



Mary Queen Catholic Church
Elementary Faith Formation Handbook

Grades PreK-4 through 5th

2021-22 School Year

(Updated 4/15/2021)

Parish Mission Statement

*Our Mary Queen community, inspired by faith and love,
will live, worship, teach, welcome, and support one another
in the imitation of Christ.*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Parish Information

Mary Queen Church
606 Cedarwood Drive
Friendswood, TX 77546-4551
Phone: 281-482-1391
Fax: 281-482-4886
Website: www.maryqueenchurch.org

Parish Office Hours

Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm

Priests and Deacons

Pastor: Fr. Jim Kuczynski, M.S. - Phone Ext. 312
Parochial Vicar: Fr. Sibi Kunninu, M.S. Phone Ext. 314
Deacon Chuck Turner - Phone Ext. 316
Deacon Vince Eklund - Phone 281-389-8845

Elementary Faith Formation (EFF)

EFF Office Hours

Monday thru Thursday: 8:30 am - 5:30 pm

Elementary Faith Formation (Grades PreK-4 – 5th)

Director of Elementary Faith Formation
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GENERAL INFORMATION – Elementary Faith Formation now includes grades PreK-4 – 5th. Throughout the handbook, and in other correspondence, it may also be simply referred to as “EFF.”

- **Curriculum:** Our program for students four years old through grade five follows the Catechetical Framework for Lifelong Catechesis of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and the Catechesis for Children and Adolescents as directed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Textbooks are chosen from the Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series set forth by the Bishops’ Committee on the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Publications used for catechesis in 2021-22 will be Pflaum Gospel Weeklies for grades PreK-4 to grade five. Each curriculum encompasses the six tasks of catechesis in the General Directory of Catechesis, which are to promote: knowledge of the faith; liturgical education; moral formation; teaching to pray; education for community life; and missionary initiation.

- **Communication:** Contact the Director of Elementary Faith Formation for inquiries concerning the EFF program, curriculum, or sacrament preparation. Communication is made in the following manner: articles/announcements in the parish bulletin, flyers sent home with students on occasion and e-mail. In fact, e-mail is the primary mode of communication, so please be sure your email address is current with our office. All e-mail and telephone communications made by the parish or by catechists will conform to the Archdiocesan confidentiality policy. (See Section C below on Safe Environment Programs for further details).

Websites: Parents/Guardians and students are encouraged to visit Mary Queen’s website: www.maryqueenchurch.org, which contains helpful information about our Faith Formation programs and other resources such as calendars and volunteer opportunities.

- **Safe Environment Programs:** Catechists and assistants provide a loving and safe Christian atmosphere in the classroom so that children can learn and recognize that they are children of God. All catechists, aides, and support volunteers have completed Safe Environment training as required by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and Mary Queen Parish.
- **SAFE HAVEN** is the safe environment program implemented by the Archdiocese for every adult over the age of 18 that has regular and on-going contact with children, including all EFF programs, socials, events, and activities. It is an online program and includes a criminal background check. Once approved, one’s status is good for 5 years. For more information on Safe Environment: <https://www.archgh.org/offices-ministries/office-of-child-and-youth-protection/safe-environment-training-for-adults/>
- **Circle of Grace** is a safe environment education program for all children in K-12th grades. Its primary focus is to help children and their parents develop the knowledge and skills needed to keep children and youth safe and protected from sexual abuse. Circle of Grace is an ongoing program which will provide an annual age-appropriate lesson to children in our program. Home Study parents are also provided these lessons to teach at home.
- **Home Study Catechesis:** Parents who wish to teach religion at home are encouraged to do so under the direction of the Pastor, the master catechist of the parish, and in cooperation with his parish school of religion or Elementary Faith Formation.

Parents teaching religion as *part of a comprehensive home school curriculum* are not required to register in EFF, or use an EFF-issued textbook, unless it is a sacrament year. All children preparing for sacraments do so through a parish sacrament program (see section III, A.). HomeStudy catechetical materials should be chosen from the *Conformity Listing of*

Catechetical Texts and Series provided by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on February 8, 2021. For more information:

<https://www.usccb.org/resources/Current%20Conformity%20List.pdf>

Parents who teach religion at home *as an alternative to attending EFF classes* will register and pay the fee to obtain home study materials and have the work recorded in the office. There is a brief parent orientation to pick up materials and gather any information on events for the year. Parents will receive the student textbook(s), a student prayer booklet, and a calendar with the suggested schedule of lessons. Regular check-ins give parents the opportunity to stay on track and turn in completed lessons for credit. Final work is to be turned in the last week of April.

- **Special Education:** Students with disabilities are rightfully welcomed in faith formation. Please indicate on the registration form any accommodations that might be made for the child to enrich his /her experience. Since many of our catechists and aides do not have training in special needs, children can be incorporated into the EFF classes with the help of special buddies. Whenever a volunteer buddy is not available, it may be necessary for a parent or another adult to assist in the classroom until a routine is developed. For children not able to attend a typical classroom setting, then a “Catechesis of the Good Shepherd” Atrium is available on EFF Sunday mornings to provide individualized catechesis (as space permits).

II. PROGRAM GUIDELINES

- **Admission Policies:** Regular tuition cost for parishioners is \$60.00 per student with a family maximum of \$180. Tuition for non-parishioners is \$90 per student with a family maximum of \$270.

Mary Queen pastoral policy recognizes that each student has the right to Catholic formation and guarantees each student enrollment in the EFF program regardless of financial limitations.

No student will be denied due to financial limitations.

See the Religious Education Director for more information.

- **Pre-K Students:** All students entering the program must be at least 4 years old by September 1st of that year.
- **Kindergarten Students:** All students entering the Kindergarten program must be 5 years old by September 1st of that year.
- **First Reconciliation and First Eucharist:** Students must be entering second grade or older to participate in sacrament preparation with at least one immediate prior year of regular attendance in formal Catholic education.
- **Rite of Christian Initiation for Children:** Children who are not baptized* before the age of reason (age 7), are invited to join the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults adapted for Children*. This process helps school-aged children learn more about the Catholic faith, and when appropriate, to prepare for the Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist. Parents with children interested in becoming Catholic should contact the Elementary Faith Formation Office.
- **This process is also recommended for children baptized into another faith and/or without any prior faith formation.*
- **Registration:** Early registration is offered at the end of each school year. A reminder will be communicated to parents /guardians. Open registration is held the remainder of the year, as space permits.
- When completing the online registration form, check the grade your child will be ENTERING in the FALL, and sacraments the child wants to receive.
- To ensure placement, each registration form must be accurately completed and submitted with payment.
- Late or incomplete registration forms will delay or prevent placement in the requested class.

- Register early to get the best choice of session days & times, and indicate a second choice for class times, in case your first choice is filled.
- Every effort will be made to honor special requests for placement with friends or catechists before class rosters are finalized. (You can indicate special requests in the box for “Special Accommodations, Support, Health or Allergy” on the electronic form). Otherwise, placement is determined by the EFF Office.
- Phone numbers and e-mail addresses of parents are given to catechists and aides and used only for EFF communications in conformity with Archdiocesan policies.
- **Grade and Session Times:** EFF classes are in the Parish Life Center. Classes are 60- 75-minutes long except for preschool & Kindergarten classes on Sunday morning, which are the length of the Mass. CLASS TIMES are as follows:

| Sunday Pre-K4, K | Tuesday Grades K thru 5th | Wednesday Grades K thru 5th |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 9:30 a.m. During Mass time | 4 – 5:15 pm | 4 – 5:15 pm |
| 11:30 a.m. During Mass time | 5:45 – 7:00 pm | 5:45 – 7:00 pm |

- **Class Assignments:** All class assignments are posted in the main hall of the Family Life Center at least one week before classes begin and through the first few weeks of EFF.
- **Attendance Policy:** Regular attendance in EFF is an important factor in helping your child deepen his /her relationship with Jesus Christ and gain an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church, Scripture, creed, prayer, and morality. Special circumstances that may impede regular attendance should be discussed with the Director of Elementary Faith Formation.
- **Missed Classes:** If your child should miss three or more classes in a row, please contact the Director of Elementary Faith Formation. A child could be dropped from the roster after three consecutive, unexplained absences to make room for children on a waiting list. Every attempt will be made to contact the parent before a child is dropped. No refund will be given for students dropped due to absences.
- **Pick-up/ Drop Off:** (NOTE: These procedures may change as we learn more about COVID protocols for the 2021-22 school year). A parent must notify the EFF office if there is anyone who **SHOULD NOT** pick up a child. A color-coded parent card is required to enter the building or whenever picking up children. Cards are given out at the parent orientations. Before dropping off children, please be sure classes are in session, and there is an adult staff member or volunteer responsible for receiving them.
 - Pre-K to third grade must be escorted into and out of the building by an adult with a color-coded session pass.
 - Older students may be dropped off /picked up under the covered area.
 - Children and parents should exit the building using the double-doors in the main hallway at all times for safety navigating cars in line to pick up students and in the parking lot.
- **Arrival and Departure:** (NOTE: These procedures may change as we learn more about COVID protocols for the 2021-22 school year).
 - All vehicles enter by Queens (see map on page 11).
 - Do not drop off or pick up children in the front areas or smaller parking lot.
 - Form two lanes for drop off /pick up under the covered area.
 - For the safety of the children and others, use extreme caution when driving through the drop off /pick-up area.
 - Park only in designated parking spaces.

- Do not park in the drop off /pick-up lanes.

Please take preschoolers AND younger students to the restroom before class begins.

(NOTE: These procedures may change as we learn more about COVID protocols for the 2021-22 school year)

- **SUNDAY:** Parents are to escort children to and from the classroom. A color-coded session pass is required for pick up.
- **TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY:** Parents with students in grades K-Gr 3 are to escort their children to and from the classroom. Students in grades 4-5 can enter and leave unescorted.
- **ALL STUDENTS SHOULD NOT ENTER A CLASSROOM WHERE NO CATECHIST OR ASSISTANT CATECHIST IS PRESENT.** Wait outside the door until one arrives.
- Arriving late is discouraged. Children arriving more than 15 minutes late may not be given credit for attendance.

**IF PICKING UP A CHILD BEFORE THE END OF CLASS,
NOTIFY THE EFF DIRECTOR OR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

I. Emergency Cancellations: If FISD, CCISD and PISD cancel classes due to inclement weather, EFF will also cancel. If you have any questions, please contact your catechist or aide who will receive this information first from the EFF Office. Use your best judgment whether to come to EFF in a potentially dangerous situation (flood, hail, icy roads, etc.)

III. SACRAMENT PREPARATION

A. First Reconciliation and First Eucharist: Preparation is during the school year for baptized students in grades 2-5 who have completed the previous year in Catholic School, EFF, or approved HomeStudy Catechesis with good attendance. Attendance in EFF classes must be maintained in the year of preparation. **All students in sacrament preparation must also have an EFF registration on file in the EFF Office.** A baptism certificate is required for your child's registration to be complete.

- If baptized at Mary Queen Catholic Church, please provide the month/year of the baptism for verification with the registration.
- If baptized at another parish, please submit a copy of that baptism certificate

B. Sacrament Preparation Parent Requirements: A sacrament schedule is provided prior to and during the parent orientations. Reminders are emailed and/or mailed to parents whenever possible, but it is the responsibility of the parent to be aware of the schedule. **At least one parent or guardian is required to attend the orientation, classes and workshop with the child for each sacrament.** Parents attending the orientations in the previous two years are not required to attend again but must make arrangements to be excused with the Director of Religious Education and to pick up the materials.

C. Sacrament Readiness: One-on-one readiness interviews with the children are given before First Reconciliation and First Eucharist to check for comprehension. Students must bring their completed work to the readiness interviews. Children are well prepared for a sacrament once the lessons and readiness interviews are complete.

D. Missed Sessions: If the mandatory parent orientation is missed, it must be made up. One make-up orientation will be offered OR if the orientation is recorded, a link will be sent out to view. Otherwise, preparation for the sacrament could be postponed until the next start date. Parent & child work together to complete lessons. If there are extenuating circumstances, please make an appointment to discuss the situation with the Director.

E. Scheduling Concerns: If there is a conflict regarding the reception of the sacraments for a minor child, the wishes of the Catholic parent with the most involvement in registering and attending Mass and EFF classes with the child will be given preferential option.

IV. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

A. Parents: Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's faith formation by attending Mass together each week, praying together at home, bringing the child regularly to EFF, discussing what is taught in class, completing homework assignments, and maintaining communication with the catechist.

B. Students: Students are to always behave in a Christian manner, and to be respectful and cooperative with youth and adults assisting in the program. They should be on time, and actively participating in classroom discussions and activities.

- **Dress Code:** We follow school dress codes. Appropriate school or church clothes should be worn. Parents will be asked to pick up students who are out of dress code.
- **Electronic devices:** Parents may reach their children in an emergency by calling 281-482-1391 ext. 333. Cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used by students during class. An EFF staff member or other authorized adult volunteer will take possession of devices that interfere with learning or discipline. A confiscated device will only be released to a parent or guardian.
- **Room Use:** No food (including gum) or drink is permitted in the classroom wing of the Parish Life Center without permission.
- **Code of Conduct:** Students will follow classroom rules, respect others and their personal property, and respect and care for the church's property, textbooks, materials, etc.

C. Discipline and Problem Solving: There is an expectation that students will share in the faith lessons and activities prepared for them by the catechists, to the best of their abilities. If a student's behavior repeatedly disrupts a class or shows inappropriate behavior, or there is a pattern of disruption, the following steps will be taken.

Disciplinary Procedures:

1st warning – verbal warning

2nd warning – redirect or time out determined by the catechist 3rd

warning – sent to EFF Office to make a discipline plan*

4th warning – parental contact with possible in-class parental supervision**

5th warning – removal of the student to home study***

*The student must work out a plan with the director to be allowed back into the classroom. This may include a written apology and acknowledgement of what the appropriate behavior should have been.

** A parent is contacted, and when necessary may be called upon to supervise the child during the remaining classes

***If a child is moved to home study, no refund of fees will be given.

Hitting, biting, scratching, spitting and other acts of physical aggression cannot be tolerated.

Parents will be called immediately to pick up the child.

A two session suspension will be imposed for each incident.

V. RIGHT TO AMEND

Mary Queen Catholic Church EFF Program reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary. Parents will be notified in writing if changes are made to any procedures or information contained in this handbook before the end of the school year.

VI. PRAYER

Guidelines for Prayer: *Catechetical Framework for Lifelong Faith Formation*
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, 2013

The *National Directory for Catechesis* (29 F – Learning by Heart p102-103) states that among formulations to be learned by heart are the following:

1. Prayers
2. Factual information contributing to an appreciation of the place of the word of God in the Church and the life of the Christian
3. Formulas providing factual information regarding the Church, worship, the church year, and major practices in the devotional life of Christians
4. Formulas and practices dealing with the moral life of Christians

Parents, catechists, and faith communities are called to assist individuals learn by heart the following prayers, formulas and practices at the appropriate age/grade listed. This is achieved in a variety of ways, including: the witness of daily prayer in the home, participation in the life of the Church and in intentional catechetical settings. The following list reflects the common language of faith to be reflected in all cultures and generations, thus facilitating, “a common way of praying in the Church, not only personally but also in community” (Children will be given a booklet with all the prayers at the start of each EFF year.)

Pre-K 3 & 4 Sign of the Cross, Grace Before and After Meals.

Kindergarten In addition to the items above: Morning and Evening Prayers, and the Guardian Angel Prayer.

Grade One In addition to the items above: The Lord’s Prayer, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

Grade Two In addition to the items above: Act of Contrition and Assembly’s Mass Responses during Mass.

Grade Three In addition to the items above: Nicene Creed, Fatima Prayer, and Hail Holy Queen

Grade Four In addition to the items above: The Ten Commandments, Apostle’s Creed, Corporal & Spiritual Works of Mercy, Beatitudes, and Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

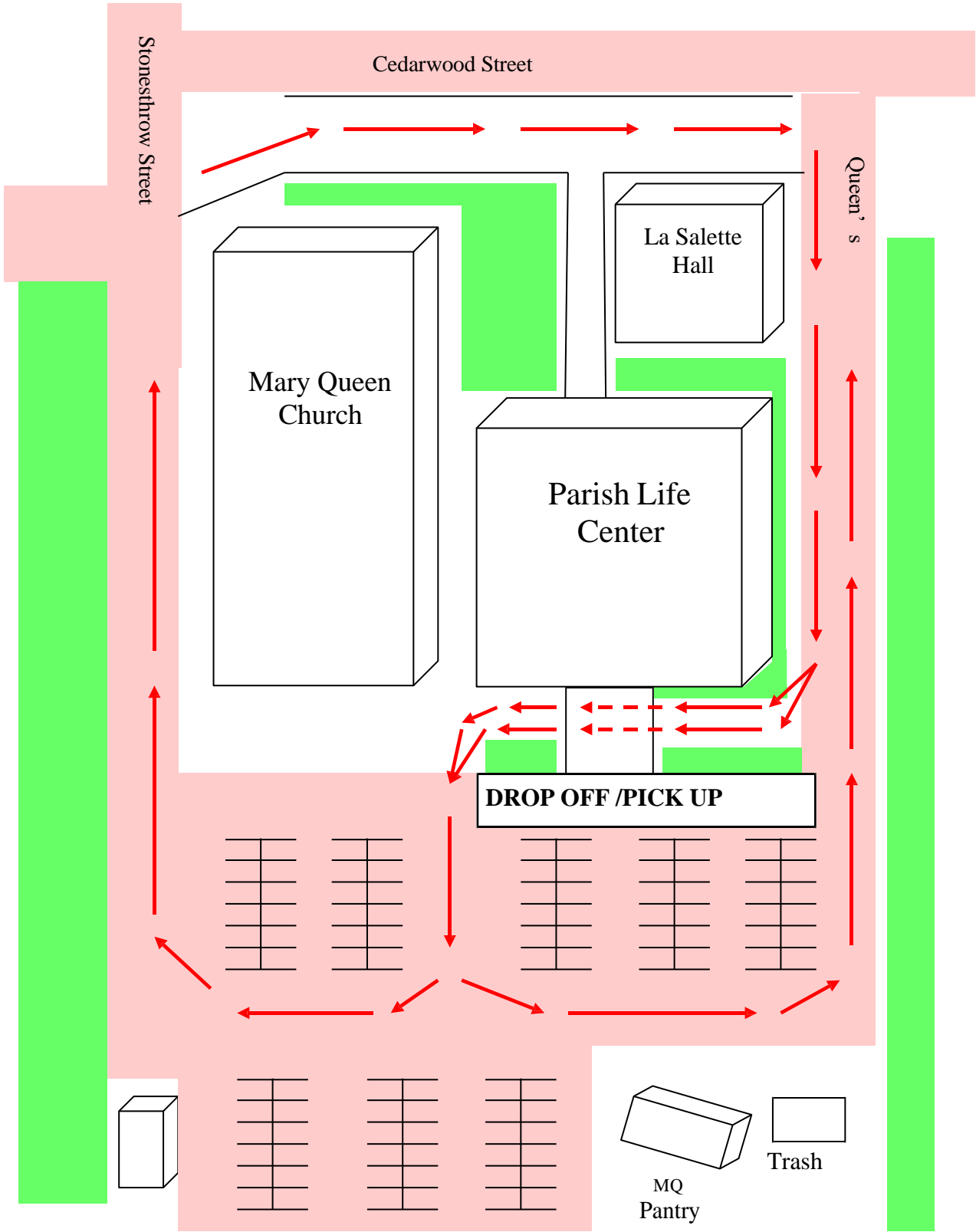
Grade Five In addition to the items above: Luminous and Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary, Act of Faith, The Seven Sacraments, Holy Days of Obligation, and Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (Shema).

Prayer to Our Lady

Dear Mother; at La Salette you wept for me- for all of us. Your apparition vividly speaks to me of your care and concern. You invite me to mend my ways, to deepen my faith, to reconcile myself with your Son and with my brothers and sisters. Whenever I feel that no one cares, I just have to turn to your apparition at La Salette to know that you are by my side. When you asked Maximin if he had ever seen spoiled wheat, he replied that he had not. You reminded him of an event that took place in his life many years prior. Although invisible, you were with him. Mother, be present to me. Be always by my side, guiding and leading me to your Son. Give me an open heart to answer your tears and appeals.

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ELEMENTARY FAITH FORMATION TRAFFIC FLOW



**Be sure that EFF classes are in session before dropping children off!
 Children younger than 4th grade should be walked into & out of
 the Family Life Center.
 Park only in designated spaces.**