

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

ST. MARY, STAR OF THE SEA

The happy life is rejoicing in the truth...There is no teacher of truth save Thee, wherever or from whatever source it shines upon me.

St. Augustine

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary, Star of the Sea School is a PK-8 parish school in Oceanside, California, offering a rich educational experience fully integrated within the wisdom, tradition and values of the Roman Catholic Church. We are committed to providing a nurturing environment that promotes academic excellence and a foundation of faith by means of which our students may live out the message of Jesus Christ. Working in close cooperation with our parents, we provide an educational program that fosters the physical, emotional, moral, spiritual and intellectual development necessary for our children to reach the fullness of their human potential.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Our educational philosophy is based upon a Christian philosophy of the human person. We recognize that each person is created in the image of God, with an ultimate purpose, which is nothing less than eternal life. Regardless of differences in talents and abilities, family or cultural backgrounds, we all possess a universal human dignity that is rooted in this mutual heritage and common end.

It is this vision of the human person that governs the Christian conception of education and its purpose. In his celebrated Encyclical on Christian education, *Divini Illius Magistri*, Pope Pius XI said: “The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to cooperate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian...the true Christian, the product of Christian education, is the supernatural man who thinks, judges and acts always and consistently in accordance with right reason illuminated by the supernatural light of the example and teaching of Christ.”

While we identify the “true and perfect Christian” as the ultimate end of education, St. Mary’s does not neglect the importance of the natural order or the need to prepare our children for productive life in the world; for “the true Christian does not renounce the activities of this life; he does not stunt his natural faculties; but he develops and perfects them by coordinating them with the supernatural.”

The educational program of St. Mary's is therefore a comprehensive program ordered to the whole child. Recognizing parents as the primary educators, our teachers are best understood as offering assistance in the formation of children according to their various capacities. These include their capacity for faith and participation in the life of grace; for an appreciation of the good and the beautiful through poetry, literature and the arts; for a sense of human history, as well as for more analytic and scientific habits of mind.

At St. Mary, Star of the Sea, we believe that each student is blessed with unique talents and gifts and is called to use them in service to God and to others. The parents, the staff, and the clergy who serve the school and the students are dedicated to forming in the hearts and minds of the students an appreciation for the dignity of life, and a responsibility for themselves and for others, including their families, their parish and their community. We understand and affirm that the purpose of education is not the mere accumulation of facts, but rather the mental and moral formation necessary to live a life of responsible human freedom.

STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

St. Mary, Star of the Sea School welcomes children with a range of abilities, backgrounds and aspirations. This diverse range of personal characteristics and experiences enriches the communal life of our school.

Our first and foremost goal is to provide the very best school experience for every one of our students. In order for that to be accomplished, it is necessary for our teachers to be able to meet the needs of the student. If a child's individual needs are within the scope of our teaching resources and facilities, we are committed to providing access to reasonable differentiated instruction and learning opportunities and working with parents to procure all outside services that may apply.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1) Schedule

Office Hours:

7:30 A.M. — 3:30 P.M.

7:30 A.M. — 1:00 P.M. (Minimum Days)

Morning Day Care: 7:00 A.M. — 7:45 A.M.

Star Care: 3:00 P.M. — 6:00 P.M.

School Hours:

School begins at 7:55 A.M. and dismisses at 2:45 P.M. First bell rings at 7:55 A.M. Students are expected to be lined up and ready for Morning Prayer in the courtyard.

Classes begin at 8:00 A.M.

Minimum Day: 8:00 A.M. — 12:00 P.M.

Faculty meetings are held on the first and third Friday afternoons of each month (Minimum Days)

Annual in-service and professional growth days are listed on the calendar.

2) Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Parents are responsible for their children getting to and from school safely and on time. Safety is always most important when it comes to our students. Only guardians or those whom they have clearly indicated have their permission may pick-up children at the school. Please read and follow all school procedures. Parents who do not follow the procedures place all of our students in jeopardy. The process will proceed smoothly if everyone cooperates.

The decision as to whether a child should ride a bicycle to school or not is left to the parents. However, children who ride bicycles should be carefully instructed regarding traffic rules and safety procedures and must wear a helmet. Bicycles must never be ridden on the school grounds. Bicycles must be placed in the bicycle racks and locked. Skateboards and roller blades or skates are not allowed to be used on school property at any time.

Morning Drop-Off

1. Students must enter the school grounds through the main gate on Wisconsin Avenue.
2. From 7:30 to 8:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, the drop-off line will form on Wisconsin Avenue in front of the school. We would ask that you please enter Wisconsin Avenue by way of Freeman Street, not Coast Highway. Please pull as far down the yellow line in front of the school as you are able. Drivers should not cut in front of other cars.

3. In the event that the car line on Wisconsin is full, please wait on Freeman and then pull alongside Wisconsin as the preceding line of cars pulls away. After you have dropped off your kids, please wait until the cars in front of you have pulled away before you pull out.
4. Drivers should not leave their cars in the drop-off line. Students should have their backpacks/lunchboxes in their laps and ready to go, exiting from the passenger side only. This may require a rearrangement of car seats.
5. Please do not park in the drop-off lane. If your child is bringing items to class such as cupcakes or projects, please park on a side street if you need to help your child.

Afternoon Pick Up

Dismissal is from Wisconsin gate. In the case of inclement weather, students will remain in their classrooms until their transportation arrives. Students must be checked out from the classroom and dismissed through the front gate on Wisconsin Avenue.

No student is to be picked up from the parking lot.

For Wisconsin Street dismissal each family should put a name card with the family name on it in the car windshield to aid the teacher in charge.

1. From 2:45 to 3:00 p.m. the pick-up lane to St. Mary's school will be along Wisconsin Avenue, beginning at the cross walk. This line will spill over onto Freeman Street. At dismissal time the teachers in charge will release students from the front gate to parents in the pick-up lane. Once all of those students have safely entered their cars, the teacher in charge will motion the Wisconsin line to start their engines and pull away. The process repeats itself until all of the students have been picked up. Any students remaining after 3:00 p.m. will be checked into Star Care. **Please do not park and exit your car in the carline.**
2. Students may not re-enter the school from the pick-up line. If something has been forgotten, please park on streets not designated for waiting cars and escort your child to the front of the building. Do not leave young children unattended in the pick-up line.
3. Arrangements need to be made in advance (not in the pick-up line) for a student to go home with another student. Both students involved need to bring a note to the office in the morning.
5. Students who walk home must have a note on file in the office. This note must be signed by a parent

Parking

The parking lot is for staff only, or drop-off for the preschool. *Elementary families may not drive into the staff parking lot to drop off or pick up students.*

Cars may be parked on the north side of Wisconsin (watch for street cleaning days!). The south curb is painted yellow and is reserved for loading purposes only.

3) Greeters

Students in Grades 4 — 6 volunteer to assist as Greeters for morning drop-off. Greeters open the car doors, and assist the student getting out of the car. Greeters are on duty at 7:45 a.m. on Wisconsin Avenue in front of the school.

4) Supervision

Unsupervised students are not permitted on the school grounds prior to 7:45 A.M. or after 3:00 P.M. Those who must come earlier are required to check into Morning Day Care. Students who remain on the school grounds after 3:00 P.M. are required to check into Star Care. Students may not leave school for any reason without the permission of faculty or administration.

5) Extended Care (Morning, After School Star Care)

Day Care is provided on school days only. Extended Day Care (Morning) and Star Care (afternoon) is available to St. Mary students from 7:00 to 7:45 A.M. and from 2:45 (or 12:15 on minimum days) until 6:00 P.M. During inclement weather, Star Care will be held in the hall.

At 3:00 P.M. each day school is in session, all students who remain on the school grounds must check into Star Care. Families are not charged for Star Care until 3:15 P.M. Each student must be signed out of Star Care by an authorized adult. Parents arriving after 6:00 P.M. will be charged \$1.00 per minute.

Children in after-school clubs must sign into Star Care after club time. Parents will not be charged for the time spent in clubs.

6) Office Procedures

The school office is open from 7:30 A.M. until 3:30 PM. (3:00 P.M. on minimum days) *Please do not telephone teachers or children during school hours.* If an emergency arises, please contact the office and the office personnel will try to assist you. The use of the telephone by the children is for emergency only.

If you wish to have a conference with a teacher, please leave a message at the office and the teacher will make contact to set up an appointment.

Lunches, books, or projects delivered by parents should be left in the office. Parents and other visitors are not to disturb classes in session.

Emergency cards are updated the first week of school. **It is very important that the office is notified of any change in address, phone, or of any other change on the emergency card.**

7) Complaints/Concerns

Most concerns relating to individual classroom procedures, grades, etc. should be addressed directly to the teacher. Constructive suggestions are welcomed only when they are motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program. It is important to clear up misunderstandings as soon as possible. It is clearly advantageous to have your concerns answered by the person(s) having the correct information to give to you. If further clarification is needed a principal appointment may be made for a later date.

If you have a concern regarding general school policy and regulations please discuss the concern with the Principal.

8) Absence/ Tardy Procedures

Prompt and regular attendance is important for the success of your child. All students are required to attend school daily in accordance with California law. *Please note that a total of 20 absences in any given year may disqualify a student from receiving credit for the grade.*

Students must attend school for a minimum of a half day to be considered present for that day. To receive credit for work missed during absences, the work must be made up within one week of the first day the student returns.

Any student who has been absent 15 or more days in a quarter, and who has not made up the academic work, will not receive a grade in the class or classes missed for that quarter. If your child is ill on any school day, *please call the office before 9:00 A.M. to report the reason for absence.* A student who is tardy must report directly to the office for a tardy slip, which will admit the student to the class.

No student will be permitted to leave the school grounds at any time during school hours or be released from class without a written and signed request from parents or designated adult. If your child will need to leave school before normal dismissal time please call or send a note to the office before 9:00 a.m. Please try to schedule all doctor, orthodontics, etc. appointments for after school so students don't miss valuable school time.

We do not recommend that any child be excused from school any length of time during the year for family vacations. Parents are responsible for any decision regarding such absences. They are to notify the teacher and the school office. *Teachers are not required and should not be expected to write lesson plans for students on vacation.* A folder of missed assignments can be ready upon the student's return.

9) Injury/Medications/Health Concerns

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of each child to inform the school office in written form regarding any medical condition which may affect the welfare of a child. Any allergies, hypersensitivities, or chronic illness should be reported. Other health factors pertaining to your child should be kept on file in the school office.

Should a student be injured or become ill, the office will attempt to contact a responsible adult per the instructions from the parent as listed on the child's emergency card. No student will be permitted to go home before this contact is made. If you cannot be reached and the illness or injury is serious enough to require medical attention, the administration shall consult the emergency care authorization form and arrange for the treatment authorized on that document.

Parents may be contacted to pick up their child if they exhibit symptoms that may be contagious to others. These include, but are not restricted to, temperatures over 99 degrees, vomiting, red swollen throat/tonsils, conjunctivitis (pink eye), Pediculosis (head lice) or at staff discretion. If a student is identified as having head lice, that student must be held from school and will only be re-admitted following appropriate treatment with the application of a pediculicide and when the child is free from active lice or nits on return from school.

Medications will not be furnished by the school. All medications must be kept in the school office, must be in their original containers, and taken under supervision in the office. **No medications of any kind, including over the counter drugs (i.e. Tylenol and cough drops), can be administered by school personnel without appropriate Doctor's prescription and Doctor's consent forms.**

California law requires every child entering school for the first time present evidence that he/she has been protected against polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, and Hepatitis B series. In addition, the State Health Department recommends that all children be immunized against rubella and mumps.

Students will be given a hearing-screening test, vision screening test, and scoliosis examination periodically. Parents must sign a permission slip prior to any screening test being administered.

10) Emergency Procedures

A Disaster Plan, which includes all school emergency procedures, is available from the front office. Emergency dismissal may be decided by the principal or his representative when serious conditions warrant. If such an emergency exists, parents will be notified by

phone or text to pick up their children at school. If an emergency occurs outside of school hours, please listen to the local radio station. As a general rule, St. Mary, Star of the Sea School follows the same procedures as the Oceanside Unified School District.

11) School Visitors

All persons (including parents) entering St. Mary, Star of the Sea School for any reason must enter through the front school entrance and go to the school office to obtain proper authorization to visit the school. **All persons must sign in and receive a visitor's pass.** Parents who wish to observe a classroom must first obtain permission from the classroom teacher. Persons, agencies or organizations desiring to contact individual students during the school day are to receive permission from the principal; however, the school may not be used by a non-legal guardian for the exercise of visitation rights.

12) Care of Property

School facilities, desks and equipment are to be treated with care. Students and their guardians are responsible for any damage to the property of the school or others. Most textbooks and library books are the property of the school and students are responsible for lost or damaged books.

All items susceptible to being lost should be permanently labeled. Lost articles turned into the school office are generally placed on a rack near the custodian's storerooms and may be claimed at recess or after school.

13) Late Tuition or Fee Payments

It is the policy of St. Mary, Star of the Sea School that any person whose payment is returned from the bank for any reason (Not Sufficient Funds "NSF", Stop Payment, Account Closed, etc.) shall be charged a processing fee of \$35 per incident by TADS. This fee applies to all checks written to St. Mary, Star of the Sea, regardless of which account is being paid (Star Care, Preschool, PTG, etc.) In addition, a total of two returned checks may result in a subsequent "cash only" basis for that account.

DISCIPLINE

We affirm in our "Philosophy of Education" that the purpose of education is the "mental and moral formation necessary to live a life of responsible human freedom." It is difficult to live such a life without ordered environment and impossible without some degree of

self-mastery. At St. Mary's we provide an ordered and safe environment wherein this self-mastery and therefore virtue may grow. However, the development of virtue in the young requires the cooperative effort of everyone involved in the life of the child, at school and home.

The development of virtue is clearly impacted more by conditions in the home than at the school. St. Mary, Star of the Sea School is not a substitute for an ordered home or for the moral formation that a child should receive in the home. As a Catholic school we will present the moral teachings of the Gospel and the Church, but these must be practiced both at the school and at home in order to have any real effect.

We will make reasonable efforts to work with students and their parents in seeking to prevent and to correct disciplinary and academic problems at the school, but the parent, as the primary educator, must take the primary responsibility in moral formation. It is important, however, for parents to be aware that they grant to the school a quasi-parental authority, and we therefore expect their support in decisions regarding their children. Discussion is always welcome if it is reasonable and in a spirit of Christian charity. Parents who cannot support the disciplinary approach of the school may be better served in looking for other educational options for their children.

The disciplinary approach of St. Mary, Star of the Sea is inspired by the disciplinary philosophy of the great Catholic educator, St. John Bosco. John Bosco taught that love and prevention are better motives to right behavior than fear and punishment. He called his method the "Preventative Method," a process that seeks to prevent falls by supervision, encouragement, instruction and kind admonition.

The concept of discipline should never be equated with mere punishment. Nevertheless we will take disciplinary actions when they are deemed appropriate. The administration follows an "individualized disciplinary approach" which takes into account the unique and personal circumstances of each disciplinary infraction. The aim of any administrative response to disciplinary infractions is to help students understand that their actions have consequences and thus to further the development of personal responsibility.

Mindful of the various developmental stages of children in grades K through 8, teachers will provide parents and students with age-appropriate classroom management plans and general class rules at the beginning of school and at the Back-To-School night at the beginning of each new school year.

1) General Conduct Rules

Proper respect for both persons and property is expected and any disrespect will be dealt with appropriately. *Respect and obedience must be shown to all teachers and adult staff at all times.* Any form of harassment, intimidation, bullying or otherwise offensive, behavior—including foul language—is unacceptable. In addition:

1. Students should be punctual and come to class prepared and follow the directions of personnel in charge.
2. Students are responsible for helping to keep the facility clean inside and outside. Gum chewing is not permitted. Snacks at recess should be consumed at the picnic tables.
3. Cell phones are to be turned off and kept in back packs or given to personnel during school hours. They are not to be used on campus by any student during school hours. Phone abuse will require student to leave phone in office for pick-up by a parent after school.
4. Skateboarding, roller-blading, Heelys (shoe skates), or bicycling are not permitted on campus.
5. Bicycles must be walked on to and off of the school grounds.
6. Radios, headphones, electronic games, etc. are not to be brought to school. Confiscated items will be left in the office for pick-up after school.
7. All equipment and materials must be used with care. Deliberate damage to, or destruction of school or private property is grounds for expulsion.
8. Students may not leave the school grounds at any time during the school day without the written permission of parents/guardians *and* clearance from the office.

2) Removal from Class / Repeated Disruption

When a student causes disruption in class the teacher may remove that student to a bench outside the classroom. Repeated removals will lead to an “office visit” and to a conduct referral. A detention may be issued depending on the severity of the disruption or if this represents a pattern of behavior. When a student is responsible for repeated disruptions or individual acts of an egregious nature the school staff may consider the following measures:

1. Conference with parents
2. Assignment of special tasks
3. Denial of privileges
4. Detention
5. Probation
6. Suspension
7. Expulsion

3) Probation/Suspension

A student may be placed on probation for a relatively serious offense, for continuing serious academic deficiency, or for continued and habitual misconduct. Probation will be for a definitive period. Continued misconduct during the period of probation will carry more serious consequences depending on the terms of the probation which may include a suspension or expulsion from the school.

A student may be placed on suspension for serious misconduct, on campus or off campus during school related activities, or for continued misconduct. The length of any suspension is determined by the principal considering the nature and circumstances of the conduct. In some cases an in-school suspension may be assigned.

4) Expulsion

A student may be expelled from school for misconduct of a serious nature calling for immediate dismissal without suspension or for a repetition of conduct for which the student has been suspended one or more times. The following are possible grounds for expulsion:

1. Actions grossly detrimental to the physical, moral, or psychological welfare of other students, including but not limited to bullying, harassment, or acts of violence or a credible threat of such..
2. Incurable or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the class.
3. Damage to, or theft of, school or private property.
4. Possession of weapons (toy or real).
5. Possession of drugs, or other controlled substances including alcohol and tobacco.
6. Commission of obscene act(s) or engagement in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
9. Habitual defiance of school authorities and rules.

5) Harassment

St. Mary, Star of the Sea affirms the Christian dignity of every student. It is the policy of the school to provide an educational environment in which all students are treated with respect. Harassment is unacceptable conduct occurring in the school environment when an individual is subjected to treatment which is hostile, offensive or intimidating. Any harassment is unacceptable, including harassment directed toward an individual because of that individual's race, creed, color, national origin, physical ability, gender, or other personal characteristic. A charge of harassment will not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action, up to, and including expulsion from the school.

6) Student Threats Policy Procedure

The principal in consultation with appropriate staff is to determine what constitutes an authentic threat and if it is so determined will take the following steps:

1. Police will be notified immediately.
2. The parent or guardian of the student who has made the threat will be notified immediately.
3. The student will be kept in the principal's office under supervision until the police/parents arrive.

4. The parent or guardian of any student who has been mentioned as a potential victim, as well as any adult who has been mentioned, either verbally or in writing, will be notified immediately.
5. The student will work from home and will not be considered for readmission to the classroom unless and until the following steps have been completed.
 - a. The principal must receive a report from the police, either written or verbal. That report should include notification of whether the child will be charged with any crime as well as an assessment of the child's access to weapons.
 - b. A comprehensive mental health evaluation and risk assessment must be conducted by an independent psychiatrist or psychologist.
 - c. The principal will, after obtaining the permission of the parents, provide the mental health care professional with all relevant facts.
 - d. The principal shall receive a written comprehensive evaluation report and documented treatment plan from the mental health care professional stating the basis upon which it has been determined that the student does or does not pose a danger to self or others.
6. If the psychiatrist or psychologist recommends re-admittance, the principal may or may not decide to readmit the child. The outcome of the investigation, including police and mental health reports will be considered in the decision to re-admit. Any decision regarding readmission will involve consultation with the pastor.
7. If the student is re-admitted to the school, the mental health care professional must provide a follow-up assessment of the student within 30 days. The principal must be provided with a copy of the follow-up assessment and evaluation and with any recommendation for therapy, counseling, or other treatment. Cooperation with recommendations for continuing care will be a condition of re-admittance and continued enrollment.
8. Documentation from the mental health care professional concerning the student is to be placed in a separate, confidential file and will not be a part of the student's academic or disciplinary file. Only the principal and/or pastor will have access to these files.

UNIFORM RULES AND APPEARANCE

1) School Dress

Proper uniform is a requirement for attendance at St. Mary Star of the Sea School. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child is in conformity to the uniform policies of the school. The school uniform may be purchased through the Dennis Uniform Company and is to be worn at all times unless a free dress day is declared by the principal. **Please consult the Dennis Uniform Co. web site below for the St. Mary's uniform specifications.** On free dress day we ask that the students exercise restraint and that the students not dress in outlandish or inappropriate clothing. Tank tops, halter necks, spandex, bare midriffs, plunging necklines, and excessively short hemlines are not permitted. Walking or knee length shorts are permitted. Students are expected to be well groomed and clean. For safety reasons, high heels, thongs, sandals, or boots are not

permitted. Socks should be worn at all times. Parents will be contacted if a child wears unacceptable dress.

All uniform articles may be obtained from:

Dennis Uniform Company
www.dennisuniform.com (School code D52)
4217 Ponderosa Avenue, Suite D
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 573-1804 or (888)737-5243 or fax (858) 573-1805

General Uniform Norms:

- a. Skirts and walking shorts should not exceed 2" above the knees.
- b. Boy's slacks should not sag, have excessive bagginess, may not be torn and must be fit at waist.
- c. Belts are required for all boys in 5th-8th grade. Belts are to be plain without designs or fancy buckles.
- d. Boy's shirts must be tucked in. Girl's polo shirts must be tucked in but blouses may remain out.
- e. Shoes must be appropriate, in good condition, and practical for school use. Neutral colors for shoes and shoelaces only. No wording on shoes is allowed. No flip-flops, sandal, boots, heeies or high heels. Socks must be crew or ankle socks of a neutral color. Low cut socks below the ankle are not allowed.
- f. Uniform walking shorts are optional and may be worn at any time *except days when Mass is celebrated.*
- g. Only school uniform outerwear may be worn in the classrooms.

Formal (Mass Day) Dress:

Formal uniforms are to be worn on Fridays and special Mass days (Holy Days of Obligation) unless special exceptions are granted by the administration. Formal uniforms may also be required for specified field trips.

- a. Boys are required to wear khaki pants, a white collared shirt, white, blue or black socks and neutral colored shoes. Middle School boys are required to wear a navy blue tie. The uniform blue vest, pullover sweater or button cardigan sweater may be worn, but students are not to wear other outerwear including school sweatshirts to Mass.
- b. Girls are required to wear their formal plaid uniform skirt (6-8), plaid skort or jumper (K-5), a white collared blouse, white, blue, or black socks and neutral colored shoes. The uniform vest, pullover sweater or button cardigan sweater may be worn, but students are not to wear other outerwear including school sweatshirts to Mass.

2) Physical Education Uniform

All grades: Royal blue shorts
 Royal blue T-shirt with logo
 Tennis shoes or athletic shoes

P. E. shorts, T-shirts, and the St. Mary's sweatshirt may be purchased through Dennis Uniform Company. Students who have P.E. early in the day often encounter wet grass. Wearing sweat pants over the shorts can rectify this problem. Students are permitted to wear plain grey or navy blue sweat pants for P. E. in cold weather. All students may wear P.E. uniforms throughout the day on those days that they have P.E.

3) Hair/Make-up

All students are expected to be clean and well groomed. *No bleaching, dyeing, tipping or streaking of hair is allowed for both boys and girls.*

Girl's hair needs to be pulled away from eyes and face. No hair extensions. *Girls in grades K-5 may not wear fingernail polish or makeup.* Middle School girls may wear neutral polish (pale pink, nude, French Tips, etc.) All girls will be asked to remove make-up and fingernail polish if grade level guidelines are not followed..

Boy's hair is to be cut above the ears, eyebrows, and collars. Hair length must be trimmed neatly above the collar. Boys must be clean-shaven.

4) Jewelry

Students may wear a single silver or gold chain with a religious cross or crucifix. No choker necklaces and no bracelets. Wristwatches are allowed.

Small pierced stud earrings for girls only are allowed. No hoops or dangling earrings are allowed. Only one earring per ear lobe is allowed. Any other piercing must be removed before the first day of school.

Boys are not to wear earrings. Girls may not wear dangling or multiple earrings.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

1) Curriculum

The course of studies at St. Mary's is meant to be demanding. However, we welcome students of different abilities, and will work to help each child succeed. At St. Mary's we place great importance on the teaching relationship as a species of friendship. Thus we expect the teachers to observe and willingly work with the strengths and weaknesses of the children in their care, and the students likewise in charity and respect for their teachers to be moved to cooperate in learning. In our students, therefore, we wish for good hearts as much as good minds.

2) Student Learning Expectations

The "Student Learning Expectations" developed by the school community express the educational objectives of St. Mary, Star of the Sea. Our goal is to produce:

A) Faithful Christians who:

1. Understand and can express the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.
2. Value and respect themselves, others, and all God's creation.
3. Practice living out the Church's teachings by making moral choices.
4. Celebrate their faith through active participation in Catholic prayer & worship.

B) Independent Achievers who:

1. Demonstrate a solid foundation in all basic subjects.
2. Apply critical thinking, problem solving, and technology skills.
3. Read, write, and express their ideas clearly and creatively.
4. Develop a lifelong appreciation for literature, music, and art.
5. Demonstrate a personal awareness of good health habits.

C) Christian Leaders who:

1. Recognize and use their God-given talents in the service of others.
2. Identify and respond to community and global needs.
3. Work with others in a spirit of compassion, patience, and understanding.
4. Model Christian values through their words and actions.

3) Homework

Homework has an essential place in the educational program. The amount of time spent on homework will obviously differ with each student's needs and ability. St. Mary's recognizes that sometimes outside activities and family time are important for student growth. However, homework should usually be given priority.

Homework time will vary from grade to grade and night to night. Ordinarily, the following will be used as a guideline:

Grades 1 – 2	15-30 minutes
Grade 3	30-45 minutes
Grades 4 – 5	45 minutes - 1 hour
Grade 6	1-1 ½ hours
Grades 7 – 8	1-2 hours

Parents will be informed of the teacher's homework policy at Orientation (Back to School Night). We urge all parents to take an active interest in their child's homework. It is the responsibility of the student to see that assignments are properly written down and completed on time. Allowing the student to be fully responsible for turning in their homework helps them to learn important organizational skills.

4) Grading

Report cards are distributed four times a year. Academic grades are based on diocesan-established standards.

Marks follow the code printed on the Diocesan Report Card with the following breakdown:

A	100–93	C	73–76
A–	90–92	C–	70–72
B+	87–89	D+	67–69
B	83–86	D	63–66
B–	80–82	D–	60–62
C+	77–79	F	59 & below

5) Religious Formation

As a Catholic school, daily instruction in the Catholic faith is an integral part of our educational program. Prayer and liturgical experiences are integrated within the school program. When Mass is celebrated in the school hall all students attend. While we welcome all, only Catholic children who have received the Sacrament of Holy Communion are allowed to receive the Eucharist at Mass. All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

In Grade Two students are prepared for First Reconciliation and First Communion. Parents are responsible for a major part of this preparation and must attend orientation meetings to assist them in carrying out this responsibility.

We expect the parents to be involved in the religious formation of their children. Parents can do this by talking with their children about God and their faith, by attending Mass together on Sundays and other days of obligation, and by praying together as a family.

6) Promotion/Retention

Only those students who complete the work in the basic skill areas shall be promoted to the next grade.

In the case of slow progress, each student shall be considered individually. Any decision regarding non-promotion is made after considering all the facts related to the student's emotional, physical, social, and intellectual development collected from several sources.

7) WCEA/WASC Accreditation

Self-evaluation and accreditation is completed every three to six years. Using approved progress report forms, the school documents its implementation of the visiting committee recommendations in a timely fashion. St. Mary, Star of the Sea School is a fully accredited institution of learning.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

It is important that the parent/teacher relationship be a cooperative one. We ask that parents monitor student's papers and homework assignments. Often a parent can detect a problem even before it becomes apparent to the teacher. Teachers rely on the insight of parents as well as their own more objective observations. When both home and school work together the student is better served.

Parents, teachers, and students are all members of the total school community. With the help of parent volunteers and parent participation in school functions, all members of the school community will benefit. We ask that every family be involved according to its ability.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL & PTG

St. Mary, Star of the Sea Advisory Board

The St. Mary's Advisory Board is a group of parents who meet monthly with the Pastor and the Principal in an advisory capacity to discuss ways to continue to develop the school in a direction that best serves the needs of the community and our children and to assist the principal in development efforts for the school. In addition, the Advisory Board promotes parental support for the school program and serves to increase mutual understanding between school and parents.

St. Mary, Star of the Sea Parent-Teacher Group

The St. Mary, Star of the Sea or P.T.G. is a group of parents and teachers who serve, with oversight from the school administration, to support the various fundraising and community building events of our school. These events are important in creating strong and positive relationships between the families of our school, and also help in supporting the many good programs our school has to offer. This Parent-Teacher Group will also serve the vital function of providing a voice for the community, specifically regarding these fund-raising and community building events.

COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Classroom Concerns

Most concerns or questions relating to individual classroom procedures, grades, etc. should be addressed directly to the teacher. It is important to clear up misunderstandings as soon as possible. It is clearly advantageous to have your concerns answered by the person best able to give you the correct information. If further clarification is needed, an appointment with the principal may be made.

Gossiping

Every organization experiences to some degree the ill effects of gossip, yet in a Catholic school such tendencies should be resisted as a result of our understanding of the specific requirements of the moral life and the respect that is due to others. The Catholic Catechism teaches, unequivocally, that “respect for the reputation of persons forbids every attitude and word likely to cause them unjust injury.” Furthermore, it explains that one becomes guilty of **rash judgment** when we assume as true, without sufficient foundation, the moral fault of another. (It is also understood that merely hearing a report from one or even multiple persons does not guarantee its truth.) We also become guilty of **detraction**, when we disclose another’s faults and failings to persons who did not know them without an objectively valid reason. Lastly, we become guilty of the serious sin of **calumny** when, speaking contrary to the truth we harm the reputation of others and give occasion for false judgments concerning them.

Harmful gossip not only causes harm to individuals, but also harms the common good. Therefore, we respectfully request that parents resist the temptation to gossip about school families and staff and also to resist the tendency to “rush to judgment” upon every negative report they may hear. Parents should be careful to resist the temptation to gossip at all times, but especially in the presence of their children and while on school grounds.

If you hear some report that you think may bear on the good of the school, please discuss your concern with the Principal. If additional discussion is needed you may make an appointment to speak with the Pastor of St. Mary’s. Constructive suggestions are welcomed when they are motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program.

SAFETY REGULATIONS/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

School emergencies

If your child becomes ill or is injured at school, you will be called and asked to come and pick up your child as soon as possible. While sick children are kept comfortable and out of the classroom in the nurse's room, home is where they want to be when they don't feel well. Please set up a plan for another family member or friend to be available to pick your little one up if you are not available. Be sure to keep emergency information up to date. If the illness or injury is serious, and the parents cannot be reached, the school will refer to the emergency card and arrange for the authorized treatment therein.

Emergency procedures

St. Mary's coordinates emergency procedures with the Oceanside Police Department's School Resource Officer. Fire, earthquake and emergency drills are conducted as needed at school, following the directives of our emergency plan. Each staff member has an assigned task and communication tools with survival materials on hand.

In case of a natural disaster, our facility and staff have been prepared to care for our students. During a disaster, all children will remain at school, under the supervision of a teacher, until a parent, guardian, or authorized individual arrives. If it ever became necessary to evacuate the St. Mary's school site, our planned alternative sites are Ditmar School. (Corner of Ditmar & Oceanside Blvd) Or St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church on Pierview & Ditmar.

Lockdown procedures

Please be advised that a lock down will be ordered if our Principal is directed by the Oceanside Police Department or she assesses the need to secure the campus at any time.

During a lockdown, the campus will be closed and doors will be locked. No one will be admitted in or out. **This will be strictly enforced.**

All teachers are equipped with walkie-talkies so that they can communicate with the elementary office.

The important thing for you as parent to note is that during a lockdown, no one comes in or out. **No exceptions.** The doors will be locked and you will not be allowed to enter or leave the school during this time. We know that this is all very scary. The world is becoming a very scary place and God willing, we will never need to lockdown for a real emergency... but if we do, we will be prepared. We will care for your children and through practice and preparation, we will be ready.

Insurance

The student accident program provides financial aid in helping to meet hospital, surgical, and medical expenses incurred by reason of student injury. This optional insurance plan covers accidents which occur on school property, one hour before school commences and one hour after dismissal on day's school is in session. Insurance forms are available at the school office.

MISCELLANEOUS

1) Mission Program

Whenever possible, assistance is given to others as a means of continuing Christ's message of love. During the year, projects are held to enable the students to give of themselves, both financially and actively, to fulfill our goal as Christ-centered, community-minded people.

2) Student Government

Leadership and responsibility are a very important part of Catholic education. One of the means of promoting leadership and responsibility is through the student's involvement in the Student Council. The Student Council plans activities for the benefit of the entire student body. Only students of good academic and behavioral standing will be considered for the Student Council. The Commissioner of Religious Activities must be Catholic.

3) Field Trips

No child will be allowed to participate in a school-sponsored field trip unless the appropriate permission slip is returned, signed by a parent or guardian, and fees paid as necessary.

Permission for a student to attend a field trip must be in writing on the diocesan permission slip only and may not be given verbally (e.g. by telephone).

Field trip drivers/chaperones should not bring siblings, as the role of the field trip driver/chaperone is that of responsibility for the children under his/her care and require undivided attention. Proof of insurance must be provided once per year to the school office prior to driving for a field trip. All drivers are asked to complete the CMG process before they may drive with children.

4) Classroom parties

All classroom parties must be scheduled and approved by the teacher. Home party invitations may not be distributed at school unless every student in the class receives an invitation.

5) After School Sports

Students are encouraged to participate in after-school sports suitable to their age and abilities if their grades and conduct permit. These sports may include flag football, volleyball, basketball, and soccer. A designated sports fee must be paid in order to be eligible for participation. St Mary, Star of the Sea School athletic teams are coached by volunteers. The teams compete with other Catholic schools which comprise the North County Parochial League.

A school permission slip form signed by parent/guardian is required for a student to participate in athletic events.

An After School Sports Contract must be signed by parent/guardian and the student in order to be eligible for participation.

Students are responsible to return the sports uniforms in good condition (washed and small repairs made) or replace them.

6) School Pictures

School pictures will be taken in the fall and students are required to be in a designated uniform for these pictures. Optional student portraits are offered in the spring.

7) Access to Student Records

The student's parents or legal guardian have the right to inspect all of their child's records in the presence of the principal or his delegate. If a child transfers during the school year, please inform the teacher and principal a week ahead of departure date, so that the report card and other information can be ready. All records will be forwarded to the new school upon request from the school with the parent signature authorizing the release of records. No report cards or records will be released until all financial obligations have been satisfied.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Mary, Star of the Sea admits students of any race, color, national and/or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the schools. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and/or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.