

WELCOME TO SAINT MARY SCHOOL



Saint Mary School

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FORWARD

The purpose of this handbook is to give all students and their parents a general overview of rules and activities. This handbook does not claim to contain each and every rule and policy of the school. Further, such rules or policies are subject to change during the school year with sufficient notice to all students. Saint Mary School is YOUR school. We welcome your input, comments, and concerns. Please share them with your principal.

*Saint Mary School provides a safe and loving Catholic learning environment,
where faith and knowledge meet.*

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Mission Statement

Saint Mary School provides a safe and loving Catholic learning environment, where faith and knowledge meet.

We believe...

- ✠ in promoting the teachings of Jesus Christ and the mission of the Catholic church.
- ✠ in serving the students of this community, in partnership with their parents, and in nurturing them to become life-long learners who serve God and one another.
- ✠ in developing students into confident young adults fully equipped to take their place as Christian leaders in our communities.
- ✠ in providing high quality academics intertwined with our Catholic faith and beliefs.
- ✠ in designing activities to develop the whole student: body, mind, and heart.
- ✠ in equipping students with the study skills, discipline, and personal faith to be successful in middle school and beyond.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is very important to us. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please contact one of us. We have an open door policy and want to work with you to solve problems. Many problems/concerns occur because of miscommunication or misunderstandings. We are all here because of our love for God and children.

WHEN YOU NEED ANSWERS

Please adhere to the following chain of command:

1. To seek an answer to a question concerning a school situation (whether it is from the bus stop, playground, bus, or classroom) please begin with the primary supervisor.
2. If you are not satisfied with his/her answer, please approach the principal next.
3. If you are not satisfied with the answer, please contact the Pastor

HOME-SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE

At Saint Mary School, communication between parents and school is important to the academic success of students. Encourage your children to bring home all correspondence from school. In addition, please reply quickly to letters requiring a signature or a response. Each week, a parent newsletter will be sent home featuring up-to-date information regarding school information (usually on Thursday via email). Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, and report cards are given at the end of each quarter. Each child is evaluated on an individual basis according to his/her own ability. Report cards are sent home with the students.

EMAIL and WEBSITE

Visit our website, www.saintmarypawpaw.org, for upcoming events, school calendar, email addresses, pictures, etc.

Most faculty and staff members have school email addresses. You can find them on our website or by using the person's first initial and last name followed by @saintmarypawpaw.org.

ACCREDITATION

Saint Mary School has received accreditation status by successfully completing the Accreditation Process of the Michigan Nonpublic School Association. The accreditation cycle is five years. Every fifth year schools must reapply for accreditation and complete the self-study report, as well as receive a site visit by the accreditation team. Our accreditation is due for renewal in the spring of 2020.

DIOCESAN POLICIES

The Diocese of Kalamazoo has published a policy manual by which all diocesan schools are bound. These policies override any local or internal policies which a school may develop. Saint Mary School strictly adheres to all diocesan policies in regard to the operation of its school. A copy of the diocesan policy manual is available in the school office for parental review.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Saint Mary School depends on tuition to run its educational programs. Tuition is due monthly unless otherwise specified in the written contract and approved by the principal. Tuition is to be paid in full on or before your last payment in May. It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school if financial difficulties arise. Saint Mary School reserves the right to take unpaid tuition accounts to Small Claims Court and/or to collections. Book fees may be paid in advance or added to your tuition contract. Registration fees are due at the time of registration.

You are required to sign a written tuition agreement at the time of registration.

TUITION PAYMENT

Tuition is due by the 15th of every month beginning in August. It is your responsibility to pay monthly. If your monthly payment is **NOT** postmarked or received by the 15th, you will be charged a **\$15.00 late fee**. Late fees will be added to your tuition balance.

NONPAYMENT POLICY

When a tuition payment is delinquent, the following steps may be taken:

1. If payment is not received within two weeks after the due date, personal contact or a phone call reminder will be made.
2. If payment is not received within 30 days a reminder letter will be sent.
3. If your account is past due (over 60 days) without sufficient notification to the school office, you may be asked to pay your account in full before your child can return.

SAINT MARY SERVICE HOURS

Saint Mary School depends 100% on the support of our families. We expect all school parents to give of their time and talents by completing service hours. A volunteer form is sent home at the start of the school year, and parents can choose from different opportunities. Pre-school parents are asked to volunteer 10 hours each school year, and parents of children in K-5 are asked to volunteer 20 hours per year. Parents will be assigned two shifts at the Wine and Harvest Festival in September, and they are asked to either volunteer themselves or find someone to cover those volunteer hours.

ADMISSION POLICY

Saint Mary School does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin. Saint Mary School gives preference to students enrolled the previous year and whose accounts are current, and to parishioners of Saint Mary Church and other Catholic churches.

ADMISSION POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Saint Mary School recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each student. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the challenge to provide assistance and program to serve students with special needs according to the resources available within/to the school. Parents are considered an integral part of the process.

Saint Mary School provides for a normal range of learning differences and serves students whose instructional program requires minimal adjustments. The system does not offer direct special education instruction. It does, however, provide administrative services to coordinate with resident public schools for the screening and diagnostic evaluation of students and the development of an Adjusted Education Plan (AEP). Direct special education services may be provided by the public school district in which the child resides.

Adjustments that allow a student access to the general curriculum, but do not fundamentally lower the standard or expectation of the course, are available to students on an individual basis determined by learning needs and a documented disability. Adjustments do not release students from demonstrating required knowledge. Rather, adjustments provide students with disabilities the support they need to demonstrate what they know and understand.

Saint Mary School strives to address and make appropriate adjustments for special learning needs, but in some cases, it may not be feasible. If the school does not have the resources to address the need that has emerged, if an appropriate education requires more than minimal adjustments, if the student seriously disrupts other students' learning, or if the student puts the safety of staff or other students at risk, enrollment may be terminated. In such cases, Saint Mary School will attempt to assist families in finding appropriate alternatives.

PRIORITY ORDER FOR ENROLLMENT

- 1) Students enrolled the previous year and whose accounts are current
- 2) Contributing parishioners' children
- 3) Open enrollment for those interested in attending Saint Mary School

When classes are filled, a waiting list will be compiled on a first come, first served basis.

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

Saint Mary School provides a strong academic program intertwined with our Catholic faith. Our Catholic faith is an integral part of the school program and intertwined throughout the day. Math and reading are strongly emphasized with assistance given to those who may be struggling. Creative writing is used in conjunction with other subjects. Students are encouraged to write often. Computers are available in each classroom and in the computer lab to enhance the competency in technology. Computer skills are taught to students at each grade level. Kindergarten through fifth grade students have the opportunity to work on computer skills in the lab. Science skills are taught by implementation of hands-on experiments. Saint Mary School's Social Studies curriculum is designed to develop an understanding of citizenship among our children. The outcomes ensure that students have the knowledge, skills, and democratic values necessary for rational decision-making as participating citizens in a multicultural and interdependent global society.

IN ADDITION TO THIS CORE CURRICULUM, SAINT MARY SCHOOL ALSO OFFERS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

1. **RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES:** Instruction in Catholic Religion is offered on a daily basis. All students and teachers attend Mass on Wednesdays and Holy Days. We come together as a community to worship with an attitude of reverence and respect. The sacrament of Reconciliation is offered to students twice each school year, during Advent and Lent. Students in preschool through fifth grade attend Prayer Service each Monday, an all-school Rosaries in May, "Stations of the Cross" during Lent, and May Crowning. Additionally, we have Adoration and Benediction on the first Friday of each month.
2. **PHYSICAL EDUCATION:** Weekly classes are held for kindergarten through fifth-grade students. P.E. classes are aimed at improving students' physical development as well as teaching games, sportsmanship, and working together as a team.
3. **LIBRARY:** Students generally go to the library bi-weekly with their classroom teacher. They will be guided to select books appropriate to their grade level and reading ability. Please help your child with the responsibility of returning books on time and in the proper condition. Students will be held financially responsible for any lost or damaged books.

6. **COMPUTER TRAINING:** Computers are available to all students in kindergarten through 5th grade. Students in kindergarten through 5th grade are offered computer training in the lab as well as computer use in each classroom.

Computer Usage Policy: Saint Mary School makes the internet available to our students & teachers. Saint Mary School will make every effort to protect our students from inappropriate materials. All students will be monitored by an adult and must have a signed Internet Acceptable Use Policy in order to use the internet.

7. **BOOK IT:** Students in Kindergarten – 5th grade participate in the “Book It” reading program sponsored by Pizza Hut. As an incentive, students who reach their monthly goal and complete their classroom requirements receive a coupon for free personal pan pizza.
8. **AR:** The Accelerated Reading Program is an exciting reading incentive program for students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. The objective of this program is to get and keep our children excited about reading! Over 1500 books in our library have been tagged according to grade and reading level, and have a point value ranging from 0.5 to 10 points. When the children finish reading any story that they choose, they take a short comprehension test on the computer. Students can see immediate results; points are awarded based on the percent of correct answers on the test. The books read can also be used in conjunction with Book It, book reports, silent reading, or books read in class.
10. **SAFE TOUCHING PROGRAM:** The creators of the *Protecting God’s Children*TM program developed the *Touching Safety* program. This program is provided to us by Diocese of Kalamazoo, and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain a safe environment for children and to protect all children from sexual abuse. The lessons are offered to all students in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. Parents will be advised as to when the lessons will occur and have the right to choose whether their student participates. A Parent guide, overview and lesson plans are available for all new parents and by request.

WELLNESS POLICY

Saint Mary School is committed to creating a healthy school environment that enhances the development of lifelong wellness practices to promote healthy eating and physical activities that support student achievement.

Physical Education and Physical Activity Opportunities

Saint Mary School shall offer physical education opportunities that include the components of a quality physical education program. Physical education shall equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for lifelong physical activity. Physical education instruction shall be aligned with the Michigan Physical Education Content Standards and Benchmarks.

Every year, all students shall have the opportunity to participate regularly in supervised physical activities, either organized or unstructured, intended to maintain physical fitness and to understand the short and long term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

SCHOOL PARTIES, BIRTHDAY PARTIES, AND TREATS

Parties are scheduled with the classrooms in celebration of Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Parents will be contacted and asked to help with one of the parties by the room parent. If parents wish to help their child celebrate his/her birthday by sending treats to school, they are asked to contact the teacher in advance. Parents—please be aware that the school/teachers will not pass out any birthday party invitations at school unless the entire class (or the entire class of boys or girls) is invited. Also, please do not pass out invitations to only select students in the school building. Hurt feelings can arise quickly, and we respectfully request that you mail invitations to homes for those who are invited. Addresses are available in the main office as long as parents have allowed them to be published.

DISCIPLINE

The goal of discipline is to assist students in achieving self-discipline, respect for self and others, and to learn their responsibility toward neighbor, church, and state. Students are expected to be responsible, respectful, and attentive during school and at all school functions. Parents are ultimately held responsible for the child's behavior and will be kept informed of serious discipline problems. Parents are encouraged to impose appropriate disciplinary action at home, if necessary. Teachers are responsible for developing a written set of rules and teaching them to their students. Respect for the dignity of students prohibits the use of corporal punishment, berating statements, or degrading actions as a means of seeking adherence to the rules and regulations of the school.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

All members of Saint Mary School community have a right to a healthy and safe environment, respectful treatment of others, freedom from harassment and abuse, and to a positive learning environment. In support of these rights, the following behaviors are expected of Saint Mary School students at all times.

A. RESPECT FOR ADULTS

1. Refer to adults by their last name prefaced by the appropriate title.
2. Use a moderate tone of voice when addressing an adult.
3. Listen and answer respectfully.
4. Follow directions promptly.
5. Participate to the best of your ability at all times in the classroom, church, school assemblies, or on the playground.

B. RESPECT FOR OTHER STUDENTS

1. Keep hands to yourself; do not shove or hit others.
2. Speak courteously and without interrupting one another.
3. Help each other and be kind to one another.
4. NEVER use foul language.

C. RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

1. Be responsible for any books, desk, bus seat, or equipment assigned to you. The COST of school property is the responsibility of the student and his or her family.
2. Use restrooms, classrooms, hallways, and playground with care.

When these behaviors are not followed, one of the appropriate disciplines will be occur:.

1st Referral:

1. Loss of recess time (possible written assignment and/or service project).
2. Temporary isolation from other students with restriction of activity.

2nd Referral:

1. Same as the first plus a phone call to the parent by the student outlining his/her problem.
2. After School Detention time may be assigned.

3rd Referral:

1. Total isolation (suspension) from the other students plus extra assignments for a 1-3 day period for a building or playground offense. Suspension from the bus for 1-3 days for bus or bus stop problems.
2. A conference with the parents, student, appropriate supervisor, and the principal is required for reinstatement to the bus or classroom.

(SEVERE, HARMFUL, OR DANGEROUS VIOLATIONS WILL NOT BE GIVEN THE THREE REFERRAL PROCESS.)

GUM CHEWING

Gum chewing is generally not allowed at school, on school premises, or on the school bus. Gum chewing may be allowed on special occasions with permission from the classroom teacher and principal.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

Suspension will be left to the discretion of the principal. All infractions will be documented, and the parents will be notified when suspension takes place. Students may be given a suspension of 1-5 days. Suspension may take place in school, totally isolated from other students, or out-of-school, at the discretion of the principal. In the event of a serious infraction where expulsion is necessary, there will be a hearing before an executive session of the School Board involving the principal, pastor, appropriate supervisor, and parent. A student may be expelled for the following reasons:

1. Possession of drugs, alcohol, knives, or firearms.
2. The student's continued presence in school would seriously hamper the welfare of other students, faculty, or staff.
3. The school determines that it can no longer serve the needs of the student.

DETENTION

After-school detention periods will be used for those students who repeatedly turn in late or unfinished work or who fail to turn in assignments. Detention will also be assigned for flagrant violations of the school's discipline code. Parents will be notified and are expected to provide transportation home.

PLAYGROUND

Students go outside for recess before lunch unless weather is rainy or very severe. Experience has shown that children do better in the afternoon if they are permitted outdoor recess. Parents are asked to make sure students are dressed for the weather: Heavy coats, mittens, hats, boots, snow pants are necessary in winter. The rules on the playground are:

1. Obey the playground supervisors.
2. Use equipment as it is intended.
3. Respect each other and each other's property.
4. Use appropriate language. (Profanity will not be allowed.)
5. Do not throw sand, rocks, sticks, or snowballs.
6. Keep your hands to yourself and off other people.
7. No climbing on the fences or under trees/bushes along the edge of the fence.
8. Students may not come back into the building unless it is an emergency.

Remember the Golden Rule: "Treat others as you would like to be treated."

Discipline policy: 1st offense—a warning is given to the students
2nd offense—a "time out" is given against the fence
3rd offense—student sent to principal's office

SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL DRESS CODE 2019-2020 (PRESCHOOL THROUGH 5TH GRADE)

Saint Mary Catholic School has implemented a dress code that helps simplify the matter of student attire and creates an atmosphere that is conducive to learning – free from distractions that clothing choices can create. The dress code is viewed as a sign of belonging to Saint Mary Catholic School and is an expression of pride in our community. Cooperation with the dress code encourages responsibility and self-discipline on the part of the students. Some items of note are stated in **bold**.

Tops

- White, light blue, hunter green, or navy blue polo shirts or button down dress shirts **with collar**
- White, hunter green, or navy blue sweaters--long sleeve, cardigan, crew neck, or v-neck--may be worn over a collared shirt.
- Navy blue, non-hooded, crewneck sweatshirts or zip fleeces may be worn over a collared shirt.
- Saint Mary School embroidered fleece jackets purchased through the school may be worn over a collared shirt. The Saint Mary Catholic School name can be embroidered on all tops through Lands' End. No other emblems or logos are allowed. **Lands' End School Code - 900158247**

Bottoms

- Khaki or navy blue pants; woven cotton or corduroy. **Classic style only with natural waist.** No denim, cargo pockets, athletic, nylon, flares, **skinny or stretchy** pants.
- Khaki or navy blue shorts – knee length*
- Khaki, navy blue or hunter/classic navy plaid** woven fabric skirts – **knee length**
- Khaki or navy blue woven fabric skorts (skirt in front, shorts in back) – **PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN ONLY**

Khaki, navy blue or hunter/classic navy plaid** jumpers – **knee length**

*Shorts may be worn between **April 15 and October 15.**

Hunter/classic navy plaid skirts and jumpers may be found in the Lands' End catalog or at land-send.com. For consistency purposes, please ensure that all plaid items are purchased from the specified vendor, Lands' End. **Lands' End School Code - 900158247

Accessories

- Belts - Navy, brown, or black, plain, no wider than 1 ½ inches, plain buckle (not mandatory)
- Socks – **White or navy**
- Tights and Leggings – **white or navy only; must extend to ankle; must be worn with skirts or jumpers between October 15 and April 15 (No bare legs during the colder months.)**
- Shoes – athletic shoes may be worn—**no light up or roller shoes are allowed; dress shoes or dress boots must be navy, brown or black. No cowboy boots are allowed.**
- Sandals with backs may be worn with socks between **April 15 and October 15.**

Accessories including headbands, hair bows or flowers, and scarves must be either white or blue.

General Notes

- **Clothing should be clean and free of all rips, holes and tears.**
- **Non-uniform sweatshirts, jackets, fleeces or sweaters may not be worn in classrooms.** Please ensure that students have ample cold-weather, uniform-compliant layers for indoor use during the winter.
- Clean, usable clothing may be donated to the uniform closet, and items in the uniform closet may be taken for use at no charge.

The last Friday of every month (or another close day) will be a designated Uniform Holiday, unless announced differently. The Uniform Holidays for this school year are **tentatively** planned as follows: September 27, October 25, November 22, December 20, January 31, February 28, March 27, April 24, and May 29. (Dates are subject to change; please watch the weekly parent letter for announcements.)

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is provided by Paw Paw Public Schools to those students who live within the Paw Paw School District. Riding the bus is a privilege for our students and not a right. This privilege may be taken away from any student who is not conscientiously following the regulations:

1. Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.
2. Keep hands, arms, and legs inside the bus.
3. Remain quiet and orderly.
4. Avoid pushing and rushing.
5. Remain seated except when entering and leaving.

SUSPENSION FROM THE BUS IS THE PUNISHMENT FOR STUDENTS WHO CHOOSE TO MISBEHAVE ON THE BUS. CHANGING BUSES IS NOT ALLOWED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM PARENTS.

PICK UP & DROP OFF and PARKING SAFETY

Please use the back parking area for drop-off and pick-up:

- If you are picking up or dropping off, stay to the right, drop off at the side walk and have your child/ren walk down the sidewalk to the school.

- If you are parking stay to the left, pull up and park, and walk your child to the school

There is a 'No Parking Zone' in front of the school that will be strictly enforced. If you park in the west end parking lot or on Paw Paw Street, please park and then bring your child in the morning or wait for him/her in the foyer after school.

Note: Preschool parents need to walk their children in and out per state preschool/childcare regulations.

Bus Lanes: Please keep the area on the east end of the building on Paw Paw Street clear for the bus at all times. This is a no parking zone.

FIELD TRIPS

When classroom teachers plan field trips away from school, a note to that effect will be sent home. A permission slip will be included which must be signed and returned to the school. Each trip requires its own slip. **INSURANCE LIABILITY REQUIRES WRITTEN PERMISSION - PHONE CALLS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.** Students who do not return signed permission slips will not be allowed on field trips. Regular dress code will be followed for all field trips unless stated otherwise. Parents who volunteer to drive on a field trip are required to fill out a driver information sheet each new school year. Seatbelts & child safety seats are required for each passenger.

FIRE/TORNADO/LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Drills are held periodically throughout the school year for the protection of all concerned. When the alarm sounds for a fire drill, staff and students will immediately proceed to designated exits. In the case of a tornado drill or lockdown drill, a staff member will announce it over the PA, and staff and students will immediately proceed to designated, protected areas. Each classroom will have a clearly visible sign, which gives both exit and protected area information. Teachers will carry their roll books or attendance charts.

SEVERE WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Saint Mary School will be closed if Paw Paw Public School announces a closing due to severe weather. In the event that it is necessary to close school because of snow, ice, or mechanical failure, these closings will be announced over the local radio and television stations beginning at 6:30 a.m. Additionally, a staff member will attempt to send an email blast to all parents notifying them of the cancellation. Please do not call the school to obtain this information.

When it is necessary to dismiss students early due to emergencies, it will also be announced on the radio, television and station websites. Parents will be called if this is possible and students will be sent home as soon as possible. If school buses cannot run, riders will be kept at school until parents are able to pick up their child/ren.

Regular walkers will be sent home unless there is a danger. (IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT PARENTS INSTRUCT STUDENTS WHAT TO DO IF NO ONE IS AT HOME.)

Please go to wwmt.com and sign up for text alerts when either Paw Paw Public Schools or Saint Mary School in Van Buren County close. This is just another way to get this information quickly.

TRANSFER/CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify the school in advance when withdrawing students so that school records can be forwarded to the appropriate school district. Any changes in address or phone numbers should be reported to the school office immediately. Parents of new students coming to Saint Mary must sign a "request for records" form so that student records can be obtained from their former school.

STUDENT PHOTOS/PUBLICATIONS

From time to time, photos will be taken of students, student activities, special programs, etc. The school reserves the right to use these photos for news releases, the school website, yearbook, school-related video/DVD and slide presentations, brochure, marketing publications, etc.

The school will allow members of the media to take pictures of students and other school activities for publications. At times, photographers may take photos for resale and make them available to students and parents.

The school feels that these are legitimate opportunities for students to be in the "limelight" and also promote the school.

If a parent prefers photos of their children NOT be used or published, please notify the school administration in writing.

LOST AND FOUND

There is a lost and found box in the office for unmarked items. All marked items are returned to the child. Please help us by marking/writing your child's name on all items brought to school. Unclaimed items are given to charity at the end of the each semester.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONE

Saint Mary School takes a firm stand against illegal substance abuse in an effort to provide a school environment which promotes educational goals, and which is totally free of drug abuse or trafficking activities. Students in grades Preschool through Fifth Grade will be given age-appropriate instructions in substance abuse prevention, clearly teaching that unlawful possession and use of such substance is wrong and harmful. Students, parents, and employees of Saint Mary School are equally responsible to insure acceptable standards of conduct. Compliance with these standards of conduct is mandatory, and any person in violation of them is subject to disciplinary sanctions as follows:

1. Parents will be notified upon discovery of students involved in selling or using of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol on school property.
2. A conference will be promptly held with both students and parents together. A referral to special counseling agencies will take place in conjunction with the support of guidance personnel.
3. In the event that the student fails to cooperate with the rehabilitation program, or relapses into unacceptable conduct, the school will proceed with expulsion, and if necessary, referral for prosecution.

SCHOOL HOURS

School begins each day at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m. for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Half-day dismissal is at 12:15 PM. Children dropped off before 8:10 a.m. MUST go to Latch Key. Children arriving between 8:10 –8:20 MUST report to the gym until the bell rings.

LATCH KEY (BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE)

Saint Mary School's Latch Key Program is a before and after school program designed to meet the needs of working parents. A safe and caring environment with adult supervision, planned activities, snack, homework, and outdoor/gym time is provided. Saint Mary Latch Key Program is an extension of the home, family, and school. If no one answers the door bell, please knock on the latchkey window for entrance.

Latchkey hours: 7:00 a.m. to 8:10 and 3:25 to 6:00 p.m. Payment is due on the 15th of each month. Late fees apply after 6 p.m. and the 15th of the month.

AFTER SCHOOL PICK-UP

School dismissal time is **3:25 p.m.** Your children must be supervised at all times . If you are unable to be here at dismissal time, then your child(ren) **will be sent to latchkey**. If you are here working in the building or meeting with a teacher, please make sure that your children stay with you, go to latchkey, or sit quietly on the chairs in the foyer.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Once the school day has begun, no student may leave without authorization from the office. When an emergency requires an early dismissal, it is necessary to send a note or call the office stating the reason why you will be picking up your child. Children will not be dismissed until signed out by a parent in the office. Please report to the office to pick up your child. **Do not go directly to the classroom.** If the child is returning to school that day, then a parent must sign the child back in to school in the office.

PRESCHOOL

Saint Mary Preschool is based on the philosophy that children learn best through play and active involvement in age-appropriate activities. One of the most important experiences that the children undergo is that of learning to be with others. Along with this, we hope to develop in the children a positive self-image, independence, self-control, a sense of responsibility, respect, cooperation, and trust. Our program is designed to provide a variety of new and stimulating learning experiences and activities for the children to explore. Please contact the office for more specific information.

FREE & REDUCED LUNCH FORM

At the beginning of each school year, a free/reduced lunch form will be sent home. It is **important** that you **fill it out**. The amount of money that we receive from the public school for reading and math intervention is dependent upon these forms, as well as the possibility for your children to receive PPPS cold lunches at a free or reduced amount.

HEALTH

Help your child to practice good health habits, which we try to reinforce at school. **Do not send your children to school if they are sick or have had a fever in the past 24 hours.**

If your child contracts a COMMUNICABLE DISEASE, do not permit them to return to school until your physician gives you permission to do so. Cases of diphtheria, hepatitis, rheumatic fever, rubella, measles, and other diseases should be reported to the school immediately so that the County Health Department can take the necessary steps to prevent an epidemic. (All communicable diseases must be reported to the school office at the time they are diagnosed.) Please notify the school if your child suffers from asthma, epilepsy, allergies, or other health problems, so that proper procedures may be followed with the least possible trauma for the child or others.

EMERGENCY FORMS/IMMUNIZATION

The school office keeps Emergency Forms on file in case a child becomes ill while at school. **Parents need to keep this information current.** Michigan School Law requires that each child be immunized or that parents have had a mandatory meeting with the Van Buren County Health Department. Proof of immunization is required for all students entering Saint Mary for the first time.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE FOR STUDENTS

Children are NOT PERMITTED to keep any medicine in school including cough syrup, Tylenol, aspirin, cough drops, etc. All medicine must be kept in the school office and ONLY AUTHORIZED school personnel can administer such medicine if/when they have written permission stating time and dosage from the doctor in charge.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING MEDICATIONS

Prescription or nonprescription medications required by a student should be administered by a parent at home or by the student's medical provider. Parents should use every effort to have medication times set for time periods other than school hours.

When it is not possible, two designated staff members may assist the administration of medication during school hours, subject to the following rules:

1. **Administering Medication.** Only those people designated and trained by the school administration may administer medications to students. Two of these designated people must be present when medications are administered.
2. **Physician's Note.** A note from the student's physician (including a dentist) relating to each medication must be on file. The note must state that a valid health reason exists that makes administration of such medication necessary during school hours or when the student is under the supervision of school officials. The physician's note must indicate the student's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the time and day or dates to be given, possible side effects, special care needed for the medication (e.g. refrigeration), the termination date for administering the medication, and the physician's signature. This request is in effect for the school year in which the note is issued.

3. **Parent Note.** The parent or legal guardian must also provide the school with a note giving permission to have the school administer the medication. This note should include the name of the medication, the dosage, the time and day or dates to be given out, the student's name, a parent's signature, and the date. Staff should ensure that the note remains in the student's file.
4. **Responsible adult must bring medication to school.** All medication shall be brought to school by a responsible adult except in situations in which the parent, physician, or school administration believe it is in the best interest of the student that he or she carry the medication. In these situations, the student shall carry a copy of the written permission form from the parent. The student must carry the medication in the container with the original label. Except for inhalers, the student shall carry only one day's dosage.
5. **Check-In procedure.** The school's designated staff member shall record the date medication is brought in, ensure that the required authorization is on file, and count and record the number or amount of medication in the presence of the person who deposited it.
6. **Original container.** All medication must be in the original labeled container and be labeled with the student's name. The school shall accept no more than a thirty (30) day supply. The school shall not administer expired medications.
7. **Changes to prescriptions.** It is the responsibility of the parents to notify the school of any changes to the original prescription, and a new pharmacy label and container must be submitted with any change.
8. **Student responsibility.** It shall be the student's responsibility to come to the office at the appropriate times for medication unless a physician or dentist indicates in writing that the student cannot do this. The parent may put a note in the student's lunch box to remind the student to take his/her medication.
9. **Self-medication.** Students shall not administer any medication to themselves, except when a physician, the principal or legal guardian and the student agree in writing that it is necessary and appropriate. In compliance with Public Act 120, there must be written notification from the physician and parent on file in the school office before a child may carry their own inhaler. The student must demonstrate proper administration of the medication (such as an inhaler for asthma) and must inform the school's designated person who will record what time the medication is taken.
10. **Locked cabinet.** School staff shall keep all medication in a secure, locked, and clean location at all times when not being administered to students.
11. **Documentation.** The school's designated staff member shall keep a separate Medication Administration Record for each student that includes the student's name, medication, dosage, times to be given, signature of person administering the medication, and a place for other information to be recorded, such as any observed reactions or possible side effects. All such records shall be deemed a permanent part of the student's records and shall be confidential, except as disclosed to other staff members on a need-to-know basis.

12. **Disposing of Medication.** All medications not retrieved by the parent/guardian will be destroyed one week after the expiration date, contact with the parent/guardian, or the end of the school year, whichever is first.

FIRST AID

First aid may be given. Several staff members have been trained in First Aid & CPR. In case of an emergency, the parent will be notified immediately. The severity of injury in which parents would be contacted would consist of broken bones, bee stings, head injuries, suspected sprains, severe lacerations, allergic reactions (such as asthma attacks). Parents are also notified in cases where we suspect an infectious disease, such as pink eye, head lice, chicken pox, etc.

Accident reports are filed and parents are notified for anything other than a skinned knee, slivers, or slight abrasions. Each child has on file a current up-to-date emergency form giving school authority permission to have child transported or to take the child to hospital for treatment until parent or family doctor is notified.

ILLNESS PRIOR TO SCHOOL

Please call the school office at 657-3750 by 9:00 AM of EACH DAY of your child/ren's illness to notify us of their absence. If no call is made to the office, then it will be considered an unexcused absence. Attendance is critical to a successful school year. Children who have missed three days of school or more due to illness should have a note signed by the family physician.

ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL

Parents will be notified if a child becomes ill while at school. Parents must provide transportation home for such an illness. Please keep the office informed of two alternate names and phone numbers of responsible people who can be called, if a parent cannot be reached.

RETURN TO SCHOOL FOLLOWING ILLNESS

Please do not send a child back to school until he/she is fever free (without medication) AND vomit free for 24 hours. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any missed work from his/her teacher.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is an extension of classroom learning and should be designed to reinforce and practice concepts taught during class time. It is difficult to give an exact amount of time that a child should spend doing homework. Differences in learning styles and type of homework can vary the time needed to complete an assignment. The approximate time spent on homework should be 10 minutes per grade beginning in first grade. If it takes longer, contact your child's teacher so modifications/adjustments can be made if necessary. **Please Note:** The approximate time given does not include daily work that was NOT completed during regular classroom time.

VISITORS

Visitors are welcome and encouraged to help in the classrooms, on the playground, and around the school. For the safety of our students, all visitors are asked **to report to the office** upon arrival. Individuals/volunteers who have contact with children are required to attend a Protecting God's Children session.

VOLUNTEER WORKERS

Many volunteer tasks are available at the school. If you would like to volunteer your talents or services, please call the office and we will refer you to the appropriate person. At registration, you will receive a "PTO Sign Up & Volunteer form" so that you may sign up for your areas of interest.

SAINT MARY PTO

Saint Mary PTO is dedicated to the support of the educational welfare of Saint Mary children. The PTO organizes, promotes, and coordinates various activities and projects throughout the year. All parents of Saint Mary School are members of the PTO. Meetings are held monthly and will be published in the weekly newsletters.

SAINT MARY LOCAL CONSULTATIVE ADVISORY BOARD – "LCAB" (SCHOOL BOARD)

Saint Mary School LCAB meets monthly. Meeting dates will be published in the weekly newsletters. The LCAB is a consultative board to the principal and the pastor. The LCAB is composed of parents and Saint Mary parish members.

BUILDING SECURITY

Saint Mary Parish and School staff are concerned about the safety of our students. An intercom system has been installed outside the front and at the preschool entrance. (The Parish office has its own intercom system.) Parents or students entering the building must use the intercom system. You will then be able to enter the building after the door release is unlocked.

All doors will be locked except during the following times: the front door will be open from 8:20-8:35 a.m. and after school (front door only) from 3:20-3:35 p.m.

ASBESTOS REQUIREMENTS

An asbestos management plan is on file in the principal's office showing or describing the following information:

1. Areas of testing and location of any friable materials
2. Results of tests past and present
3. Results of air sampling if done or to be done
4. Recommendations of consultants
5. Asbestos projects completed and final test clearance, etc.

It is important to know that not all Asbestos Containing Building Materials needs to be removed from our school building. If identified, a program can be implemented to ensure that the material is maintained in good conditions and that appropriate precautions are followed when the material is disturbed for any reason.

Villa Environmental Consultants inspected Saint Mary School for asbestos according to EPA and Diocesan Guidelines in 2018. All areas are examined semi-annually and are maintained according to EPA regulations. A copy of the Asbestos Management Plan and Report are available in the school office.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

A Crisis Management Plan is available in the school office. A copy of the plan can also be found in each classroom.

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN—Virtus.org

The Diocese of Kalamazoo is committed to making all its parishes and schools a safe environment for all Children. Saint Mary Parish has responded to the directive from our bishop and is committed to **Protecting God's Children**. Child abuse, particularly child sexual abuse, is reprehensible. The Protecting All God's Children Program assists participants to understand signs of abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse, and five empowerment steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse in our society. This program is for all individuals who want to keep children safe. It is MANDATORY for all individuals/volunteers who have contact with children on a regular basis to attend a session. Sessions will be posted as they are made available to us. All participants MUST register via the Internet. If you do not have access to the Internet, have any questions, or would like a registration form, please contact the school office. It is the hope of the Diocese that eventually all Catholics and caring adults will be trained in this program, thus making not only the Church safe from abuse, but to drastically impact the welfare of all children within our community.

WEAPONS-FREE POLICY

Unauthorized possession of any form of weapon or look-alike weapon in school, on school property or at a school-related event may result in immediate suspension or expulsion. Professional counseling at parental expense may be mandated.

The Diocese of Kalamazoo has a weapons policy regarding suspension and expulsion that the school will follow if the need arises. The policy book is available in the school office.

HARASSMENT

Saint Mary School students are directed not to be a party to any form of racial, ethnic, sexual, or emotional harassment. Encounters of this nature should be immediately brought to the attention of the administration.

TITLE IX COORDINATOR

To the extent that Title IX of the U. S. Education Amendments of 1972 applies to Saint Mary School, the principal is appointed the Title IX coordinator. Saint Mary School abides by Policy #4166.4 and its accompanying regulations found in the Policy Manual of the Catholic Schools—Diocese of Kalamazoo regarding avoidance of harassment. The principal will answer questions and disseminate information about Policy #4166.4, investigate complaints, and take appropriate corrective action pursuant to this policy. The principal's contact information is as follows: (269) 657-3750 or mradosky@saintmarypawpaw.org.