

MOTHER OF SORROWS PARISH

FAITH FORMATION INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION PACKET

Faith Formation registration has begun! There are a few new things about how registration works this year, so please read the following information carefully, and then register at the link included in this information packet.

Included in this information packet:

- A. At a Glance: Overview of what you need to register for, depending on your family profile
- B. Faith Formation Program Options
- C. Faith Formation Program Fees
- D. Sacramental Preparation
- E. Faith Formation and Sacramental Preparation Registration Links
- F. Mother of Sorrows Family Faith Formation and Sacramental Preparation Calendar (this includes information for those who are only in the family faith formation program, or who are in both the family faith formation program and sacramental preparation.
- G. Mother of Sorrows Sacramental Preparation Calendar (this includes information for families who attend Mother of Sorrows School or are doing the At-Home faith formation program, with children in 2nd or 8th grade who are preparing to receive First Holy Communion or Confirmation in spring of 2025.)

Not included in this information packet:

- Dates/times for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)
- Dates/times for the St. Mary/St. John Weekly Faith Formation Program and Sacramental Preparation classes

If you register for either of these programs, you will receive more information from the directors of the respective program.

A. AT A GLANCE

Who You Are	What You Need to Do
<p>Parishioners with a child(ren) entering grades K-8 who attend Mother of Sorrows School.</p>	<p>No need to register for faith formation – your child receives this through the school religion program.</p> <p>If you have a child in grade 2 or 8, you will receive information for sacramental preparation (First Holy Communion or Confirmation), and will need to provide information and documentation for your child to receive their sacrament in spring of 2025. You and your child will follow the “Sacramental Preparation Calendar”.</p> <p>If you have a child(ren) in grades 6-8, they are also invited to participate in the Mother of Sorrows Youth Ministry program. More information can be obtained from Jacob Gindhart (jgindhart@dioceseofgreensburg.org).</p>
<p>Parishioners with a child(ren) entering grades K-8 who do not attend Mother of Sorrows School.</p>	<p>Register for a faith formation program. Options include the Family Faith Formation Program here at Mother of Sorrows, the At-Home Program, the CGS Program (hosted at the regional center at St. Regis Parish), or the St. Mary/St. John Weekly Faith Formation Program.</p> <p>If you have a child in grade 2 or 8, you will automatically receive information for sacramental preparation. You will also need to provide additional information and documentation for your child to receive their sacrament in spring of 2025 (you will receive a link to provide this documentation after registering your child for faith formation). You will receive a calendar and updates on the sacramental preparation sessions that integrate into the program you select. Although faith formation classes and sacramental preparation sessions will be taking place at different locations depending on the program you sign up for, all Mother of Sorrows parishioners will receive First Holy Communion and Confirmation here at Mother of Sorrows Parish.</p> <p>If you have a child(ren) in grades 6-8, they are also invited to participate in the Mother of Sorrows Youth Ministry program. More information can be obtained from Jacob Gindhart (jgindhart@dioceseofgreensburg.org).</p>
<p>Parishioners with youth in high school</p>	<p>Mother of Sorrows has a High School Youth Ministry program that youth in grades 9-12 are invited and encouraged to attend. More information can be obtained from Jacob Gindhart (jgindhart@dioceseofgreensburg.org).</p>

B. Faith Formation Program Options

FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

This year, the family faith formation program will take place monthly. Two options will be offered, one on **Sunday afternoons** at 4:30pm, and the other on **Wednesday evenings** at 6:30pm. The family faith formation families will also be given access to Catholic Brain, a USCCB approved online catechetical resource that provides a significant amount of additional content that can be done at home throughout the month. We believe this resource will be most helpful for grades 1-5, although it also provides content for grades 6-8. This program is offered as a means of fostering intergenerational faith formation that brings the whole family together, and stresses the parents' role in forming their children as part of living out your baptismal calling together as a family. Unless otherwise notified, all family faith formation sessions will begin with everyone together in the Church.

CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Our CGS program is now part of the regional CGS Center at St. Regis Parish. We are the largest parish in the region served by this center and continue to support the program in multiple ways. If you register for the CGS program, your information will be shared with Karen McDade, director of the regional center, and the catechists, many of whom are MOS parishioners and have already been running the program here at MOS. Although the registration and fee for the program will still happen through MOS, further information regarding dates/times for the sessions and anything else you need to know will come to you from one of the CGS catechists or from Karen McDade. CGS is a weekly program for children ages 3-12, that emphasizes contemplation and getting to know God personally through a unique experiential methodology inspired by the Montessori method. If your family is new to CGS, it is most recommended to consider joining Level 1 (ages 3-6). If you have older children who are already familiar with CGS, or whom you believe would easily transition into this system of learning, feel free to submit your information, and the CGS team will be in touch with you regarding openings for Levels 2 and 3.

THE AT-HOME PROGRAM

Those of you who would like to teach your children the faith at home will receive the Finding God textbook for your child(ren)'s grade level. You are welcome to come to the family faith sessions as well. Sessions such as the "Teaching the Mass" in October and "Sacred Triduum Sign and Symbol" in Lent are great opportunities for kids to learn

about the meaning behind things they see, hear and say during the liturgy throughout the year. There is no additional fee for participating in both programs.

ST. MARY FAITH FORMATION

We also offer the option to participate in Faith Formation at St. Mary Parish (Export).

St. Mary offers a weekly faith formation class called *Discover!* for grades K-8 on Sunday mornings, 10:00-11:30am at St. Mary Parish, in Export. If you select this as your preferred faith formation program, your information will be shared with Joann Giuffre, Director of Faith Formation for St. Mary. You will receive any additional program information directly from Joann.

We will inform all families about special family friendly events offered by St. Mary throughout the year, such as an All Saints' Day party in November and Easter Egg Hunt in April.

MOTHER OF SORROWS SCHOOL RELIGION PROGRAM

Any parishioners enrolled at Mother of Sorrows School receive faith formation through the school's religion program.

C. Faith Formation Program Fees

The fee for faith formation program (all options) is \$60 per child, or a maximum of \$100 per family. To simplify the administrative process, all families will submit the registration fee to Mother of Sorrows parish even if you sign up for one of our partner programs (CGS or the St. Mary and St. John faith formation program). Please submit your fees by September 8, 2024.

If you attend Mother of Sorrows School, you do not need to register for faith formation, nor pay an additional fee – this is already covered through your school registration and tuition.

D. Sacramental Preparation

To streamline the registration process, any family who registers a second or eighth grader for faith formation will automatically receive information for sacramental preparation for First Holy Communion (second grade) and Confirmation (eight grade). After your faith formation registration has been received, you will be sent a link to provide additional documentation and information needed for your child to be able to celebrate their sacrament in spring of 2025.

If you sign up for the family faith program, the at-home program, or attend faith formation at school, you will receive information for the sacramental preparation session that happen here at MOS. These sessions are designed to integrate well with the family faith formation

program in terms of both scheduling and approach (parents attend the sessions with their children). During some of the regular family faith formation sessions, second and eighth graders will be in their own breakout groups, which will have a stronger focus on preparing for their respective sacraments integrated into the formation themes.

- All sacramental preparation sessions and events are necessary to be ready for the reception of the sacraments in spring of 2025. Please make every effort to attend all sacramental preparation sessions as they are scheduled. We realize that sometimes unexpected life occurrences prevent attendance on a given day. If you miss a sacramental preparation session and are unable to attend the alternative time, please connect with Ellen Mady (emady@dioceseofgreensburg.org) if your child is preparing for First Holy Communion, or Jacob Gindhart (jgindhart@dioceseofgreensburg.org) if your child is preparing for confirmation, to arrange for an accommodation, which might take the form of work done at home, or coming in for an additional make up session. Some confirmation preparation activities (the NET Confirmation Retreat and the Confirmation Reflection with Bishop Kulick), cannot be easily made up through an alternative session; these are designated on the calendar already to aid in your planning.

If you sign up for faith formation at St. Mary, you will receive information about sacramental preparation classes held at St. Mary. The sacramental preparation schedule at St. Mary aligns well with the faith formation program there. Even though your child will attend formation and sacramental preparation sessions at St. Mary, they will receive the sacrament here at Mother of Sorrows, their home parish.

There is no fee for sacramental preparation.

E. Faith Formation and Sacramental Preparation Registration Links

For parishioners with children not attending Mother of Sorrows School, register for faith formation here: <https://forms.gle/rajAQiiFRewRAUWL9>. If you register a 2nd or 8th grader, they will automatically be enrolled in sacramental preparation as well, and you will receive future information pertaining to both faith formation and sacramental preparation.

For parishioners with children attending Mother of Sorrows School, register for sacramental preparation here: <https://forms.gle/AbRrvMfM5PXDEy4A>. You do not need to register for faith formation.

F. Mother of Sorrows Parish

Family Faith Formation and Sacramental Preparation Calendar

- This calendar contains dates and times pertaining to the Family Faith Formation Program and Sacramental Preparation Programs here at Mother of Sorrows. It does not contain the dates and times for the CGS program or St. Mary. If you register for one of those two programs, you will receive that information from the respective program director.
- This calendar contains dates and times for specific tracks (e.g. First Communion and Confirmation students), as well as the faith formation calendar for everyone.
 - If you do not have children receiving a sacrament, calendar sections labeled “everyone”.
 - If you have a child in 2nd grade, follow the calendar sections labeled “everyone” and “2nd grade sacramental prep”.
 - If you have a child in 8th grade, follow the calendar sections labeled “everyone” and “8th grade sacramental prep”.
 - ***If you attend MOS School or choose the at-home faith formation option and have a child receiving a sacrament, this is not your calendar. Please follow the “Mother of Sorrows Sacramental Preparation Calendar”, also included in this information packet.***

September 2024

EVERYONE

September 22

- **Blessing of the catechists during Mass.** Parents will be invited to partake in this blessing as the primary catechists of your children.
- 4:30-5:45pm **Family Faith Formation**

September 25

- 6:30-7:30pm **Family Faith Formation** (alternative time)

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

Sacramental Meet and Greet

September 8 or September 15 (choose one) – 10:30 in the social hall. Pictures will be taken of the First Communion and Confirmation students during this time.

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

Sacramental Meet and Greet

September 8 or September 15 (choose one) – 10:30 in the social hall. Pictures will be taken of the First Communion and Confirmation students during this time.

October 2024

<p><u>EVERYONE</u></p> <p>October 16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 6:30-7:30pm Family Faith Formation: Teaching the Mass, OR <p>October 20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 4:30-5:45pm Family Faith Formation: Teaching the Mass (alternative time) <p>October 23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- All are invited to join in the parish Trunk or Treat in the evening. More information will be forthcoming.
<p><u>2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)</u></p> <p>No additional sessions</p>
<p><u>8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)</u></p> <p>October 30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 6:30-7:30 Confirmation Prep Meeting (8th graders only – parents do not need to attend). More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart.

November 2024

<p><u>EVERYONE</u></p> <p>November 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 4:30-5:45pm Family Faith Formation, OR <p>November 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 6:30-7:30pm Family Faith Formation (alternative time)
<p><u>2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)</u></p> <p>No additional sessions</p>
<p><u>8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)</u></p> <p>November 13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 6:30-7:30 Confirmation Prep Meeting (8th graders only – parents do not need to attend). More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart.

December 2024

EVERYONE: There will be no regular Family Faith Formation session this month. Instead, families will participate in two Advent service projects for the parish, both taking place after the 9:30 or 11:30 Masses.

December 8

- 10:30-11:15 OR 12:30-1:15 (choose one)

Family Faith Formation Service Project – families will be stuffing bags of straw to be given to the parishioners for their Nativity scenes; gather in the Social Hall

December 22

- All Masses: Families are invited to bring a Baby Jesus from your home nativity scene to be blessed

December 29

- 10:30-11:15 OR 12:30-1:15 (choose one)

Family Faith Formation Service Project – families will be preparing home blessing bags with holy water and chalk to be given to parishioners on the Epiphany; gather in the Social Hall

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

No additional sessions

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

No additional sessions.

January 2025

EVERYONE

January 5

- 4:30-5:45pm **Family Faith Formation**, OR

January 8

- 6:30-7:30pm **Family Faith Formation** (alternative time)

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

No additional sessions

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

January 18

- 9:30-5:30pm **Confirmation Retreat**. *All confirmation students need to attend this retreat. If you are unable to for serious reasons, please inform Jacob as soon as possible (early fall), in order to find an alternative retreat option. This might require travel and might not be ideal in terms of scheduling, so please make every effort to be able to attend the MOS confirmation retreat scheduled for January 18.*

February 2025

EVERYONE

February 2

- 4:30-5:45pm **Family Faith Formation, OR**

February 5

- 6:30-7:30pm **Family Faith Formation** (alternative time)

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

February 23

- 4:30-5:45 Sacrament of Reconciliation Preparation Session

February 26

- 6:30-7:30 Sacrament of Reconciliation Preparation Session (alternative time)

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

February 18

- 6:00pm **Confirmation Reflection with Bishop Kulick.**

More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart. This is a mandatory component of the confirmation preparation program that cannot be made up due to the involvement of the diocesan bishop.

March 2025

EVERYONE

March 9

- 4:30-5:45pm **Family Faith Formation, OR**

March 12

- 6:30-7:30pm **Family Faith Formation** (alternative time)

March 16

- 10:30-11:15 OR 12:30-1:15 (choose one)
Family Faith Formation Service Project – families will be writing cards for the homebound

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

March 19

- 6:30-8:00pm Reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Mother of Sorrows Church), OR

March 26

- 6:30-8:00 Reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (alternative time)
 - This will be held at St. John's Parish in Delmont

We highly encourage families to bring your child to one of these scheduled First Reconciliation sessions, which will be child-friendly and geared toward helping your children, along with their classmates, walk through the reception of the sacrament for their first time. However, if you are unable to make either of these dates, you are welcome to bring your child to one of the regularly scheduled Reconciliation times at Mother of Sorrows Parish (Saturdays at 9am), prior to your child's reception of First Holy Communion. If you choose to do so, please approach the priest and let him know that it is your child's First Reconciliation, so he can help guide your child through the process.

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

March 19

- 6:30-7:30 Confirmation Prep Meeting (8th graders only – parents do not need to attend). More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart.

April 2025

EVERYONE

April 6

- 4:30-5:45pm **Family Faith Formation: Sacred Triduum Preparation**, OR

April 9

- 6:30-7:30pm **Family Faith Formation: Sacred Triduum Preparation** (alternative time)

These are the final Family Faith Formation sessions for the year.

April 11-12

- All are invited to join in annual Living Stations of the Cross, which are prepared by the Mother of Sorrows Youth Group, and will be held the evenings of April 11 and 12th, in the Mother of Sorrows School building. More information will be forthcoming.

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

April 27

- 4:30-5:45 Sacrament of First Holy Communion Preparation Session, OR

April 30

- 6:30-7:30 Sacrament of First Holy Communion Preparation Session (alternative time)

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

April 16

- 6:30-7:30 Confirmation Prep Meeting (8th graders only – parents do not need to attend). More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart.

May 2025

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

First Holy Communions will take place during a variety of Masses throughout the Month of May and possibly the first weekend of June depending. First Holy Communion Masses will not be scheduled on May 11 (Mothers' Day). A sign-up link to select the date and time for your child's First Holy Communion will be sent out in January.

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

Evening of May 7

- **Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.** Location: Mother of Sorrows Parish. More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart.

Summer Dates of Note:

Vacation Bible School: To be held here at Mother of Sorrows Parish on the afternoons of June 9-14, 2025.

Camp Virtue: This is an all-day regional camp that Mother of Sorrows supports and participates in, and will be held at St. Barbara Parish, July 7-12, 2025.

G. Mother of Sorrows Parish

Sacramental Preparation Calendar

- *This calendar is for families with children in 2nd or 8th grade who attend Mother of Sorrows School, or are completing the at-home faith formation program.*
- Parent participation is involved in all of the 2nd grade events and activities. For the 8th grade events, parent participation is only needed when indicated.

September 2024

2nd and 8th grade students and parents:

Sacramental Meet and Greet

September 8 or September 15 (choose one) – 10:30 in the social hall. Pictures will be taken of the First Communion and Confirmation students during this time.

October 2024

2nd and 8th grade students and parents:

October 16

- 6:30-7:30pm **Teaching the Mass Session**, OR

October 20

- 4:30-5:45pm **Teaching the Mass** (alternative time)

These sessions are held in Mother of Sorrows Church.

October 23

- All are invited to join in the parish Trunk or Treat in the evening. More information will be forthcoming.

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

No additional sessions

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

October 30

- 6:30-7:30 Confirmation Prep Meeting (8th graders only – parents do not need to attend). More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart.

November 2024

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

November 13

- 6:30-7:30 Confirmation Prep Meeting (8th graders only – parents do not need to attend). More information will be forthcoming from Jacob Gindhart.

December 2024

2nd and 8th grade students and parents:

December 8

- 10:30-11:15 OR 12:30-1:15 (choose one)
Service Project – families will be stuffing bags of straw to be given to the parishioners for their Nativity scenes; gather in the Social Hall

December 22

- All Masses: Families are invited to bring a Baby Jesus from your home nativity scene to be blessed

December 29

- 10:30-11:15 OR 12:30-1:15 (choose one)
Service Project – families will be preparing home blessing bags with holy water and chalk to be given to parishioners on the Epiphany; gather in the Social Hall

January 2025

2nd Grade (First Communion Prep)

No additional sessions

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

January 18

- 9:30-5:30pm **Confirmation Retreat**. *All confirmation students need to attend this retreat. If you are unable to for serious reasons, please inform Jacob as soon as possible (early fall), in order to find an alternative retreat option. This might require travel and might not be ideal in terms of scheduling, so please make every effort to be able to attend the MOS confirmation retreat scheduled for January 18.*

February 2025

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February 23

- 4:30-5:45 Sacrament of Reconciliation Preparation Session, OR

February 26

- 6:30-7:30 Sacrament of Reconciliation Preparation Session (alternative time)

These sessions are held in Mother of Sorrows Church.

8th Grade (Confirmation Prep)

February 18

- 6:00pm **Confirmation Reflection with Bishop Kulick.**

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- 10:30-11:15 OR 12:30-1:15 (choose one)
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April 2025

2nd and 8th grade students and parents:

April 6

- 4:30-5:45pm **Sacred Triduum Preparation**, OR

April 9

- 6:30-7:30pm **Sacred Triduum Preparation** (alternative time)

April 11-12

- All are invited to join in annual Living Stations of the Cross, which are prepared by the Mother of Sorrows Youth Group, and will be held the evenings of April 11 and 12th, in the Mother of Sorrows School building. More information will be forthcoming.

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April 27

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May 2025

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