



Discipleship Formation Handbook

Missionary Discipleship Office

920-739-7758

Website

www.stmcath.org

Missionary Discipleship Team

Pastoral Leader

Deacon Lincoln Wood lincoln@stmccath.org

Missionary Discipleship Coordinator- Family and Children

Children in pre-K through grade 5

Emily Shackleton emily@stmccath.org

Missionary Discipleship Coordinator- Family and Youth Grades 6-12

Andy Chmura andy@stmccath.org

Missionary Discipleship Coordinator- Family and Adult Adult Formation

Greg Mohr greg@stmccath.org

Missionary Discipleship- Operations Assistant

Wendy Fischer wendy@stmccath.org

Faith Formation Office Hours and Contact Information

Office Phone: 739-7758 (all calls now go through main parish number) Office Hours:
(September through May)

8:30 am - 4:00 pm (M-Th)

2:00 pm - 8:00 pm (1st, 2nd and 3rd Wednesdays of the month)

Summer hours by appointment Website: www.stmccath.org

Welcome!

“Know that the greatest service that man can offer to God is to help convert souls.”
-St. Rose of Lima

We, the Missionary Discipleship team of St. Thomas More, are at your service. We are here to help you learn more about our beautiful Catholic faith.

Parental Role

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children.” (#2223) Since you have such an impact on your child(ren)’s faith life, we ask that you support their discipleship development by:

- Growing in your own faith life.
- Participating in the celebration of Eucharist with your child(ren) each weekend.
- Including prayer as a part of your and your family’s daily routine.
- Encouraging regular participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Encouraging them to take a more active role in the parish’s life and ministry, in keeping with their age and abilities (serving, ushering, music, help with service opportunities around the parish, etc).

*Ask us about more youth volunteer opportunities.

Personal or Health Concerns

Information about learning disabilities or other personal concerns should be communicated on the registration form. This will allow for the student and the catechist to develop a healthier relationship and provide for protection against harmful reactions in class. We want to be able to minister to each student as his/her individual needs require.

Website

Please go to www.stmcath.org to access our calendars, registration, and other Discipleship Formation information.

Tuition/Fees

Due to the generosity of the parishioners of St. Thomas More, we do not charge for Discipleship Formation. We are excited to partner with parents in passing along the faith to the next generation by forming missionary disciples. We do request a donation from parents with a child or youth preparing for sacraments as well as a middle schooler attending the retreat. These fees are to help cover the additional costs of resources. If these fees cause a hardship, please contact the office for a financial aid form.

Attendance

As we partner with parents in forming their child(ren) in the faith, it is essential that parents are also formed and therefore attend each session with your child(ren). With meeting only once or twice a month (depending on the option you choose- Wednesday or Sunday), attendance is very important. Most things can not be “made up” as there is a lot of discussion. If any resources are used, we will send those to all families who were not in attendance that week so they can become familiar with the information they missed.

Please call or email all absences.

Homework and Extracurricular Activities (Appleton Area School District Policy #345.3)

There is both a written policy (for homework) and an informal agreement (for extracurricular activities) to reserve Wednesday evenings for family activities and Discipleship Formation in the Appleton Area School District (AASD). As a commitment to community life and in cooperation with community groups and religious educators, the AASD makes every attempt not to schedule extracurricular events on Wednesday evenings. This is done so that students and families can be involved in non-school activities on Wednesday evenings. This agreement is a combined effort by Appleton schools and the churches to help families prioritize the value of faith formation. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact the AASD at 832- 6161 or the St. Thomas More Missionary Discipleship Office at 739-7758.

Discipline Expectations

There is only one rule in our St. Thomas More Discipline Plan. Students will show respect in both actions and words for the catechists, aides, other students, building, classrooms, and all classroom items, including the property of the teacher and other students who use the classroom, and the program as a whole during class time and at all parish sponsored activities on and off parish premises. This plan will:

- Promote the well-being and safety of all students and staff.
- Protect the right of every catechist to teach and every student to learn.
- Maintain the dignity, worth, sacredness, and value of each person.
- Include appropriate and timely communications with parents.
- Foster personal responsibility and accountability of actions by students and staff.
- Exemplify Gospel values particularly that of love.

Discipline Plan

If there is an issue within a classroom, the student will receive a verbal warning. If it persists, the parents will be called out of the parent session to address the situation.

Communication Devices

Students should not be on their phones (or other electronic devices) during class unless directed to. If this becomes a problem, they risk being taken away.

Pastoral Care

As Discipleship Formation coordinators, we are ready to walk with families, children, youth, and adults in any life situations that they face. We offer support and resources during difficult times, celebration during happy times, and everything in between! Our pastoral associate, parish nurse, deacons and priest/pastoral leader are here to support in a deeper way at times of death or extreme circumstances. The Parish Office can be reached at 739-7758 or stmparish@stmccath.org.

Catholic Education Commission (CEC)

The Catholic Education Commission is an advisory body to the pastor/ pastoral leader. It is responsible for the total Discipleship Formation program of STM Parish by initiating policies and setting guidelines for/with the Missionary Discipleship coordinators so the programs can accomplish their goals. The CEC reports directly to the St. Thomas More Parish Pastoral Council.

Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Code

The Diocese of Green Bay will not tolerate the sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a minor by a priest, deacon, other minister, employee, or volunteer who is in the service of the Diocese. Likewise, all students are expected to be respectful of all others they come in contact with. Any sexual harassment or misconduct will NOT be tolerated, and a student suspected of such behavior will be immediately asked to leave and parents will be contacted.

*VIRTUS - "Protecting God's Children" (Preventing Child Abuse Awareness)
Each volunteer and employee of the Green Bay Diocese eighteen years old or older who have regular contact with children and vulnerable adults are to participate in a "Protecting God's Children Adult Awareness" (VIRTUS) session which the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Diocesan Department of Total Catholic Education mandates.*

The Diocese of Green Bay is committed to creating, providing, and maintaining safe environments in all its parishes, schools, and other institutions so that all persons, especially children, young people and individuals at risk, will be protected as far as possible from all harm particularly sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of minors and abuse of individuals at risk. This policy is in compliance with The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

There are VIRTUS sessions available throughout the year at different locations throughout the Diocese of Green Bay and now also online which any volunteer or employee can attend. No volunteer can work with children in the religious education area if he/she refuses to attend.

* Legal Reference: Wisconsin Statutes s.48.981 (2) (3) (4)

In accordance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Statement on "Protecting God's Children", each grade level, Pre-K through high school, will receive 1-3 hours of education in abuse recognition, prevention, and other moral issues every year.

Student Dress

Students shall wear clothing appropriate to the learning environment of a church community or a parish sponsored event. Hats and coats are removed during class. Garments which advertise or promote values contrary to the message of Jesus are not acceptable.

Smoking/Drugs

Smoking, including e-cigarettes, or any other device inhaled by users, alcohol and drugs are prohibited by both the Green Bay Diocese and St. Thomas More policies.

Weapons

No one shall possess, use, threaten, or store a weapon or lookalike weapon on parish property or on parish sponsored events. Weapons are defined as anything that could cause bodily harm, property damage, or intimidation. Students in possession or reasonably suspected of being in possession may be subjected to search and seizure. Such an effort would be done in the presence of an adult witness. The police may be notified depending upon the results of the search. Parents will always be notified that such an event has occurred.