hope our teens will enjoy the sessions, build positive peer and adult relationships and find the themes relevant to their lives. Our teenagers need opportunities to explore and question, while looking ahead at how our Catholic Faith can help us be our best selves. We hope our program will give our teens a solid foundation in love and faith that will ground them as faithful, happy and productive adults who will make a positive difference in the world.

These sessions will meet at St Joseph's along with the rest of the Faith Formation program. Parents are needed to help support the program. Providing snacks for each session is a great way to help. Occasional off-campus activities and service projects will require transportation and additional supervision help. Special activities will require extra adult supervision in addition to the Catechist(s). All parents are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to keep their VIRTUS Clearance up to date.

PARTICIPATION IN MASS

Mass is not optional for Catholics. It is the source and summit of our faith. Mass is our time to be thankful for the gifts bestowed on us by God and share in worship with a community that is connected in faith and love. The Sunday program is designed so children may participate at Mass with their family at St. Joseph's or attend the Noon Mass at St. Michael's. Saturday evening Masses at both St. Michael and St. Peter are also good options. Students and Families are welcome to participate in Mass anywhere, but we ask that you plan your schedules to allow students to be on time for the start of the session. (a little earlier than 10:00 am) Since the official program only meets twice per month, families may attend any liturgy at any of our churches on the off-weeks.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER - MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Why Volunteer?

- ♥ Get a chance to meet other adults
- ♥ Get to know the children of the parish
- ♥ Build lasting relationships with other people
- ♥ Learn more about your own faith
- ♥ Learn something new (training and resources are provided)
- ♥ Increase your own skills and build confidence
- ♥ It's fun and rewarding
- ♥ You will touch the future!
- ♥ Make a difference to those you meet and to the world!
- ♥ Your caring presence will be a sign of God's love to all. We need you!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Catholic Church and Divine Mercy Parish are fully committed to providing a safe environment for all children, youth and vulnerable adults participating in our programs. Therefore, all volunteers who work with children and youth are required to fulfill the expectations clearly stated in the guidelines for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, including the completion of the required training and giving consent to necessary background checks for substantial contact with children. We appreciate your help in keeping our children safe.

We strongly encourage ALL PARENTS to participate in this process even if you are not an "official" volunteer in the parish. Go to virtus.org to create a login and begin the process!

Please see our website for more information (divinemercymd.org) or contact Alison Lyons at alison.lyons@archbalt.org for more information on the requirements.

Volunteers Needed Religious Education of Children and Youth And Adult Faith Formation

All Religious Education programs in any parish depend on the time, talent, skill and dedication of many volunteers who are willing to give of themselves to help pass on faith to each other and to the next generation. The ministry asks for commitment, time, and energy but the rewards can be blessings beyond measure.

At the time this booklet was published, our program is fully staffed with lead-catechists for each session. There are still many ways to help. Some ministries are short term and demand less time. Others ask for people to go the extra mile in service to God and the Church. God has given each one of us skills and talents to share. Hopefully, you will answer God's call to share yours!

If you are interested in helping in any way—even in a limited capacity, please let us know by contacting the Director of Mission or the Coordinator of Religious Education for Children and Youth or by sending the form below to the parish office. **This form or a phone call will not commit you to any job or ministry**, but we can discuss your possible interest and involvement in the Mission related ministries.

God is calling you to become involved in something that will change your life and the lives of others for the better.

I am interested in making a difference. Please contact me about how to get involved!

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Primary Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

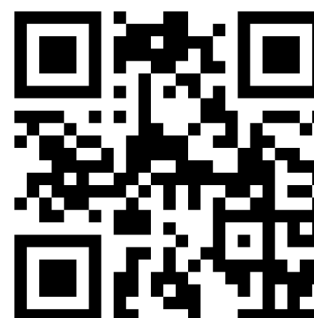
Mailing Address: _____

Church site where you attend Mass most often: St Ann St. Joseph St. Michael St. Peter Other

I am interested in more information on volunteer MINISTRY with... (Check all that apply):

YOUNG CHILDREN MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL AGE YOUTH ADULTS

Scan image to complete form online



I want to help but I'm not sure where

Or — Return paper form ASAP to:
Margie Meyers, Director of Mission
44 E. Main Street, Frostburg, MD 21532
OR: Drop in Collection Basket in envelope marked "Margie Meyers"
OR: Call (301) 689-6767
OR: Take a photo of completed form and email to:
Margaret.meyers@archbalt.org



Faith Formation Schedule

All schedules are subject to change. Please be sure to watch the parish bulletin for updated information.

Sunday, October 1 st	Family Faith Formation Kickoff
Sunday, October 15 th	Faith Formation Classes & Parent Meeting in Hall
Tuesday, October 17 th	Sacramental Prep Information Meeting via Zoom (7 – 8:30pm)
Sunday, November 6 th	Faith Formation Class & Parent Meeting in Hall
Sunday, November 19 th	Family Faith Formation
Tuesday, November 28 th	First Reconciliation Sacramental Prep Workshop (6 – 7:30pm)
Sunday, December 3 rd	Faith Formation Classes & Parent Meeting in Hall
Sunday, December 17 th	Divine Mercy Parish Christmas Program
Sunday, January 21 st	Faith Formation Classes & Parent Meeting in Hall
Tuesday, January 23 rd	Sacramental Prep Information Meeting via Zoom (7 – 8:30pm)
Sunday, February 4 th	Faith Formation Classes & Parent Meeting in Hall
Sunday, February 18 th	Family Faith Formation
Sunday, March 3 rd	Faith Formation Classes & Parent Meeting in Hall
Sunday, March 17 th	Family Faith Formation
Sunday, April 7 th	Faith Formation Classes & Parent Meeting in Hall
Tuesday, April 16 th	First Eucharist Sacramental Prep Workshop (6 – 7:30pm)
Sunday, April 21 st	Family Faith Formation End of Year Celebration
Sunday, April 14 th	Confirmation Informational Meeting (After the Noon Mass)

SPECIAL NOTICE:

Altar Servers Needed at all 4 Churches!

One of the very special and important ministries in our church is the ministry of Altar Server. This a special way for our young people to learn the valuable lesson of service in our faith and more about the mass as they learn to assist our clergy.

We will be holding training sessions very soon for new servers. Adults are welcome as Altar Servers, too, so parents and children can serve at Mass together.

For more information or to volunteer, talk to **Deacon Harold** or email Margie at : margaret.meyers@archbalt.org

Please help us feed the hungry!

Help us by donating pre-packaged snacks and drinks (small bottles of water or juice boxes or pouches) for snack time between Mass and the Session!

HOW TO REGISTER A STUDENT

To register your child (or teen) for Religious Education please go to <https://tinyurl.com/DM2023FaithFormation>

There is a paper form included in this booklet. Please register online if you are able. Paper registration may be completed if necessary and sent to the Parish Office.

Resources for Parents

Combined Grade Adaptations:

Kindergarten use K Resources

Grades 1 & 2: Use Grade 1 Resources

Grades 3 & 4: Use Grade 3 Resources

Grades 5 & 6: Use Grade 5 Resources

Grades 7 & 8: Use Grade 7 Resources

Interactive Session /Assessment Email:

divinemercyrelioueducation@gmail.com

Family Resources Link:

[FindingGod.com/familyresources](https://www.findinggod.com/familyresources)

Required Web Materials

1. At-Home Edition
2. Interactive Session Reviews (assessments)

Additional Online Support

3. Study Guides
4. Fishers of Faith (unit review game)
5. Getting to Know Your Child (grade-specific profiles)

© Loyola Press. All rights reserved.

Finding God | LOYOLA PRESS. A JESUIT MINISTRY

Faith Formation Plan for Families of Children in Grades Pre-K through Gr. 8

The Office of Religious Education
Divine Mercy Catholic Parish
44 East Main Street
Frostburg, MD 21532
Return Service Requested

MONTH/Unit	GROUP SESSION Meet at St. Joseph, Midland After the 9:00 am Mass Unless otherwise noted.	AT HOME SESSIONS (See color chart on P. 10 for online support at home)	
OCTOBER Unit 1: GOD Family Formation: The Pascal Candle	October 1 NEW Family Faith Formation Kickoff Ch.1 with Grade-Level Catechist October 15 Ch.3 with Grade-Level Catechist	Sessions 2, 4, 5	<i>Family Mass on 10/1 at 9:00 am</i> All Group Sessions: 10:00 am – 11:30 am
NOVEMBER Unit 2: JESUS Family Formation: Time for ADORATION	November 5 Ch.6 with Grade-Level Catechist November 19 Family Faith Formation Ch.10 with Grade-Level Catechist <i>This session will include a time for Adoration of Christ in the Eucharist for all ages and Parents.</i>	Sessions 7, 8, 9	<i>Family Mass on 11/19 at 9:00 am</i>
DECEMBER ADVENT & CHRISTMAS	December 3 Ch.15 with Grade-Level Catechist First Sunday of Advent <i>Time of Confessions</i> December 17 Holiday Event: Advent & Christmas Celebration at Midland Fire Hall 2:00 p.m.	Sessions Families read the Christmas session in The Year in Our Church section of the Children’s Book. <i>Merry Christmas!</i>	<i>Family Mass on 12/1 at 9:00 am</i>
JANUARY Unit 3: THE CHURCH	NO SESSION Jan. 7 January 21 Ch.11 with Grade-Level Catechist	Sessions 12, 13, 14	<i>Family Mass on 1/21 at 9:00 am</i>
FEBRUARY FAMILY LIFE Family Formation: Sorrowful Mysteries	February 4 Family Life Session with Grade-Level Catechist February 18 First Sunday of Lent Family Faith Formation Family Life with Grade-Level Catechist	Sessions – Family Life home sessions	<i>Family Mass on 2/18 at 9:00 am</i> Ash Wednesday is Feb 22: Lent Begins
MARCH Unit 4: SACRAMENTS Family Formation: Blessed Palms	March 3 Ch.16 with Grade-Level Catechist <i>Time for Confessions</i> March 17 Family Faith Formation Ch.18 with Grade-Level Catechist	Sessions 17, 19, 20	<i>Family Mass on 3/17 at 9:00 am</i> See Schedule for Holy Week and Easter Services
APRIL Unit 5: MORALITY Family Formation: Corporal Works of Mercy	April 7 *Divine Mercy Sunday* Ch.21 with Grade-Level Catechist April 21 Family Faith Formation Ch.23 with Grade-Level Catechist	Sessions 22, 24, 25	<i>Family Mass on 4/21 at 9:00 am</i>

Table of Contents

Religious education/YM Important
Dates.....9
Bishop Walsh info4
General Information.....2-5
Parent Resources and links.....10-11
Registration Form... separate insert
Tuition info5
Sacramental Prep Information.....2
Volunteer Information.....7-8
Youth Ministry Info.....6

Divine Mercy Parish Faith Formation Information Booklet

A Family Registration form for Religious Education is
included in this booklet.

**Receive a \$5 early tuition discount
by registering now!**

**Early Registration deadline:
Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023**

Deadline for Registration: Sept. 25

*Please note: Divine Mercy Parish will accept registrations after
the deadline of Sept. 9, but students who are registered after
that date may not receive guaranteed books right away. We
appreciate every effort you can make to register before the
deadline!*