

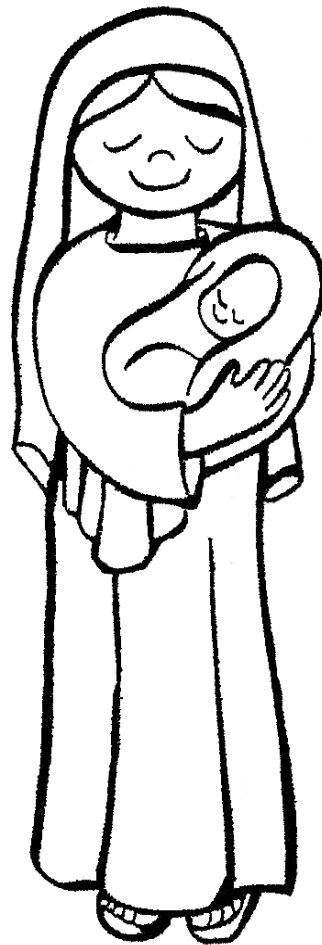


ST. MARY PARISH PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

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Escondido, California 92025

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PRESCHOOL OFFICE HOURS ARE MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
FROM 8:30am TO 4:00pm

**ST. MARY PARISH PRESCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK
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THE REMAINING PAGES IN THE HANDBOOK ARE COPIES OF THE INFORMATION PACKET GIVEN TO YOU AT REGISTRATION.

Dear Parents,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

I want to welcome you and your child to the wonderful world of preschool. We are here to support you and continue the learning process you have already started at home with your child. The nurturing, individualized care we provide enables each child to be comfortable and secure while away from their home.

St. Mary Parish Preschool offers a wide variety of learning experiences within the context of a Catholic faith environment. Activities are structured to help your child grow socially, emotionally, academically and spiritually.

Our developmental philosophy allows each child to explore the world at his/her own pace. Concepts in language, art, math, science, music, religion and other readiness areas are learned through many "hands on" experiences. Learning centers are set up within the classroom and playground to allow for these tactile activities and to encourage each child's individual growth.

I pray that the time you and your child spend here at preschool will help you to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Blessings on your day,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Darlene Karnes-Versteegh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'D' and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Darlene Karnes-Versteegh
Preschool Director

PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary Parish Preschool is a faith community of children, parents, teachers and clergy working together to provide parochial education in the Catholic tradition.

We believe that each child is a unique creation of God. We respect all children's natural curiosity about their world and their desire to be independent. Because we appreciate the miracle of each child's development, materials and surroundings are prepared to challenge a child's spirit of discovery and wonder.

Sensory, motor, perceptual and language skills are introduced through materials and activities which are both child centered and teacher directed. Work is planned which emphasizes the process rather than the product, fostering a sense of accomplishment.

We emphasize learning through play with the use of varied materials such as a sensory area, language development and literacy program, math manipulatives, and the dramatic play center. Schedules are designed which balance structure and free choice. We will coordinate activities to go with each liturgical celebration appropriate to each season.

We appreciate our faith family's ethnic diversities and cultural richness. We encourage mutual respect for individual interests and talents, and celebrate the sharing of God's gifts. Our staff is dedicated to the following goals:

- To create a Christ centered catholic environment in which children will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- To teach through example, the concepts of fairness, respect and loving one another.
- To offer opportunities for children to develop and learn language and social skills through their own meaningful play.
- Meet the child's individual needs by recognizing his/her stage of development and fostering growth by offering appropriate materials and experiences.
- Assess the child's particular learning style and create a program that meets his/her individual needs.
- To create an atmosphere of unconditional acceptance for each of God's children.
- To encourage children to explore the world around them - to ask questions, to experiment, and to realize the joy of discovery.



PRIORITIES FOR ADMISSION

St. Mary Parish Preschool serves families in and around the Escondido community. Parents must agree to abide by the philosophy and agree with policies and regulations of the school/Diocese. Priorities are as follows:

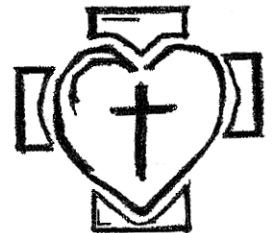
- Families in good standing at St. Mary Parish, currently enrolled or seeking enrollment.
- Children of families whose siblings are registered at St. Mary Parish School.
- Children of families in good standing and registered at other Catholic parishes.
- All other children whose parents by their behavior demonstrate an acceptance of the St. Mary Parish philosophy.



AGE FOR ADMISSION

Families of children seeking admission into preschool must follow the priority criteria above. Children must be:

- 4 years old by September 1st of the academic year to enter pre - k.
- 3 years old by September 1st of the academic year to enter preschool.
- 2 years old by September 1st of the academic year to enter preschool.



ENROLLMENT PROCESS

- Parents visit preschool with their child before applying.
- Director interviews parents and provides registration forms upon request.
- Parents complete registration forms, request child's doctor to complete and sign the physician's report, make sure child's immunization card is complete and shots are up to date.
- Give completed registration forms to the Director one week prior to the child's start date.
- Acceptance is finalized, upon Director approval after a month probationary period. At that time the Director may require parents to withdraw their child from the program.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Diego, mindful of their mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, grant admission to children of any race, color, and national and /or ethnic origin. Each is given all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to children at the schools. The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Diego do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national and /or ethnic origin, age or sex in the administration of educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

An annual registration fee of \$ 75.00 per child is due at the time of registration. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable. Parents will be notified in writing 30 days prior to any tuition rate change.

Please see separate tuition sheet for current rates

Financial requirements are as follows:

- Payment of tuition in monthly installments is due and payable by the first of each month. A late charge of \$25.00 is applied after the 10th of the month.
- A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for all N.S.F. checks. If more than two checks are returned to us unpaid, you will be required to pay your monthly tuition in cash for the remainder of the year.
- Children will not be admitted to school if parents have not paid tuition by the 15th of the month.
- Parents picking their children up after the ending time of the session they choose will be charged a late fee of one dollar per minute. This fee will be added to your monthly tuition.
- It is a requirement that parents participate in fund raising activities.
- Parents will participate in the Scrip (certificate) program.
- The Parent Service Policy requires each family to donate a minimum of 20 volunteer service hours per year. Single parents are expected to give a minimum of 10 service hours per year.
- Tuition credits will not be given due to absences, illness, or vacations.



CURRICULUM

St. Mary Parish Preschool incorporates a religious curriculum and a "hands on" developmental program. Each month we choose a religious theme that follows the liturgical calendar. We also choose a monthly theme that coincides with the planned academic activity. Our focus is religious education. Children will have the opportunity to attend a prayer service once a week where we sing, pray and learn about the trinity who is God the father, Jesus his son and the Holy Spirit. In this way we will lay the foundation for the children's continuing Catholic education.

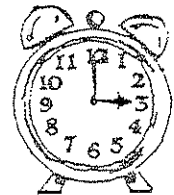
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION / SCHOOL HOURS

St. Mary Parish Preschool is on a traditional schedule, with children attending school from September until June. We will offer two sessions, either a half-day morning or a Full-day session.

The morning session will be from 8:30 am - 11:30 am Monday through Thursday. Pre-k children attend Mass on Friday mornings at 8:00 am in the church. Friday morning session ends at 11:30am. Full day sessions start at 7:00 am and end at 6:00 pm

Parents may choose one of the following schedules:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2 Half Days per week | 2 Full days per week |
| 3 Half Days per week | 3 Full Days per week |
| 5 Half Days per week | 3 Full Days per week |



ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

When the parent arrives at preschool he /she is required to sign - in and walk the child into the classroom. Please be sure that your child is under the supervision of a teacher before you leave. Use the same procedure when you pick up your child at the end of the session, making sure the teacher sees you leave. A full signature is required when children are signed in or out.

Only those people listed on the child's emergency card will be allowed to pick up the child. Any person listed on your emergency card may be asked to show picture identification before the child is released.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We will be using a parent bulletin board near the entrance of the classroom for announcements. Every parent needs to be aware of the information posted there. Please take the time to read it each day. A newsletter will be sent home each month to keep you informed of school activities.

Parents should refer to their child's file box for daily communications to obtain permission slips, special notices etc.

Parents who have questions, comments or concerns about their family's involvement with our school are encouraged to speak to the Director at the earliest possible time. Please be aware that teachers need to be working with the children during the day. Teachers are not available for conferences during their lunch break. Please schedule a conference ahead of time if you have a concern that requires a more lengthy conversation with the teacher. We would be happy to speak with you about your child. When you have a question about your child's progress at school we encourage you to speak with the teacher or the Director. When you have a concern about school procedure or policies please contact the Director.

Teachers who need to contact a parent will write a note and place it the child's file.



DISCIPLINE

Our discipline policy states that children may not be disruptive to our teaching or to the student's learning, safety, or development. As a Catholic preschool we include in our policy the teaching of kindness and gentleness. Corporal punishment or any other violation of a child's personal rights is strictly prohibited.

The policy will be carried out as follows:

For the first instance of disruptive behavior:

- Teacher will talk to the child about behavior
- Child may be asked to choose a different activity

For the second instance of disruptive behavior:

- The child will be moved away from the other children for a time out
- After the time out the child will be asked to make amends for the wrong behavior

For the third instance of disruptive behavior:

- The child will come to the Director's office to talk about any problems which may have arisen in finding a solution to the behavior problem.
- If the child has further difficulty in the classroom the parent will be contacted for suggestions on how to make his/her child's day the best one possible.
- The Director will work with the parent to establish a behavior plan that meets the needs of the staff, family and child.
- If the behavior plan fails the child will be permanently dismissed from the program.

It is our hope that the children will learn to be kind and gentle in their behavior with each other.



ABSENCES and ILLNESS

If a student will be absent from class, please notify the Preschool office before 9:00 am. There will be no tuition credit given due to absences or illness.

St. Mary Parish Preschool staff will conduct a daily health check of each child before the child is admitted for the day. This is to ensure that the child is ready for a day at preschool.

St. Mary Parish Preschool is not able to provide care for children when they are sick, so please do not send your child to school when they are feeling ill or have a fever of 99 degrees or above. If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be contacted immediately. If you cannot be reached, the persons listed on your emergency card will be contacted. We expect that you will pick up your sick child promptly. To insure that your child has completely recovered, we ask that you keep him/her home for a full 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal and your child is symptom free. A child who has been prescribed antibiotics may return to school 24 hours after their first dose of medication. Tuition credits or schedule changes are not given due to illness.

EMERGENCIES/ MEDICATION

If children become injured while at preschool:

- We will call paramedics to come to preschool to assess the situation.
- If necessary paramedics will transport your child to the nearest hospital for treatment. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible.
- The Director will accompany your child to the emergency room and remain with
- your child until a parent arrives.



When a student must take medication during the school day, the medication must be given to the Preschool Director. We require you to sign the medication form located by the parent sign-in sheet in order for your child to receive medication. The container must be marked clearly with the child's name and directions for dosage. If the medication requires refrigeration, it must be clearly indicated.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

It is the responsibility of parents to inform the preschool Director in writing concerning allergies, hypersensitivity to drugs, antibiotics, bee stings, foods, etc., physical limitations (hearing, vision, etc.) or chronic illness. Any other health factors should also be recorded and kept on file in the school office. The Director will communicate this information to the appropriate teachers.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

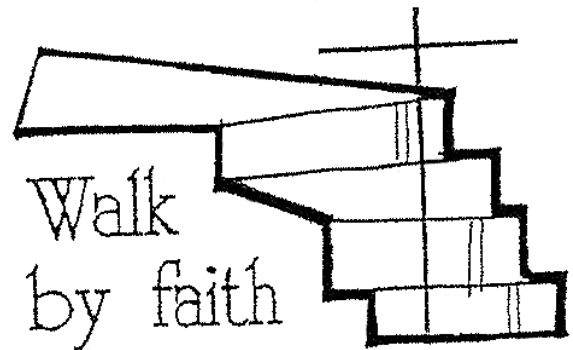
Parents should notify the Director when their student has a communicable disease such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, streptococcal infections, "pink eye", sore throat, pediculosis (head lice), scarlet fever or whooping cough. The school must notify parents if other students have been exposed to the disease.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Visitors' badges are part of the safety alert at school. Any visitors on campus not recognized by students or wearing a visitor's badge will be reported to the office for immediate action.

Our preschool is licensed with the State of California, Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. Licensing program analysts have the right to come and inspect the preschool at any time. They also have the right to talk with and interview children.

The entrance to the preschool is the driveway on 13thAve. between the hall and the upper grade classrooms. This driveway will be closed and locked during class time. The gate will be open in the mornings until 8:40am. It will be reopened at 11:25am for half day pickup. The gate will be closed at 11:40 and remain closed until 3:05pm.

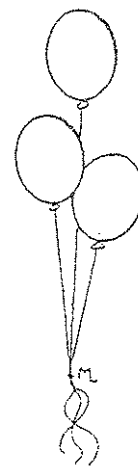


SNACKS

While at preschool your child will be served a nutritious snack. Morning session snack will be given at 10:00am. Afternoon session snack will be given at about 3:30pm. Weekly menus will be posted on the parent board.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

We thank and praise God for all the children in our care. We would like to join you in celebrating your child's birthday. If you would like to bring a special treat such as cookies, muffins, fruit or anything your child really likes, please let your child's teacher know in advance (about one week). This will allow the teacher to prepare for your child's special day and be able to tell you how many goodies are needed.

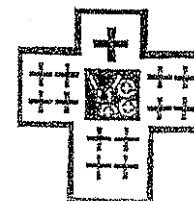


FIELD TRIPS

As part of the preschool experience we offer occasional field trips. A small fee will be charged in order to cover the cost of the field trip. Parents will be asked to drive. Permission forms must be signed and returned to the teacher before any student may leave the school grounds to participate in a field trip. All children must wear their St. Mary Parish Preschool T-shirt.

PRAYER SERVICE DAYS

Every Wednesday and Thursday is prayer service days at preschool. On these days children wear navy blue "bottoms" and their yellow preschool T-shirt. Children need to bring one non-perishable food item to school to put in our giving basket. All food items will be given to St. Vincent de Paul for families in need.



UNIFORMS

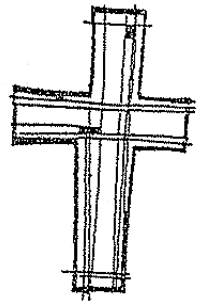
School policy requires students to wear uniforms. Children are expected to wear their uniforms every day they attend school.

Uniform requirements are:

- Navy blue pants, shorts, skirts
- White/ Navy blue collared shirt / blouse
- Any color shoes and socks
- Navy blue sweaters or jackets
- St. Mary Parish preschool T-shirt for field trips and prayer service days. T-shirts are available for purchase in the Preschool office.

REQUIREMENT TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

All preschool teachers and staff are mandated to comply with the child abuse reporting requirements as stated in the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing, Title 22 Handbook.



RAINY DAY SCHEDULE

On rainy days, our program is modified. Children remain inside during playground time. The back deck is open for painting and to watch the rain. Weather is an event in southern California, we wouldn't want to miss it.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

St. Mary Parish Preschool holidays are:

September	Labor Day
October	Columbus Day
November	Veteran's Day Thanksgiving Break
December	Christmas Break
January	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February	President's Day
March/April	Easter Break
May	Memorial Day
July	Independence Day

GOALS

Our goal at St. Mary Parish Preschool is to provide varied religious experiences such as the reading of bible stories, songs, prayers, and liturgical traditions. Along with religious education, children will participate in many teacher directed and child initiated academic activities.

Sensory, motor, perceptual and cognitive skills are introduced by providing materials and activities that are age appropriate. Language and literacy are important parts of our curriculum. Parents are encouraged to participate in the book bag program in order to support our early literacy for children component.

The children's work is planned which emphasizes the process rather than the product, fostering a sense of accomplishment. In this way we can foster the concept of the teacher being the child's new adult authority figure. By the time your child leaves preschool he/she will be comfortable with our school routine and have enough academic center time experiences which will aid in the transition into Kindergarten.

EMERGENCIES

If the school is closed due to an emergency situation that occurs after school hours, (fire, earthquake, etc) you may call the elementary school office at (760) 743-3431 to obtain a daily pre-recorded message about when classes will resume or any other information we feel parents will need to know. Information may also be available on the local news stations. St. Mary Parish Preschool will follow the same emergency schedule as the Escondido Union School District.

When an emergency occurs during school, all children will remain at school and parents will be called immediately to come pick up their child. If St. Mary campus becomes unsafe, parents will be notified of the relocation site. Teachers will remain with the children until parents arrive.