

# St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Catholic Church



## Religious Education Parent Handbook 2024-2025

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## Contact Information

### **Office Hours:**

Tuesday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

\*Closed from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. for lunch.

### **Physical Address:**

30300 Catholic Hall Road  
Hammond, Louisiana 70403

### **Mailing Address:**

Post Office Box 100  
Albany, Louisiana 70711

### **Phone:**

(225) 567-3573

### **Website:**

<https://stmargaretstthomas.com>

### **Email:**

[bohenderson@stmargaretstthomas.com](mailto:bohenderson@stmargaretstthomas.com)

### **Faith Formation Staff:**

Fr. Paul August Gros, Pastor

Deacon William “Byrd” Corbett

Deacon Tim Messenger

Baleigh Olah Henderson,

Coordinator of Religious Education & Sacramental Preparation

Melissa F. Berghausen, Youth Minister

### **PSR GroupMe**

Please join the 2024-2025 PSR GroupMe to stay connected with updates!



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# Welcome!

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The Religious Education program at St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland is here to assist parents in their mission to nurture a faith-filled child. We offer resources and support to parents and families who wish that their children will grow in faith and be a witness to God's presence in the world.



*“Parents are the ones who must create a family atmosphere animated by love and respect for God and man, in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is fostered.”*

*- Vatican Council II*

In giving life to your child, you assume the obligation of raising him or her to be a virtuous person. In choosing to baptize your child in the Catholic Faith, you accepted the responsibility of being the fundamental source of your child's faith formation, to regularly practice their Catholic faith and to know, love and serve God in every way.

Raising your child in faith means he or she will become a person who demonstrates by word and deed what it means to be a Christian; a disciple of Christ.

## A Disciple of Christ...

1. Lives a moral Christian life.
2. Meaningfully participates in liturgical and sacramental worship.
3. Prays on his or her own and in communion with the Church.
4. Provides service to the Church and to those in need.
5. Is knowledgeable about the faith.
6. Shares the Good News of Jesus Christ with all people.

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# Our Program

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The Parish School of Religion (“PSR”) program at St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland, is designed to give young people the opportunity to encounter Christ in their lives through **instruction, prayer, service, and participation in the Liturgy**. Each of these elements is essential to experiencing the joy and peace that comes from living a full Christian life.

*“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”*

- *The Great Commission (Mt. 28:19-20)*



## When Do We Meet?



To greater emphasize the link between the liturgy and religious instruction, PSR classes will be held at St. Margaret in the Hall of Saints for grades Kindergarten (K) through Sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) from **11:15 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.**, immediately following the 10:00 a.m. Mass on Sundays. This provides families both, the opportunity to attend Mass together and subsequently engage in holistic catechesis afterward.

PSR classes will be held in the Hall of Saints for grades Seven (7<sup>th</sup>) through Eleven (11<sup>th</sup>) from **6:45 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.**, immediately following the 5:30 p.m. Mass on Sundays. This, too, provides families the opportunity to attend Mass together and to take advantage of other programs for adult catechesis offered at St. Margaret.

As class time is valuable, students should be at the Hall of Saints on time and prepared for class. While we do realize that some families will have children in both, morning and evening sessions of PSR, our facilities simply cannot handle further realignment of the program to accommodate more particular class times during the morning session. Such is a wonderful dilemma of parish growth!

## Attendance

Once registered, students are expected to attend all classes, and parents will be notified of repeated absences. Excessive absences will result in lack of completion of the grade in question. **No more than four (4) absences per year will be accepted.** If a student is absent from class, that student is to present a signed note from their parent detailing the reason for their absence from class. **It is the responsibility of the parent and student to contact the catechist or Coordinator of Religious Education for missed assignments due to the absence.**

## Communication

Updates regarding class cancellations, closures, or important updates will be shared via the GroupMe (QR code can be found on the contact page), via email, and St. Margaret social media pages. If you have any questions regarding the PSR program or need to provide an update on your student, please email Mrs. Baleigh at [bohenderson@stmargaretstthomas.com](mailto:bohenderson@stmargaretstthomas.com).

## Code of Conduct

Students should enter the Hall of Saints in a quiet and respectful manner. Out of respect for other students and parish property, no running or pushing is allowed. Unless an adult is in a classroom, students are not allowed to enter classrooms alone (please make sure if you drop them off for class, their teacher or another adult is in the classroom!). Students should also dress in an appropriate manner. Food and drinks are prohibited in class, unless provided by the catechist or St. Margaret.

Good Christian attitude and respect should be shown to both, catechists and classmates. **Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.** Parents will be contacted, and students will be sent home, should such situations occur. Repeated disciplinary action will result in dismissal from the PSR program at St. Margaret.

Students will be allowed to have cellular devices, however, such devices may be subject to being placed out of their reach during class time by the catechist. If issues with the phones persist, students may be asked to not bring them back into the class. iPads and tablets are strictly prohibited.

Any behavior that is judged to be one of the four D's (Dangerous, Destructive, Disruptive, or Disrespectful) by the catechists and parish staff will not be tolerated. This includes bullying, fighting, sexual harassment, verbal abuse, vandalism, and

possession of illegal substances or weapons. It also includes any pattern of disruptive behavior in the class that undermines or derails the lesson or classroom order. Any student who engages in conduct that is detrimental to the safety and well-being of others will be removed from class for the day, and his or her parents will be notified.

**Any student found in possession of cigarettes, alcohol or drugs, or who perform any illegal activity on the parish grounds will be immediately removed from the PSR program.**

## **Registration**

All students will be required to register for the 2024-2025 school year by or before **August 5, 2024. Registration fees are \$40.00 per child. A \$10.00 late fee will apply if registrations are submitted after August 5, 2024.** This facilitates planning for the Religious Education staff and prevents the parish from uselessly wasting resources by purchasing unneeded supplies, but also ensuring enough supplies are available for all students.

**Only territorial or registered parishioners are allowed to register their children in the PSR program at St. Margaret. Parishioners of neighboring parishes can register ONLY with the written consent of their pastor.**

In an effort to maintain sacramental records, if your child was not baptized at St. Margaret, **please provide the parish office with a copy of your child's baptism certificate from the church where he or she was baptized.**

## Instruction

Christ’s command to teach is called *catechesis*, which in Greek means “instruction by word of mouth.” The instructional curriculum we use in our PSR program is the *Word of Life* series (grades K-8<sup>th</sup>) and *Formed.org* by the Augustine Institute, as well as *Decision Point* (integrated into grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>) by Dynamic Catholic.

*Word of Life* is a comprehensive, multifaceted curriculum that calls children, parents, teachers, and catechists to conversion and transformation in Christ. This program brings together faith and reason and demonstrates how the truths of the faith speak to the human heart. This curriculum helps Christians to give a complete meaning to their existence, educating them in a mentality of faith in keeping with the Gospel (2020 *Directory for Catechesis*). Responding to the needs of contemporary culture and those of modern man requires an “evangelizing catechesis”.

*Word of Life* unites a faithful articulation of the faith as it is presented in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with, when necessary, esteemed sources in the living tradition of the Church to form a presentation of faith that is meaningful, practical, and intelligible for modern students.

*Decision Point* gives our high school students the tools they need to become engaged young Catholics in a meaningful conversation about the genius of Catholicism in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

*Formed.org* will be available to the entire St. Margaret community and especially utilized by our PSR program. With *Formed.org*, families will be able to view and enjoy audio content, movies, eBooks, and family-friendly programming. Whether you are watching at home, in PSR class, or on the go, encountering and sharing faith-filled content has never been easier.





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# Sacramental Preparation

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## Continuous Enrollment

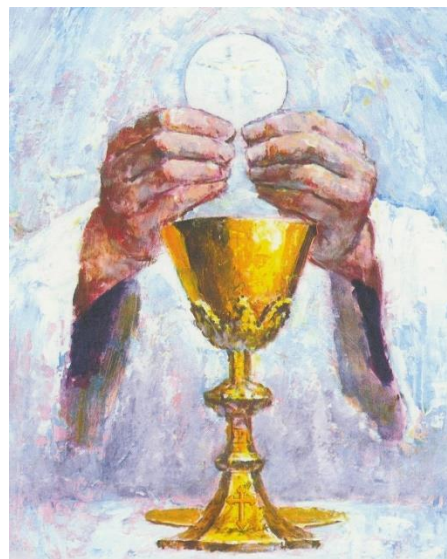
The structure of the PSR program is linear – each year’s instruction builds upon the previous year. To receive the sacraments, students are required to attend each year of religious education beginning in Kindergarten and ending in Eleventh Grade. Students who do not attend every year of instruction will be required to participate in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) or the Order of Christian Initiation of Children (OCIC) to receive Confirmation or Eucharist, respectively based upon their age and their understanding of the precepts of the faith.

*Students transferring from other Parish Schools of Religion will be required to show proof of their previous level(s) of instruction before integration in the St. Margaret PSR program.*

## First Reconciliation & First Communion

Our Second-Grade students will spend the year preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. While all years of participation in the PSR program are important, it is imperative that students are in attendance of all classes for their second-grade year.

The class will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday, **February 22, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.**, at St. Margaret Church. The students will receive their First Holy Communion on **Sunday, April 27, 2025, at the 10:00 a.m. Mass.** Practice for First Holy Communion will be held on **Saturday, April 26, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.**, at St. Margaret Church.



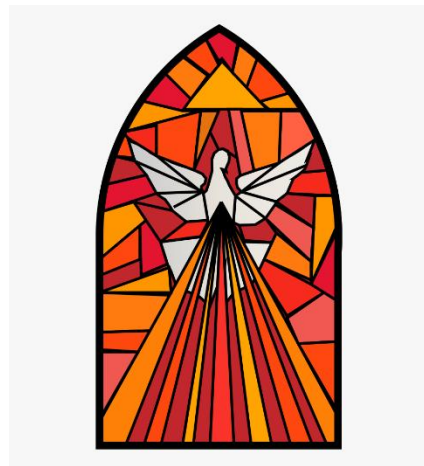
## Class Reconciliation Sessions

To emphasize the importance of regular use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, each PSR class will be given the opportunity to receive the Sacrament twice annually as a class or group of classes at St. Margaret with the Pastor and/or priests from surrounding parishes. Parents of PSR students are also invited to participate in these sessions, especially as a witness to the importance of its routine use. Dates are chosen by the Pastor and Religious Education Coordinator and communicated with parents and students in a timely fashion.

## Confirmation

Our Eleventh-Grade (11<sup>th</sup>) class spends the year especially preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Part of this preparation includes a **MANDATORY** Confirmation Retreat. Retreats are a common component of many spiritual traditions. They provide structure to answer the inner calling to step away from the ordinary and routine in order to be redirected and grounded in what God desires. This year's retreat will be on **Saturday, February 15, 2025**. More information will be announced later in the year.

The 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will be required to complete Ten (10) service hours prior to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.



*All 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will be required to submit a Christian Service Form to document his or her service hours prior to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. 10 service hours will be required to be completed. \*See below for Christian Service opportunities.*

**The students will celebrate and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday, May 4, 2025, at the 5:30 p.m. Mass, celebrated by the Bishop.**

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# Christian Service & Prayer

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At St. Margaret, we believe that it is essential for all ages to experience the joy of helping others through Christian Service. This includes any Corporal of Spiritual Works of Mercy freely given to another person to meet a genuine need.

While the 11<sup>th</sup> Grade class is required to complete service hours, ALL students are invited and encouraged to give back to our community and serve others.

In the first of the Beatitudes, Jesus explains, “*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy*” (Mt. 5:7). Here, “Blessed” can also be translated to “Happy,” which is what every parent wishes for his or her child.



*“If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,’ but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have work, is dead.”*

*- James 2:15-17*

## What Counts as Christian Service?

**Corporal Works of Mercy** are kind acts that help others with their material and physical needs. This includes providing food, shelter, and healthcare for the poor, sick, or elderly.

**Spiritual Works of Mercy** are compassionate acts that help others with their emotional and spiritual needs. This includes teaching the young, assisting in Liturgical worship, and comforting the sad or lonely.

Paid service or community service offered to support **enrichment activities** (e.g., sports, drama, arts, & music) are good things, but they **do not count** as Christian Service.

## Christian Service Opportunities at St. Margaret

The Religious Education Program and other parish ministries offer various opportunities for service throughout the year. If your child participates in Christian Service outside of St. Margaret Parish, those hours must be approved by the Religious Education Coordinator, which will determine whether it conforms to the definition of Christian Service as a Corporal or Spiritual Work of Mercy described above.

Various opportunities available for service at St. Margaret include, and are not limited to altar serving, serving as a lector in Mass, monthly Food Distribution Days, setting up for various campus activities at St. Margaret, participating in Youth Group sponsored activities, Vacation Bible School, and more. Please contact Mrs. Baleigh with any questions regarding service opportunities.

## Prayer



*“...the life of prayer is the habit of being in the presence of the thrice-holy God and in communion with him. This communion of life is always possible because, through Baptism, we have already been united with Christ.”*

*- Catechism of the Catholic Church*

When Catholics pray the ***Our Father, Hail Mary, or Glory Be*** together in unison, we enter as a people into communion with the divine. It is a glorious thing! These prayers are essential for all Catholics to know, but they are only a few of the many beautiful prayers in our Catholic tradition. In our program, we teach the young students these prayers, along with the ***Act of Contrition***.

Catholics believe Mary, the Mother of God, has a special role in salvation and a unique relationship to the Trinity, and so we pray to the Blessed Mother for her special power of intercession on our behalf. We do this especially through the prayers of the Rosary.

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# Liturgical Participation

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The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, which include Sundays and Holy Days. This obligation extends to all the baptized faithful unless impeded by some grave reason or unless dispensed on singular occasions by one's pastor. Catholics are invited and encouraged to participate in weekly Mass. Since parents are the "first teachers" of their children, parents should be attending Sunday Mass within the context of their faith community with their children.

The PSR program functions only in tandem with the Sunday liturgy; without it, such catechetical instruction is fruitless since the program merely explains the faith that is proclaimed and celebrated in the liturgy and lived in the world. ***All children, along with their parents, are required to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation throughout the calendar year.***

*"The Lord Jesus, on the night before he was handed over, took bread, and after he had given thanks, broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"*

*- 1 Cor. 11:23-24*



Liturgy comes from the Greek work "liturgia," which means "the work of the people." Divine liturgy is the "work of God". Each time we celebrate the Mass, we offer up perfect worship to the Father through Jesus's own offering on the cross and renew our connection to the sacred mystery of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the core of the Mass and the heart of Catholic belief. Here, we receive Jesus' astounding gift of his very body and blood in the Holy Eucharist. The Eucharist fills us with grace, satisfies our spirit, and inspires us to share the joy of this experience with others.



*“We should be mindful of the mystery of the communion of saints and remember that we live out that communion most especially at the mass.”*

*- Bishop Robert C. Molino*

Full, conscious, and active participation in the Mass unites us as one community, one family, and one body in Christ. The ancient rituals of the Mass extend this unity across space and time, to all who came before us and to all who will come after.

Regular attendance at Mass is essential to the development of a true sense of belonging to the eternal People of God. It is never too early or too late to begin this process. The alternative is to always feel like a tourist among God’s people – welcomed, but not truly at home.

Parents are encouraged to instruct their children, to answer questions, to model respectful behavior, and above all, to guide their children to actively participate in the actions and responses of the congregation. It is not a “be silent and still” celebration.

*The precept of the Church specifies the law of the Lord more precisely: “On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass...”*

*The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin.”*

*– Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2181*

## Class & Event Calendar

|                    |                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August 11, 2024    | First Day of Class! MANDATORY Parent Meeting                                                                            |
| August 18, 2024    | Theology in a Bottle                                                                                                    |
| August 25, 2024    | High School Holy Hour                                                                                                   |
| September 1, 2024  | NO PSR CLASS! Happy Labor Day!                                                                                          |
| September 8, 2024  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Reconciliation                                                                                    |
| September 15, 2024 | Kindergarten Circle of Grace                                                                                            |
| September 22, 2024 | Theology in a Bottle                                                                                                    |
| September 29, 2024 | 4 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reconciliation                                                                  |
| October 6, 2024    | 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace                                                                                  |
| October 13, 2024   | 5 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reconciliation<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> & 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace       |
| October 20, 2024   | 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reconciliation<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace<br>Theology in a Bottle |
| October 27, 2024   | High School Holy Hour                                                                                                   |
| November 3, 2024   | 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace                                                                                  |
| November 10, 2024  | Theology in a Bottle                                                                                                    |
| November 17, 2024  | NO PSR! St. Margaret Fall Festival                                                                                      |
| November 24, 2024  | NO PSR!                                                                                                                 |
| December 1, 2024   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace                                                                 |
| December 8, 2024   | 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace                                                                                   |
| December 15, 2024  | Theology in a Bottle                                                                                                    |
| December 22, 2024  | NO PSR! Christmas Holiday                                                                                               |
| December 29, 2024  | NO PSR! Christmas Holiday                                                                                               |
| January 5, 2025    |                                                                                                                         |
| January 12, 2025   |                                                                                                                         |
| January 19, 2025   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Reconciliation<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace<br>Theology in a Bottle |
| January 26, 2025   | 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reconciliation<br>Kindergarten & 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Circle of Grace<br>High School Holy Hour   |
| February 2, 2025   | 5 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reconciliation                                                                  |
| February 9, 2025   | 6 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Reconciliation                                                                  |
| February 15, 2025  | 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Retreat                                                                             |
| February 16, 2025  | Theology in a Bottle                                                                                                    |
| February 22, 2025  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade First Reconciliation                                                                              |
| February 23, 2025  |                                                                                                                         |
| March 2, 2025      | NO PSR! Mardi Gras Holiday                                                                                              |
| March 9, 2025      | 1 <sup>st</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace<br>Theology in a Bottle                                         |
| March 16, 2025     | NO PSR! St. Joseph Altar                                                                                                |
| March 23, 2025     | 6 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Circle of Grace                                                                 |
| March 30, 2025     |                                                                                                                         |
| April 6, 2025      |                                                                                                                         |
| April 13, 2025     | High School Holy Hour                                                                                                   |
| April 20, 2025     | NO PSR! Happy Easter!                                                                                                   |
| April 26, 2025     | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade First Communion Practice                                                                          |
| April 27, 2025     | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade First Communion (10:00 AM Mass)<br>Last Day of Classes!<br>Theology in a Bottle                   |
| May 4, 2025        | May Crowning<br>11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Mass (5:30 PM Mass)                                                 |
| May 18, 2025       | Theology in a Bottle                                                                                                    |

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# Additional Resources

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Here are a few additional online resources for you and your family to view!

## **Busted Halo**

An online magazine that provides news, featured articles, radio, and videos aimed at young adults.

[www.bustedhalo.com](http://www.bustedhalo.com)

## **Catholic Mom**

Faith, family, and fun from a Catholic perspective are all discussed here in the form of podcasts and articles from various columnists and contributors.

[www.catholicmom.com](http://www.catholicmom.com)

## **EWTN**

EWTN is a global, Catholic Television, Catholic Radio, and Catholic News Network that provides Catholic programming and news coverage from around the world.

<https://www.ewtn.com/>

## **FORMED**

Presented by the Augustine Institute, FORMED is a free gift to all parishioners of St. Margaret & St. Thomas. Think of it as “Catholic Netflix”. It contains the best Catholic content in movies, books, and bible studies. Click on Sign Up, click on “I belong to a Parish Organization”, enter our zip code (70711), enter your email, that’s it!

<https://formed.org/>

## **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops**

The official site of the U.S. Catholic Bishops includes an online Bible, the Catechism, publications, movie reviews, and more.

[www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)

## **Word on Fire**

Founded by acclaimed author and producer, Bishop Barron, *Word on Fire* is a media ministry that reaches out to millions of people across the globe. Home to the *Catholicism* series featured on PBS.

[www.wordonfire.com](http://www.wordonfire.com)