Handbook Highlights and Important Information

ST. MARY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The mission of St. Mary Catholic School is to develop the whole child's spiritual, moral, and intellectual growth, and well-being in a Catholic environment.

Welcome!

Welcome to all our new families join us at St. Mary Catholic School! We are excited to have your family here! Welcome back to all our returning families. We are glad you have chosen St. Mary Catholic school to continue your student's educational journey.

In the following pages you will find information on a wide variety of topics, including helpful information, new and updated policies, and our uniform guidelines. The Table of Contents should help you get directly to a specific topic at any time.

Please take special notice that this book is not a replacement for the *Student-Parent Handbook,* which is available for parents online at the beginning of the school year. The Student-Parent Handbook is the official guidebook containing rules, policies, and information. This booklet is an additional tool and will provide you with helpful information, but for specific "official" questions, please refer to the Student-Parent Handbook or contact the school office.

In addition to this information, St. Mary has a program called Bobcat Buddies. If you want, we will match you up with a family (a "Bobcat Buddy") that will be able to speak and meet with you throughout your first year at St. Mary to answer questions and advise you. To request a buddy family, please email Patricia Richards at prichards@stmarylc.org.

Thank you and God bless.

SCHOOL OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

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- Payment plan exceptions

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- Immunization/Vaccination record question
- If your student will be out sick
- If your student has been out sick for more than 3 consecutive days
- If you have medication to be administered during school

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- Application/Enrollment questions
- Safe Haven training
- Records requests
- FACTS billing/payment plan questions

Kari Bennington Cafeteria Manager kbennington@stmarylc.org (email only)
- All lunch order questions.

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- All Birthday Bear questions
- All Library question (lost book/late fee)

History of St. Mary Catholic School

Founded in 1978, St. Mary Catholic School began as a small early-childhood Montessori school. We experienced a significant growth within the church parish in the late 1990's. The influx of families brought about an increased interest in providing children with an elite education in an environment rich with the **Foundations for Life - Service, Family and Faith**. The church itself was rebuilt, a multi-purpose building was created on-site, and the school expanded structurally to accommodate higher enrollment numbers. Our tiny school, created to deliver an intimate Catholic based early-childhood program, went on to become accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission to educate children in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Primary grades first through fifth were formed shortly thereafter; a sixth-grade program was added in 1997, with seventh and eighth grade following in 2002.

For the upcoming 2024-2025 school year, St. Mary Catholic School employs 23 full-time certified teachers with a combined 250 years of experience in a classroom environment. Each teacher is certified within his/her specialty field of education and participates in ongoing staff development throughout the year in many different capacities. There are approximately 250 students registered for the 2024-2025 school year, and this number continues to increase with the beginning of school. The elementary program consists of self-contained classrooms while the middle school is departmentalized. St. Mary teachers, parents, and the students themselves work together to promote academic success, community service and faith formation.

Our co-ed campus offers many opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities, as well. For example, students may join Archery, Bookworm, Chess, Crochet Crew, Game & Puzzle, Musical Theater or Orchestra. The St. Mary athletics program includes soccer, volleyball, basketball, and track for grades 3-8.

Community service is a focal point of a student's experience at St. Mary. All grade levels participate in service learning. They are studied through discussion and explanation of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Fourth through eighth grade students are required to participate within the community in many different areas: school recycling initiative, organize and execute food and clothing drives, create care bags for teens in need, crochet caps for premature babies, in addition to participating in local events for Anchor Point Family Support Center and Bay Area Turning Point. Students live by “Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve.”

St. Mary Catholic School is an expression of the educational mission of the community of St. Mary Church. The school's focus is on the individual child's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical development in an environment of mutual respect, dignity, and appreciations of one's giftedness. It is the goal of St. Mary School to prepare its students to be productive members of society, to be living examples of the Christian truths and values that are taught, to be able to respond to the needs of the community and to have a global perspective of the needs of our world.

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The Campus

Parking Lot Reference Map

A – School/Cargill Hall – Back parking lot (Morning Carline 7:25am-7:45am)
B – Church Office parking lot
C – Church parking lot (Parking for parents to attend Morning Prayer. Morning Prayer starts at 7:45am)
D – School Office parking lot (Afternoon Carline) 3:15pm-3:40pm
E – Overflow parking lot

Where do I find the office?

The office is at the front of the school, which is located on the south side of the campus (Parking Lot D). Many people mistakenly go to the back of the school, which is the entrance along Walker St. You must enter though the front of the school. All outside doors are locked during the school day, and the front is where you will be let in by the staff. Look for the blue awning.

What do I need to do to enter the building during the school day?

When visiting, come to the front of the school (Parking Lot D). At the doors, ring the doorbell to the right of the center set of doors and look for the small green light that indicates the door has been unlocked so you can enter. Stop at the office to conduct your business or check in and wear your name tag wherever you need to go in the school building or Cargill Hall. All visitors must present their driver's license to check in. Please note that all adults who come into the building for any reason must be SAFE HAVEN trained. The school handbook gives some information on SAFE HAVEN, and you will see this mentioned a lot around the school.

What is SAFE HAVEN?

SAFE HAVEN identifies best practices designed to help prevent wrongdoing and promote "right doing" within religious organizations. One of the SAFE HAVEN offerings is a child sexual abuse awareness program. School volunteers, chaperones of field trips, and others who have regular contact with students, which includes eating lunch on campus or visiting the classroom, are required by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston to participate in the SAFE HAVEN program. *All visitors must have SAFE HAVEN* ***training to ensure the safety of our students. If you plan to visit or have family visit during the school day, they must have the appropriate training and clearance. This is a mandate of the Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston and must be followed by every visitor, every visit.***

The CMG SAFE HAVEN online training is replacing the VIRTUS training. The training consists of 3 vignette style videos that are approximately 60 minutes and will include a background check to complete.

These trainings are available in English and Spanish.

All Safe Haven training is online.

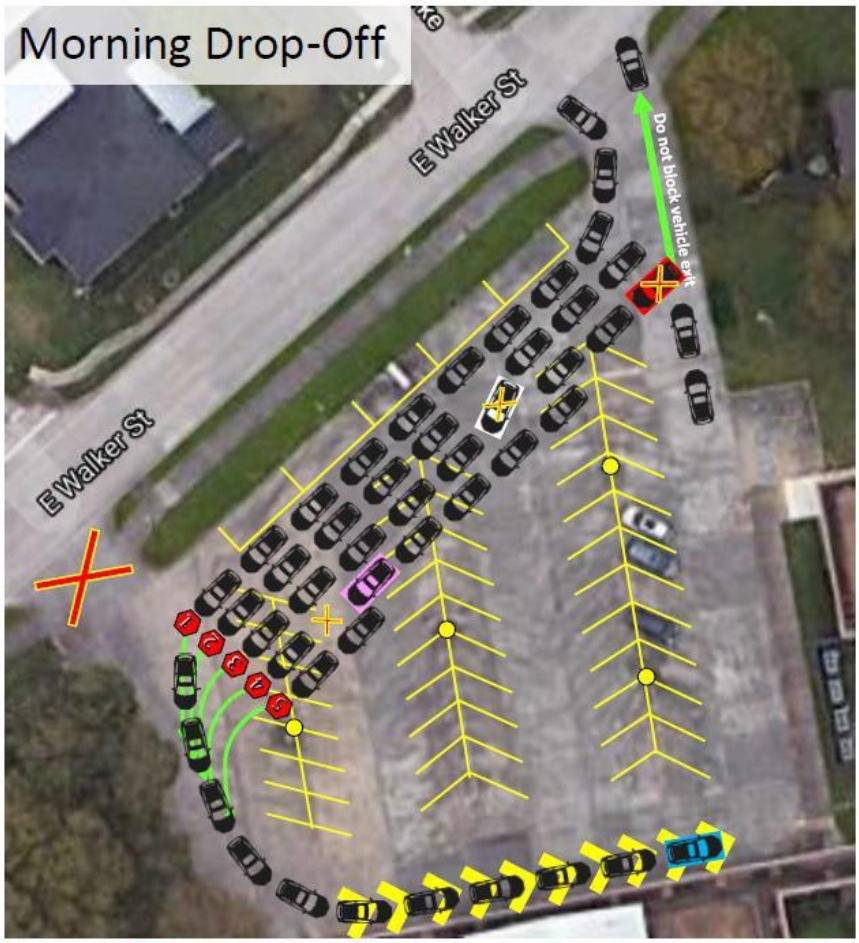
- All new parents/volunteers must complete the SAFE HAVEN online training program. The turnaround time for approval may be approximately two weeks.
- All individuals must complete the training and complete a background check **prior** to volunteering or eating lunch at the school.
- The 5-year anniversary date is still in place, individuals who recently attended VIRTUS will not be due to complete refresher training until they have met their 5-year anniversary date.
  - As the 5-year anniversary date is met, individuals will need to log into CMG Connect with their previous personal VIRTUS user id and 1234 as the password. **Once the individual logs into their CMG Connect account, they will be able to change their password**. If you do not remember the user id, you may contact the following: Janet Ellison at 281-331-4014 or jellison@stmarylc.org

After completing the SAFE HAVEN class, it may take a up to two weeks before being fully approved due to the background check that is part of the process, so we strongly recommend that you take a class as soon as possible to be ready when the need arises.

Car Line & Parking

Where do I drop off my child(ren) in the morning?

All students are dropped off in car line located in the back of the school on Walker (Parking lot A). Please follow the diagram below of the morning traffic flow. There will be many teachers helping unload cars. Please do not exit your car during drop off, nor let children exit without the assistance of one of the adults. All students exit on the passenger side. Please have them remain buckled in their seats until it is time for them to exit the car. Students will proceed along the sidewalk to the north entrance of Cargill Hall for morning prayer.



- First car (ex: blue) in unloading zone, pull all the way up to the last teacher.
- Lane 1 begins **next** to (not in) the parallel parking spots to help drivers create straight lanes. Crooked vehicles (ex: white) make it difficult for the lanes to stay straight, creating a bit of chaos, please be aware.
- All vehicles are asked to pull in tight behind the vehicle in front, no large gaps. (ex: pink)
- Once traffic begins to move, lane 1 will move forward into the curve followed by 2, 3, 4, then 5 and then it starts again with lane 1. All lanes continuously move forward to ensure vehicles can get off the road.
- Utilize lane 5 so that the exit does not blocked. (ex: red)

Car line starts at 7:25am and ends at 7:45am. Cones will be placed to block entering the back parking lot at 7:45am. Please DO NOT go around the cones. Once this parking lot is closed, you must go to the Front Office parking lot, park in a parking spot, and wait for the office doors to open once morning prayer is over (7:45am-8:00am). DO NOT park along the sidewalk. This is a safety hazard for students, parents, and staff. Once the office doors are open you will need to walk your student to the office and sign them in. If your student is not in morning prayer, they will be marked tardy when they come in the school building.

May I attend morning prayer? Where should I park in that case?

Yes, you are welcome to attend morning prayer! When you walk in, please stand on the right side of the hall. To do so, please park in the lot near the front of the school (Parking lot D) or by the church (Parking lot C) and walk to the North entrance of Cargill Hall. The Walker St. lot is a no-walk zone in the mornings during drop off.

Where do I pick up my child(ren) in the afternoon?

All students are picked up using the pick-up line in front of the school (Parking lot D). The diagram of traffic flow in this lot is shown below.

Is there any other way to pick up my child(ren) other than to get in the car line?

If you need to pick them up in a different manner, please email the school Administrative Assistant and the School Nurse ahead of time. You may check your child(ren) out through the front office up until 2:30pm. After that, please use the car line. During car line, both lots are no-walk zones to avoid any type of accident.

Where do I park on campus?

You may park in the main lot at the front of the school (Parking Lot D) or on the side (Parking Lot C).

What happens if I am late picking up my child(ren)?

Please call the office if you are running late so they can communicate the delay to your child(ren). During car line (3:15pm-3:40pm), there may not be a staff member in the office to answer the phones. Please make sure to leave a message. Any children not picked up by 3:40pm will be taken to Aftercare, and parents will be billed for that time.

Lunch & the Cafeteria

Where is the cafeteria?

Students Pk-3 – Kinder eat lunch in their classrooms. If your student purchases lunch, it is delivered to the classroom by the Cafeteria Manager. Students 1st – 8th eat lunch in Cargill Hall. However, it is also used by the parish so occasionally, another event may displace the students for lunch. At these times, the students eat in their classrooms.

When will my child(ren) be eating lunch?

Your child's teacher will provide a class schedule to the parents. Class lunch times are staggered throughout the late morning and early afternoon starting around 10:30am.

How do I purchase lunch for my child(ren)?

You will receive an e-mail when online ordering is open. You may place your order and it will be added to your FACTS account. Please remember ordering dates are final.

Friday lunches?

These lunches are usually from Marco's Pizza, Canes, Pomodoro's, or Chick-Fil-A. You may order these lunches when ordering regular monthly lunches online or by turning in the paper order form to the office 3 days prior to the date of the lunch. If you are ordering a Friday lunch during the week, you must turn in a paper order with payment (cash or check) to the office. Please e-mail Kari Bennington at kbennington@stmarylc.org if you have any questions.

May I bring lunch for my child(ren)?

Yes, you may bring lunch only for your student and it is important to make the delivery on time. The lunch needs to arrive in the office at least 10-15 minutes prior to the start of the lunch period. Once you drop it off, school staff will deliver it to your child as soon as possible, or you may join your child for lunch. If a child is at lunch for more than 5 minutes without food, a lunch will be provided, and your FACTS account will be charged the regular size lunch price. If you are running late, please notify the office so we can let cafeteria staff and teachers know not to provide lunch.

What if my child gets to the cafeteria and does not have lunch?

Your child's teacher will help him/her get a Lunchable and a drink and your FACTS account will be charged the regular size lunch price.

My child wants to buy an ice cream at lunch. How can s/he do that?

Various ice cream and popsicle treats are available every day for $1.00, payable in cash to the cafeteria staff.

May I eat lunch with my child(ren)?

Yes! You will need to check in at the front office and receive a name badge. The official lunch visitation policy is stated in the handbook. You may want to arrive a little early and walk to Cargill Hall with your child's class since access to Cargill Hall is by badge only. If you miss them, there is a bell to ring at the school-side door of Cargill Hall. Someone inside will let you in if you have a name badge. Please remember you **must** be SAFE HAVEN trained to eat lunch with your child. If you are running

late, please notify the office so we can let cafeteria staff and teachers know not to provide lunch.

We have a designated table for students and their guests to eat. If you are eating with your student at the visitors table, please make sure to clean up any food and trash.

Are students allowed to bring drinks to school?

Students are allowed to bring one, refillable bottle to school. Students may only bring water to school. Please do not send drinks like Prime, Starbucks, Cool-aid, Gatorade, Capri-suns, or any type of soda/soft drink. No open container drinks (ie. drinks with straws). All drinks must have a screw top.

What types of water bottles are students allowed to bring?

Students may bring one sealed water bottle, max 40oz. Water bottles with easy to remove lids or straws (even with straw covers) will not be allowed. Please see examples of allowed and prohibited bottles below.

Allowed:

Not Allowed:

Prohibited: NO GLASS BOTTLES!

Communication

What is the Friday Letter?

This refers to the communication the school principal emails out each week, usually on Friday, with information including highlights from the week and future events. Teachers also issue weekly updates about what each class will be doing the following week. Those are posted online, and/or emailed out to parents at the end of the week.

What is the Bobcat Buzz?

The Bobcat Buzz is the school's monthly newsletter. It is distributed via email as part of the Friday Letter message, and a copy is posted on the school website. The Bobcat Buzz contains information and is a good one-stop-shop for details about upcoming events.

What is FACTS SIS?

FACTS SIS is the online system where parents and students can access grades, performance, attendance, conduct, teacher comments, order lunches and up-coming assignments for some classes. The login instructions for "Family Portal" are in your blue Family Folder given out at Meet the Teacher.

When will I speak with my child's teacher for a parent conference?

Conference days are scheduled once each semester (typically October and February). These conferences are for the teacher, parent, and student. See the school calendar for the exact dates. Students in PreK-5th grade and their parents will have 15 minutes with their homeroom teacher. Junior High students and parents will meet with one or a pair of the junior high teachers as determined by the school. The school will provide notification of the conference times the week before the conferences.
Conferences for families with multiple children will be scheduled back-to-back as much as possible.

Other than the scheduled conference days, how can I talk with the teacher?

Send an email directly to the teacher. Teachers are happy to schedule a conference with you that coincides with their planning period. Teachers cannot schedule conferences during class time, transitions or during car line. Please do not try to conference with teachers while they are supervising classes, ie: morning prayer, car line, or in school hallways. See the school handbook for further details about communicating with teachers. You can find teacher email addresses on the school website under Contact Us.

Does the school have a yearbook? How do I get one?

A yearbook is produced every year. Parents are provided an opportunity to order a copy in the spring. You will receive an e-mail with ordering information.

Religious Education and Programs

Do the students attend Mass regularly? When?

Yes, they attend Mass at 8:30am each Friday and on Holy Days of Obligation. Students must wear full dress to Mass. See Uniform information on page 34 and in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Does the entire school attend Mass together?

Yes, all students attend Mass on Fridays and on Holy Days of Obligation at 8:30am. Junior High students often sit with early childhood students at Mass to help the teacher monitor them and to model proper Mass behavior.

May I attend Mass with my child? Where do I sit?

You are always welcome at Mass. If you are interested in sitting with your child, please contact his/her teacher ahead of time so they can plan accordingly. Students are seated with their classes in the middle aisles of the church. You **must** complete SAFE HAVEN training if you would like to sit with your child and his/her class. Once the entrance procession has started, students must stay with their class during Mass.

How do students serve at school Masses? How are they chosen for these roles?

Students serve at school Masses in several ways. If the student has gone through altar serving training, they are eligible to altar serve. Jr. High students may be asked to read and/or participate in special feast days and events. Each week a class is scheduled to sing as choir. Your child's teacher will let you know when it is their week.

How do students celebrate Advent and Christmas?

We celebrate the coming of the Christ child at Christmas, and in anticipation, parties are held for each class before school dismisses for the Christmas break. Room parents will contact you to let you know specifically what each class is doing and how you can participate and contribute. S tudents Pk3 – 5th grade also participate in the Christmas program in the church.

Do students observe Lent, Holy Week and celebrate Easter?

Yes. This is the time when we recognize that Christ suffered during this week and died for us on Good Friday. Therefore, there are no Easter parties or celebrations before Easter Sunday. Students 6th – 8th grade prepare and perform a Living Way of the Cross during Holy Week on Wednesday evening and Holy Thursday morning. Class parties are held on the Tuesday after Easter Sunday. There is no school on Easter Monday unless it is a bad weather make-up day.

You may be asked to send in party items, for some grades, prior to the long Easter weekend, so everything is in place for the following Tuesday.

What is the Living Way of the Cross?

This is the bringing to life of the Stations of the Cross during the Lenten season by reenacting each station. Everyone is invited for two opportunities to experience this moving presentation, scheduled for Wednesday evening of Holy Week and the morning of Holy Thursday.

What/When is May Crowning?

May Crowning is the feast that honors Mary as the queen of heaven and earth. Held in many schools and churches, we celebrate it in May. We come together as a school community to pray and crown the statue of Mary by laying flowers before the statue. Students may bring a flower from home. The flowers are then donated to a local nursing home facility for the residents to enjoy.

What Sacramental preparation is offered during the school day?

At St. Mary, second grade students are eligible to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Families of second graders will receive a letter from the parish director of children's religious education letting them know about the Sacramental preparation course dates and Sacrament dates for the entire parish. The classes take place weekly in the evening with First Reconciliation being on a Saturday morning at the end of February and First Communion Masses being held on consecutive Saturday mornings in late April or early May. The Religion classes during the school day also cover Sacramental preparation. Sacrament preparation classes are an excellent opportunity for spiritual growth and fellowship with other parish families. Students that participate in First Communion are invited to wear their First Communion attire to the first school Mass after everyone has completed First Communion. It is a special way that SMCS recognizes our First Communicants.

Who is required to earn service hours? How are these approved?

The students in the 4th-8th grades are required to earn service hours throughout the year and may begin to earn the hours starting June 1st the summer before. The service hours are logged, using their Student SIS account. The religion teacher will provide the specifics at the beginning of the school year as to the expectations of this project. Service hours follow our Catholic tradition of serving others and are based on the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy

Service hours can be earned through many activities, including some that will be done as school- related projects. Opportunities outside school include but are not limited to altar serving, helping clean up the day after the church Bazaar, singing in the parish Christmas Choir and Boy Scout or Girl Scout projects. Individual projects of your choosing are also encouraged.

Academic Programs and Activities

What type of curriculum does St. Mary use? Who chooses this curriculum?

The school uses the comprehensive and current school curriculum set by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and follows the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards. Catholicism is integrated into all subject areas. It is geared to meet the standards of academic excellence as defined by the National Catholic Education Association. It meets and often exceeds all educational requirements set by the state of Texas as well as the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCBED). We also supplement our curriculum with many technology-based educational tools and the most current research-based practices such as NWEA Map Testing, Assessment of Religious Knowledge (ARK – grades 2, 5 & 8), Mathletics, and more. Textbooks are reviewed and selected on a regular basis to be accurate and up to date. Teachers participate in ongoing professional development to enhance curriculum as well as integrate our Catholic faith across the curriculum. SMCS has been designated as a S.T.R.E.A.M. school by the Catholic Schools Office. S.T.R.E.A.M. stands for Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts and Music. At SMCS, we strive to support growth in mind, heart and spirit, so students can Enter to Learn and Leave to Serve.

Curriculum

Curriculum at SMCS is an Archdiocesan curriculum (founded on Christian values and authentic Catholic doctrine) based on the Texas Education Agency (TEA) essential elements as part of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Our campus curricula program is accredited by TCCB ED. Master teachers from the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Catholic schools develop, review TEKS and make recommendations as needed to utilize TEKS as the basis for our teaching coupled with Catholic doctrine and enhanced learning opportunities. It is our philosophy and belief that our curriculum demonstrates excellence in academics, rather than merely the essentials of academics since our curriculum is based on national standards. Our curriculum includes English/Language Arts (reading, grammar, phonics, spelling, creative expression, and writing), math, science (classwork and lab work), social studies (history and geography), fine arts, P.E., and religion. SMCS also offers Spanish, technology, music, and library classes.

How much homework will my child(ren) have?

The handbook gives guidelines for the amount of time students in each grade should expect to spend on homework, so check there as a start. Generally, in elementary school students will have homework every night in math and language arts as well as a stated amount of time to be spent reading. Sometimes there will be homework in other subjects, too, especially if there is an upcoming test to study for. As the grade levels increase, the students will often also have homework in social studies, science, and/or Spanish. Junior high students will have homework in several subjects every night. Some of it will need to be completed and turned in online using their MSN Outlook account. Instructions will be sent home at the start of the year letting you know how to help them set this up.

Do St. Mary students take the STAAR, or is this for public schools only?

St. Mary students do not take the STAAR test. Students in 1st through eighth grade will be administered the NWEA MAP Growth Test three times per year to monitor growth. The MAP Growth Test data is used to support and challenge students. The testing takes less than an hour per subject. Students participate in MAP testing for English Language Arts, Math, and Science. Students in 2nd, 5th and 8th grade take the ARK (Assessment of Religious Knowledge) test.

What is Tuesday Tutoring?

Once a week immediately after school, tutoring is offered by the teachers to students who need extra help. Details of this program are provided in the handbook. There is no cost for these group sessions. If your child attends Tuesday Tutoring for several weeks without seeing any improvement in grades, more intense tutoring may be needed. Teachers will contact the parents regarding tutoring recommendations as well as invite students that need extra support to participate in tutoring.

Does St. Mary offer special enrichment for children who are ahead of the class academically?

The St. Mary curriculum is designed to challenge all students. SMCS Teachers work to differentiate instruction to offer support and challenge for students. For students ready for a further challenge, their classroom teacher will offer enrichment activities in the form of centers, computer-based opportunities, or other methods as determined by the teacher. SMCS offers are variety of clubs for enrichment. Students in grades three through seven may be invited to participate in the archdiocesan enrichment program, Debusk Enrichment Center for Academically Talented Scholars (DECATS). Entrance is based on standardized test scores.

When will my child start to be recognized as an Honor Roll student?

Honor Roll recognition is provided for 6th -8th grades. Honor Roll awards are presented to students in their classroom following the grading period. There are two options: All A Honor Roll and A/B Honor Roll. Students must demonstrate academic achievement along with an E in conduct to receive All A Honor Roll recognition and all As & Bs with a P in conduct to receive A/B Honor Roll. There is an assembly at the end of the year for 4th quarter and end of year awards.

When can my child go to the library?

Students begin checking out library books in kindergarten. Different grades are allowed different numbers of books to be checked out at once. Lower grades have story time with the librarian, and older students may use the library during their class's designated time as well as other times during the day as their teacher allows. Further library rules are described in the handbook.

What is the Accelerated Reader (AR) Program? When does my child start?

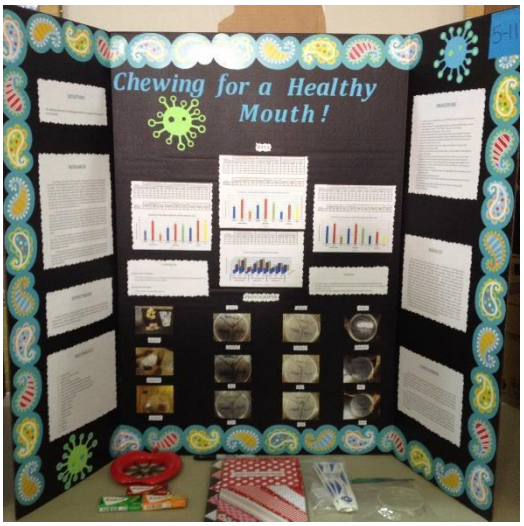
AR is an individually paced, computer-based Renaissance Learning program that helps teachers monitor your child's independent reading skills. Students begin to use it in kindergarten. After an online assessment, the student will be given a point goal and will earn points by taking a computer-based test after reading a book. Younger students watch a flower get "filled up" as they accumulate points. Older students will have a portion of their Reading class grade determined by their AR test scores. While the tests must be taken at school, parents and students can monitor progress at home by accessing the student account from home at https://hosted154.renlearn.com/234356/HomeConnect/. Parents may want to sign up for email alerts to be sent with the results of each test the student takes.
Students have goals to meet each term based on their reading level. The AR Program is a way for teachers and administration to monitor comprehension skills throughout all grade levels. It is a form of longitudinal data that supports student growth.

What is Mathletics? How does it work?

Mathletics.com is the web site St. Mary uses to supplement the math curriculum both at school and at home. It is highly individualized learning that the students love! Your child will get a username and password to access the site from anywhere, including via the tablet app. The subscription lasts year-round, so we encourage your child to use it during school breaks and over the summer to keep up their math skills.

What is the S.T.R.E.A.M Fair? Who participates in it?

SMCS is recognized as a S.T.R.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) school recognized by the Catholic Schools Office.



All students participate in the SMCS S.T.R.E.A.M. Fair. Students utilize the scientific method to answer a specific question and then present the results. Expectations are based on grade level. Students in early childhood classes complete a class project. They participate actively in the Scientific Process and the project has some independent components as well as group learning opportunities.

Students participate individually or with a partner beginning in third grade. They use the computer lab for research and complete most of the project during school. As grade levels increase, the level of independence increases.

Students earn a grade for their project within several areas, including science, writing, and math. Science Fair projects help students develop skills above and beyond science proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, math, time management, communication/presentation skills, and ethics.

Students present their projects to their peers in the classroom and showcase their projects during S.T.R.E.A.M. Night. All are invited!

Early Childhood Program

When is kindergarten graduation?

St. Mary Catholic School does not have a kindergarten graduation ceremony, but they have many special celebrations during the year featuring students in the Early Childhood Program.

Do pre-k and kindergarten students have snacks?

Yes, they alternate providing snacks each week to provide for their classmates, and the school also provides some days as well. Teachers will send home a schedule each month, so you know when it is your child's turn to bring in a snack. Classroom allergy information will also be sent home.

Do students in pre-k and kindergarten take field trips?

No. They participate in "in school" field trips. We have hosted author's visits, Moody Garden's traveling classroom and productions from theaters in Houston, so all students have the opportunity to enjoy in-school field trips. Field trips that are off campus begin in 1st grade.

Do students need to be bathroom independent?

Yes. All children entering school must be fully toilet-trained before coming to school. This includes participation in the Before and After School Program. Children will not be allowed to wear diapers or pullups while at school.

A toilet trained child can do the following:

· be able to tell the teacher they need to go to the restroom in sufficient time to avoid accidents,
· be able to pull their underwear and pants down and up without assistance,
· be able to get on and off the toilet by themselves,
· be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet,
· be able to wash and dry hands, and
· be able to postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if they are outside, or away from the classroom.

Elementary School

Does my child need to know how to write in cursive?

St. Mary students are taught cursive handwriting in the 2nd grade, and once all letters have been taught, they are expected to complete all assignments in cursive. If your child does not yet know cursive and has passed 3rd grade already, the teacher will work with you to set up a plan.

Is my child allowed to eat a snack during the day?

Teachers usually allow students to bring an individual snack, and each teacher will communicate at the start of the year when the students are allowed to eat these. If the class contains one or more students with specific allergies, these will also be communicated to parents by the teacher.

What kind of field trips do students in grades 1-5 take?

Elementary school students usually take one field trip each semester. The locations vary, but in the past have included the Main St. Theater, Armand Bayou Nature Center, Moody Gardens, various plays at the University of St. Thomas (usually after reading the associated book or play), the Ronald McDonald House, and exhibits at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Parents provide the transportation for these trips. Further guidelines are included in the handbook.

What is Camp Kappe?

The School of Environmental Education at Camp Kappe is the first and preferred choice for our Archdiocesan school students for lessons on the environment and for camp experience. The School of Environmental Education (S.E.E.) is accredited by TCCB ED and offers a supplemental education program to the Catholic schools. S.E.E. provides 5th grade students a four-day outdoor experience of God's gift of nature while studying life cycles, food chains, the environment's effect on man, man's effect on the environment, conservation of resources, etc. Camp Kappe is a retreat facility near Plantersville, TX. The date of the trip and specific information is provided to parents of 5th graders several weeks prior to the trip.

What is STAR BASE?

STAR BASE focuses on elementary students, primarily fifth graders. The goal is to motivate them to explore Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) as they continue their education.

The program engages students through the inquiry-based curriculum with its "hands-on, mind- on" experiential activities. They study Newton's Laws and Bernoulli's principle; explore nanotechnology, navigation, and mapping. They are captivated by engineering as they use the computer to design space

stations, all-terrain vehicles, and submersibles. Math is embedded throughout the curriculum and students use metric measurement, estimation, calculation geometry and data analysis to solve questions. Teamwork is stressed as they work together to explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate concepts.

Are backpacks with wheels allowed?

Yes. Students will take textbooks home nightly, so rolling backpacks for 3rd through 8th graders are highly recommended.

Junior High

Do junior high students stay in one classroom like the elementary grades?

The junior high students will circulate throughout the day to different classrooms according to subjects. However, they are assigned by grade to a homeroom. Each junior high student has a locker to keep their books and school supplies. They start and end their day in their homeroom to help them prepare for the day and for homework for that evening.

What is the 8th grade trip about? Who gets to go?

The 8th grade field trip to Washington, D.C. is a privilege and a blessing for the graduating class. Parents and students participate in fundraising events to help defray the cost. The trip usually takes place during May. A sponsor teacher from that grade will attend as the official chaperone. Fundraising for this event starts in August. Included in the cost is hotel, food, transportation, and a tour guide for the duration of the trip. Details on eligibility and guidelines for the trip will be shared during a scheduled 8th grade parent meeting in August. It is a wonderful way to celebrate the children's experience at St. Mary Catholic School and entrance into high school.

Extracurricular Activities

My child wants to play sports. What are the options?

St. Mary offers many sports throughout the year. The fall season ushers in cross country (coed, grades 3-8), soccer (coed, grades 5-8) and volleyball (girls, grades 4-8), followed by basketball (girls' and boys', grades 5-8). The spring season will bring track and field (coed, grades 3-8) an t-ball for student 3-6 years old. Practices are held after school with the exact schedule varying by sport. The seasons usually last 2-3 months depending on the competitive events that are scheduled for each sport. There is a fee per sport, and each student athlete will need to get a doctor to administer a physical and sign the appropriate Archdiocesan form to certify fitness to play. Athletic eligibility requirements and other expectations are described in the athletic handbook.

Who can participate in Orchestra?

Orchestra started in the 2019-2020 school year. The Orchestra director will send out information regarding joining orchestra. There are a limited number of slots available.

What is Musical Theater?

Musical theater is an after-school club that is a display of singing, acting, and dancing known as the triple threat. The students have the opportunity to participate in a musical, in the spring. Students learn basic vocal skills/techniques, study the art of stage acting, and learn simple choreography and dance technique. Students in 3rd-8th grades are able to join this fantastic and exciting club offered for a fee.

What is Crochet Crew?

Crochet Crew is an after-school club that meets one day each week. Students in 1st - 8th grades may participate. The students learn the basic crochet techniques using a loom, which is available for a small fee. No prior experience is necessary. The students crochet hats/beanies for newborns at their own pace throughout the year, to be distributed to area hospitals. They are also given as gifts to St. Mary Catholic Church newly baptized babies. The beanies are blessed by a priest before distribution. Students also earn service hours by attending the meetings and for each baby beanie they make.

There are several other clubs available for students to join. Please see our website for a list and details on each club.

School Events and Organizations

What/When is Open House?

Open House is a fun night full of information for you and your child(ren). Come in and say "Hi" and see what your child has been learning. Meet your child(ren)s teacher and get a packet with useful information on the upcoming year such as schedule, expectations, volunteer opportunities and more. This event takes place a few weeks after the first day of school.

When are "early dismissal days"? Why do we have them?

Early dismissal days are scheduled on Thursdays throughout the year. Dismissal occurs at 2:15pm. You are required to pick your child up at this time, and no aftercare is available at the school. This day occurs to allow the teachers to meet with the principal to discuss important school topics and upcoming events.

What is the Halloween Carnival all about?

The Halloween carnival is a fun and safe tradition at St. Mary Catholic School. It is a full day of carnival activities such as games, popcorn, candy, face painting and a photo booth. Fun for the entire family! Parents, grandparents, younger siblings, and any family members are encouraged to attend and see the children dressed up for Halloween. It is usually on the Friday before Halloween with set up Thursday after school. Please note the costume rule of no witches, devils, masks, or weapons. Adults who attend **must** be SAFE HAVEN trained.

What is Field Day?

Field day is an end-of-the-year event that allows the kids to play and compete in good spirit, encouragement, and overall sportsmanship. It is held on the school/church grounds and is an all-day event, complete with snow cones, snacks, drinks, awards, and fun. There are many different opportunities for the children to compete against their peers within their class and in a grade level adjacent to their grade, i.e., 4th vs. 5th. A special t-shirt will be designed for the day, and order forms for those go home before Field Day. Each class will have a different colored shirt. Parents and other family members are welcome to attend, and we can always use extra help that day to make everything run smoothly! Keep in mind that adult attendees **must** be SAFE HAVEN trained.

When is Catholic Schools Week, and what takes place during it?

Catholic Schools Week is a great celebration of all the Catholic schools in the United States that begins on the last Sunday in January. Activities often include a school open house, special evening events for the family, and special activities during the day for the students.

What is a Student Birthday Blessing?

On or around the day of your child's birthday, s/he will get to go on stage at morning prayer time to receive a blessing from the whole school on his/her special day. Students with summer birthdays are asked to choose a date late in the school year to receive their blessing.

What is the Birthday Bear Program?

The birthday bear program is an opportunity for parents to make a small donation to the library to purchase a book that is inscribed with the name and birthday of their child, noting it as being donated in his/her honor. Students in pre-k through 5th grades get to choose from an array of fancy bears to keep with them in the classroom for the day. Junior High students may enjoy a free dress day instead of the bear. Forms for this program are available at the start of the school year and should be submitted at least a few weeks in advance of the student's birthday. Students with summer birthdays may choose any day during the school year as their "substitute birthday" for this program.

What is First Weekend Mass?

On the first weekend of each month the children of St. Mary Catholic School are asked to attend any Mass in their full-dress uniform. In return for their service, the children are permitted to wear free dress to school the following Monday. Please see the calendar on the school website for dates. School families may also sign up via Signup Genius to bring up the gifts during these Masses. If you sign up to bring up the gifts, the students must attend Mass in their full dress uniform.

Is there a special day for family members?

Yes! The Family Luncheon is held before Thanksgiving and features parents, grandparents or other relatives eating lunch with students and having their picture taken in a specially designed photo area. Lunch order forms will be available a few weeks in advance. Keep in mind that adult attendees **must** be SAFE HAVEN trained.

What/When is the annual Fairway to Heaven Golf Tournament?

Calling all golfers! The SMCS Fairway to Heaven Golf Tournament is scheduled for the Monday after spring break each year. It is a collaboration between the church and school communities to raise funds for St. Mary Catholic School! Last year was our first tournament and it was a success! We filled all the team spots and had lots of sponsors. Best of all we enjoyed a great day of fun, fellowship, and fundraising! The tournament is held at South Shore Country Club. Check-in begins at 7:00A.M. with breakfast tacos, donuts, and refreshments! Then, the tournament begins at 9:00A.M. After golfers return to the South Shore Club House, we will enjoy a catered lunch, awards, and silent auction! Save the date: Monday, March 24, 2025!

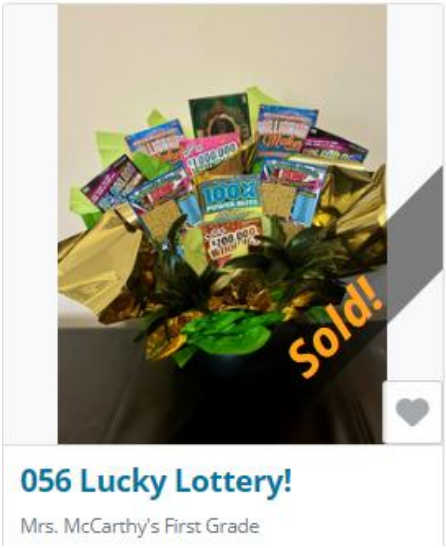
What is the St. Mary Catholic School Spring Gala?

This is our biggest fundraiser of the year! It is complete with dinner and silent and live auctions. Each class at St. Mary is asked to provide a themed basket and themed class project for the auctions. It is for adults only, and all are invited including parents, grandparents, friends, family, and parishioners of St. Mary. The attire is nice but does not need to be formal.

Proceeds are earmarked for different areas each year depending on the needs of the school. Below are some pictures showing past class baskets and art projects.

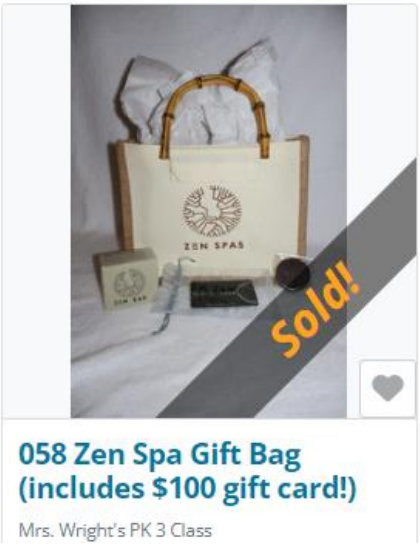
025 Principal for A Day!

For Your Favorite Student! LIVE AUCTION



056 Lucky Lottery!

Mrs. McCarthy's First Grade



058 Zen Spa Gift Bag (includes $100 gift card!)

Mrs. Wright's PK 3 Class

105 PreK 3 and 4 "A Tree of Seasons"

Art Project

109 Second Grade "Hail, Holy Queen"

Art Project

143 8th Grade Art Project

"Rock On!"

Do the students take school pictures?

Yes. They will have a class picture day early in the second semester as well as individual picture day opportunities. Pictures for the yearbook are taken in full dress uniform in the fall. Sports pictures are usually also taken on this day. You will be given the option to purchase pictures each time.

What is the Parent School Association (PSA)? When does it meet?

The PSA is equivalent to what other schools may call the PTA or HSA. The purpose of the PSA is to aid the school in all aspects of its work, to be a forum for discussions, to provide informational programs, to raise money and to create a deeper appreciation for Catholic education, especially at St. Mary Catholic School. Many hands are appreciated in the making of a PSA committee. Meetings are held on an as-needed basis and usually focus on a specific topic. Parents are all considered members of the PSA – no extra fees or sign-up required – and are asked to volunteer each year in whatever ways fit your schedule and talents. All members must be SAFE HAVEN trained.

Who makes up the School Advisory Council? What does it do? When/Where does it meet?

SMCS Advisory Council is comprised of parents and parishioners who, as a body, serve in an advisory role to the pastor and principal. They participate in the development and execution of a strategic plan for the school, assist with budgeting, and offer leadership in the areas of marketing, development, recruitment, communications, and facilities. The school advisory council holds an open meeting on the first Tuesday of the month, September – May (not in December), at 10:15am in the Ministry building. The council can be contacted by emailing lhalbardier@stmarylc.org.

Ways to Get Involved

What volunteer opportunities exist? Who do I talk to for more information or to volunteer?

There are many volunteer opportunities for people with a wide variety of talents and schedules! Some are through your child's teacher(s), others through various school committees, and many though the PSA. Any volunteering done at the school **requires** the volunteer to be SAFE HAVEN trained.

At Open House, your child's teacher may give you a paper asking about ways you can contribute. The teacher directly coordinates these opportunities.

There are a few groups that benefit the school that you may want to consider being part of: the school advisory council, and the St. Mary Catholic School Spring Gala planning committee. Please see our principal if you are interested in learning about or joining any of these.

The Parent School Association (PSA) mobilizes volunteers including but not limited to the areas listed below:

- St. Mary Welcome Group -- Bobcat Buddies
- Newsletter and Communication Group (Bobcat Buzz)
- Room Mom Coordinator
- Advent and Christmas Shop
- First Sunday Mass
- Monthly Teacher Appreciation Events
- Halloween Carnival
- St. Mary Catholic School Spring Gala (Fundraiser)
- Steps for Students Fundraiser and Tailgating Celebration & Color Run
- Teacher Appreciation Week
- Field Day

You are welcome to email the PSA parent contact, Patricia Richards at prichards@stmarylc.org, at any time regarding volunteering or contact Mrs. Halbardier or Mrs. Ellison in the school office.

What are the responsibilities of a room parent?

The St. Mary volunteer room parents assist the teacher in many different ways. At a minimum, SAFE HAVEN trained room parents are responsible for making sure the following are completed on schedule:

- Three class parties (Christmas, Valentine, and Easter) - dates are listed on the current calendar, which is on the school website. Early Childhood classes will also have parties for Apple Day, the Hundredth Day of School, Chinese New Year, Dr. Seuss Day, and Go Texan Day.
- Decorating, setting up, cleaning up and staffing the class's assigned Halloween Carnival booth.
- Gala Auction Class Basket and Gala Auction Class Art Project for the Annual Spring Gala that is held in April or May.

The room parent can always ask for assistance from other parents in that class who might want to help. All SAFE HAVEN trained parents are invited to assist in classroom activities. The room parent works to coordinate events with help from families.

A "Room Parent Workshop" is held early in the year for those interested in learning more.

I have a child/children not yet in school. Can I bring him/her/them with me when I volunteer?

St. Mary is all about family and can almost always work around having siblings attend meetings, conferences, and volunteer jobs on campus with you. If you will be helping in a classroom or the library, please speak to the teacher or librarian ahead of time to confirm whether it is feasible to have younger children attend with you for that specific activity. If you are volunteering on a committee that meets after school, your children may attend SMCS After Care Program free of charge during the meeting. Please contact Janet Ellison, jellison@stmarylc.org if you need childcare when you attend an after-school meeting. One exception is field trips. Drivers and chaperones for field trips are not allowed to bring other children along.

What is the Watch D.O.G.S. program?

WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads Of Great Students) are fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other father- figures who volunteer during the school year. These "Watch DOGS" work alongside the teachers in the classroom, play at recess, eat lunch with students, and perform other assigned activities where they actively engage with the students. SAFE HAVEN–trained dads, grandfathers, uncles, and other father-figures are encouraged to volunteer for a half day or a full day by contacting the principal.

Financial Matters

Does St. Mary provide financial assistance?

Applications for financial assistance must be filed through the archdioceses' website first. Further information on deadlines and how to apply is available on our school website. Additionally, SMCS offers direct financial assistance through funds raised from the Spring Gala. Contact the office to schedule a meeting with Mrs. Halbardier if you would like to discuss financial aid.

What is Steps for Students?

Steps for Students is an Archdiocesan-wide fundraiser held each February. The goal of Steps for Students is to raise awareness of the importance of a Catholic education and provide much needed resources for our Catholic Schools. This day of family fun includes a 5k USA Track and Field Association sanctioned race and Post Race Party. While the event includes schools from all over the Houston area, registration fees and support pledges are designated to a specific school, so this is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and raising money directly for St. Mary Catholic School! Registrants receive a t-shirt, which is often allowed to be worn to school on Spirit Days around the time of the race. SMCS depends on our community for participation in Steps for Students to support our school. Each year the Steps for Students Sponsor will work with our community to set goals and celebrate meeting them!

What are restaurant fundraising nights?

Throughout the year, the school will host fundraising nights at various restaurants. You can attend and mention St. Mary or provide a flyer, and the school will be given a portion of the sales from the night. It is a terrific way to socialize with other parents and students and staff while also raising money for your school!

Why do we have book fairs? Do parents go to them?

Book fairs are fundraisers that directly benefit the school library. We have them two times during the school year. Parents, grandparents, friends, parishioners, and family are all invited and encouraged to come. It is a wonderful way to encourage the students to read more outside the classroom. The children are given a wish list sheet to fill out at a preview time during the school day to help family members purchase. It also gives the parents an opportunity to purchase something for their children's teachers to use in the classroom in addition to the regular curriculum.

Uniform Highlights

ST. MARY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Dress Code & Uniforms
Girls

Jumpers

All Pre-K3 – 4th grade girls must wear the red plaid jumpers with the white middy blouse from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, as their full-dress uniform. The jumper must be no shorter than 4 inches from the floor when kneeling. Solid navy-blue privacy shorts that do not extend below the hemline must be worn. All Pre-K3 - 4th grade girls must wear red plaid jumpers on Mass days and any Holy Day we attend Mass. In the winter months when it is cold, girls may wear navy blue tights under their jumpers.

Skirts

All 5th grade girls must wear the red plaid skirt and the white middy blouse from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, as their full-dress uniform. The skirt must be no shorter than 4 inches from the floor when kneeling. Solid navy-blue privacy shorts that do not extend below the hemline must be worn. All 5th grade girls must wear the red plaid skirt on Mass days and any Holy Day we attend Mass. In the winter months when it is cold, girls may wear navy blue tights under their jumpers.

5th

All 7th -8th grade girls must wear the red plaid skirt and the navy-blue oxford ¾ sleeve blouse from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, as their full-dress uniform. The skirt must be no shorter than 4 inches from the floor when kneeling. Solid navy-blue privacy shorts that do not extend below the hemline must be worn. All All 7th – 8th grade girls must wear the red plaid skirt on Mass days and any Holy Day we attend Mass. In the winter months when it is cold, girls may wear navy blue tights under their jumpers.

7th-8th

Skorts

All Pre-K3 – 4th grade girls may wear the navy blue skort (skirt-short combo) from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers. The skort must be no shorter than 4 inches from the floor when kneeling.

Shorts

All Pre-K3 – 8th grade girls may wear navy blue or plaid shorts from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers. The shorts must be no shorter than a 4 – 7 inch inseam and be loose fitting. A black or brown belt must be worn with any shorts that have belt loops. Pre-K3 – Kinder girls may wear shorts with an elastic waistband.

Pants

All Pre-K3 – 8th grade girls may wear navy blue pants from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers. The pants must be no shorter than the ankle and be loose fitting. A black or brown belt must be worn with any pants that have belt loops. Pre-K3 – Kinder girls may wear pants with an elastic waistband.

Shirts

All Pre-K3 – 8th grade girls may wear red or white, pique or dri-fit performance, long or short sleeve polo shirts from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, and must have the required school crest on the left side of the chest over the heart. All shirts must be tucked in at all times except during P.E. or Recess. Students must tuck in their shirts before returning to class.

Sweaters, Sweatshirts and Jackets

SMCS girls may wear sweaters (red or navy blue), jackets (fleece) or sweatshirts from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, in the classroom. During cold weather, SMCS girls may wear heavier jackets while outside. These non uniforms jackets must be removed once back inside the classroom.

Jewelry and Accessories

Earrings – Post earrings only. Dangling and hoop earrings are not allowed. Only one earring in each ear may be worn.

Body Piercings – Body piercings are not allowed.

Tattoos – Permanent tattoos are not allowed.

Necklaces – One necklace with a religious medal, cross, or single stone may be worn. Choker style necklaces may not be worn.

Rings – (5^{th} – 8^{th}) - One ring per hand may be worn. Rings must be simple in design and may have a small stone.

Bracelets – One small bracelet or band can be worn on each wrist that doesn't cause noise or a distraction.

Watches – (5^{th} – 8^{th}) - Smart watches including, but not limited to Apple watches, Fitbit Versa, Samsung Galaxy, must receive approval from the principal before they can be worn. Misuse of smart watches on campus falls under the same guidelines as cell phones and the privilege may be revoked for the remainder of the school year.

Hair Accessories – Bows, barrettes, headbands, and ribbons should be in school colors of red, white, navy blue or our red plaid or any combination thereof. Hair wraps, jeweled hair accessories, bulky or large headbands, headbands with ears, unicorn horns, top hats, and/or feathered hair accessories, bandanas and kerchiefs are not permitted.

Belts – Black or brown belts must be worn with shorts or pants that have belt loops.

Tie – A navy blue tie is required for PreK-3-5^{th} grade girls with the White Midi blouse as part of their full-dress uniform.

Makeup - 6^{th}-8^{th} grade only

The use of make-up in grades 6th – 8th is a parental decision. Girls may wear minimal powder or tinted moisturizer to cover blemishes, light black or brown mascara and clear or light pink lip gloss and light blush. Girls are not permitted to wear eyeshadow, eye liner, bronzer, lipstick, or dark colored lip gloss. Students in PreK-3 – 5^{th} are not permitted to wear makeup.

Nail Polish

Neutral color polish is allowed. This includes clear, soft pink and nude. Students are not allowed to wear colors that are not considered neutral. Long manicured nails are not allowed. Nails should be short or sport length. Girls in 6^{th} – 8^{th} grade may wear acrylic, shellac or powder dipped nails in clear, soft pink, French tip, and nude.

Grooming

Hair should be kept clean, well groomed, and out of the eyes. None of the extreme or exaggerated haircuts, hairdos, fake hairpieces, or unnatural hair colors will be allowed**.** Students are not allowed to wear undercuts where there is carving/shaving into the hairline. "Fad" haircuts and styles are not allowed.

Footwear

Regular Dress – Athletic shoes in black, white, navy blue, gray or any combination thereof may be worn. Small amounts of other colors are allowed. No designs such as plaid, animal print, polka dot, etc. are allowed. Shoes are to be worn as manufactured. Parent/student made modifications/adornments are not allowed. Crocs and other backless shoes, open toed shoes, or sandals cannot be worn due to safety concerns. No Heelys or shoes with lights or that light up when you walk.

Socks – PreK-3 – 5th – white crew or bobby socks must be worn and must be visible above the ankle.
6th – 8th – white crew socks or bobby socks or ankle socks must be worn.

Full Dress – Girls may wear black or brown MaryJane/dress shoes, black or brown, flat ankle boot or solid white or solid black tennis shoes. No heels.

Socks – Knee high red or navy-blue cable knit socks. Navy blue tights (not leggings) may be worm during the colder months.

<u>Students must always have socks on with their shoes.</u>

Boys

Pants

Boys in all grade levels may wear the navy-blue pants from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers. Boys in 6th – 8th grade must wear the khaki pants from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, as part of their full-dress uniform. The pants must be no shorter than the ankle and be loose fitting. A black or brown belt must be worn with any pants that have belt loops. Pre-K3 – Kinder boys may wear pants with an elastic waistband. All pants should be free of stains and tears and must be sized to fit the natural waistline with no sagging on the hips.

Pants Must be worn by all boys on Mass days – NO SHORTS

PreK-3 – 5th

Full dress pants

6th – 8th

Full dress pants

Shorts

Boys in all grade levels may wear the navy-blue shorts from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers. The shorts should be no shorter than a 4 – 7 inch inseam and should be loose fitting. A black or brown belt must be worn with any shorts that have belt loops. Pre-K3 – Kinder boys may wear shorts with an elastic waistband. All shorts should be free of stains and tears and must be sized to fit the natural waistline with no sagging on the hips. NO khaki shorts.

Shirts

Polo Shirts - All Pre-K3 – 8th grade boys may wear red or white, pique or dri-fit performance, long or short sleeve polo shirts from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, and must have the required school crest on the left side of the chest over the heart. All shirts must be tucked in at all times except during P.E. or Recess. Students must tuck in their shirts before returning to class.

Oxford Shirts (Full Dress) - All Pre-K3 – 8th grade boys must wear white, button up, long, or short sleeve Oxford shirts from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, and must have the required school crest on the left side of the chest over the heart. All shirts must be tucked in at all times except during P.E. or Recess. Students must tuck in their shirts before returning to class.

Sweaters, Sweatshirts and Jackets

SMCS boys may wear sweaters (red or navy blue), jackets (fleece) or sweatshirts from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, in the classroom. During cold weather, SMCS boys may wear heavier jackets while outside. These non uniforms jackets must be removed once back inside the classroom.

Sweater Vest

SMCS boys in 6th – 8th grade are required to wear a navy-blue sweater vest from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, as part of the full-dress uniform.

Grooming

Hair should be kept clean, and cut above the eyebrows, ears, and shirt collar. None of the extreme, trendy, or exaggerated haircuts (including lines, designs sculpting or shaving of the head), or unnatural hair colors will be allowed. Boys should always be clean-shaven.

Jewelry and Accessories

Earrings – Earrings may not be worn at school or at any school related function.

Body Piercings – Body piercings are not allowed.

Tattoos – Permanent tattoos are not allowed.

Necklaces – One necklace with a religious medal, cross on a silver, gold, or leather chain.

Rings – No rings may be worn.

Bracelets – One small bracelet or band can be worn on each wrist that doesn't cause noise or a distraction.

Watches – (5th – 8th) - Smart watches including, but not limited to Apple watches, Fitbit Versa, Samsung Galaxy, must receive approval from the principal before they can be worn. Misuse of smart watches on campus falls under the same guidelines as cell phones and the privilege may be revoked for the remainder of the school year.

Hair Accessories – Boys are not allowed to wear hair accessories such as bandanas.

Belts – Black or brown belts must be worn with shorts or pants that have belt loops.

Tie – All boys must wear the red plaid tie from the official SMCS vendor, Risse Brothers, as part of their full-dress uniform.

Footwear

Regular Dress – Athletic shoes in black, white, navy blue, gray or any combination thereof may be worn. Small amounts of other colors are allowed. No designs such as plaid, animal print, polka dot, etc. are allowed. Shoes are to be worn as manufactured. Parent/student made modifications/adornments are not allowed. Crocs and other backless shoes, open toed shoes, or sandals cannot be worn due to safety concerns. No Heelys or shoes with lights or that light up when you walk.

Socks – PreK-3 – 5th – white crew socks must be worn and must be visible above the ankle.

6th – 8th – white crew socks or ankle socks must be worn.

Full Dress – Boys may wear black or brown dress shoes or loafers or solid black tennis shoes .

Socks – Boys may wear black, brown, tan, gray or blue dress socks or white crew socks.

<u>Students must always have socks on with their shoes.</u>

Full Dress Examples

Girls' Pre-k - 4th Grade Full Dress

Boys' Pre-k - 5th Grade Full Dress

Girls' 5th Grade Full Dress

Girls' & Boys' Junior High Full Dress

Regular Dress Examples

Boys' PreK-3 - 8th Grade Regular Dress Options

Girls' Pre K-3 – 8th Grade Regular Dress Options

Girls' 5th – 8th Grade Regular Dress Option

Can my child(ren) wear logo designs and labels on shoes and shirts?

No logos may be on shirts other than the St. Mary Catholic School crest made by Risse Brothers School Uniforms. Shoes with logos may be worn on school days when full-dress is not required. Fridays and Holy Days are full dress days. On these days students may bring shoes appropriate for recess in their backpacks to change into later. Please refer to the school handbook for complete uniform information.

What is "Spirit Dress", and when is it allowed?

On Wednesdays, students are allowed to wear the school's spirit shirt with their uniform bottoms. Occasionally, other days during the year will be designated as spirit dress days as well.

How do I get a spirit shirt? Are they also sold in adult sizes?

This link can also be found at the bottom of our website home page.
https://www.smlc-necessitees.com/

What do I do with uniforms that my child has outgrown?

You can either give them to another family you know or donate them to the uniform sale during the summer, where they will be made available to other families.

When will my child(ren) need to "dress out" for P.E.?

Your child will not need to "dress out" for P.E., however s/he is required to have on school approved socks and athletic shoes to participate daily.

What is my student allowed to wear on "Free Dress" days?

There are days when students are allowed or have earned free dress. Those days may be because of the Birthday Bear program, a contest at school, or for a fundraiser.

- Jeans
  - No skinny jeans, jeggings, or other tight-fitting jeans.
  - No jeans with tears, rips or cuts, or frayed ends (no underneath patches to "cover" holes)
- Sweatpants or Athletic pants
  - Cannot be made of tight or clingy material, must be full length and cannot be too long.
  - Must be true sweatpants or athletic pants and not pajama bottoms.
- Shorts – Boys and Girls
  - May be no shorter than fingertip length (approximately 4-7 inch inseam)
  - Gym shorts may be worn but can be no shorter than fingertip length and cannot be made of tight or clingy material.
- Skirts or Dresses
  - Hemlines should be no higher than 4 inches above the floor when kneeling.
  - Leggings and tights can ONLY be worn under dresses and skirts; otherwise, no leggings or tights.
- Shirts
  - Short or long sleeves only
  - NO sleeveless shirt, torn clothes, spandex, pajamas (unless on a designated pajama day), midriff/crop tops, tight fitting, or clingy fabrics.

Clothing students may never wear to school.

There are certain items of clothing that students may not wear to school for safety or modesty reasons. Please see the list below.

- Masks
- Sleeveless shirts / tank tops
- T-shirts with distasteful slogans/pictures
- See-through tops
- Spaghetti strap shirts or dresses
- Yoga pants
- Leggings (unless under a dress, not a long shirt) (If you cannot wear the top without the leggings you cannot wear it with leggings)
- Halter tops
- Torn clothing, including jeans
- Spandex
- Skorts or athletic skirts with built in shorts
- Mini skirts
- Midriff/Crop Tops
- Tigh fitting or clingy clothes
- Crocs
- Sandals
- Platform shoes
- Shoes with heels
- Open toed shoes
- Backless shoes
- Heelys or light up shoes
- Flip Flops
- “No-show” socks