



Department of Faith Formation

4301 88th Ave SE Mercer Island WA 98040

Phone: 206-232-2900

www.stmonicami.org

August 2026

Dear St. Monica Families,

The Department of Faith Formation welcomes you! We are pleased to be part of your child's religious education, and we look forward to a vibrant program year. Here are our curricula for 2026-27:

- **Elementary Faith Formation** (Grades 1, and 3, 4, 5) – ***Word of Life*** by Augustine Institute. *Word of Life* is true, doctrinal Catholic teaching connecting faith and reason centered on the *kerygmatic* proclamation to share the gospel of Jesus by forming a Christian mindset relevant for today's modern culture.
- **Elementary First Communion** (Grade 2/First Communicants) ***Signs of Grace*** by Augustine Institute (see our packet for details). Please note that First Communion is a *two-year process starting in 1st Grade*. The Archdiocese of Seattle requires a prerequisite year for all (2nd Grade) children seeking First Communion in the 2026-27 school year. Attending our Sunday 1st Grade Faith Formation classes, St. Monica's School, or another Catholic School, will satisfy this obligation. (**Registration closes on Monday, September 21**).
- **OCIC** is offered **Sundays, 10:50 -12:00pm and begins September 20**. OCIC is a comprehensive program offered for youth with minimal catechesis, or as a review, in preparation for the Sacraments. William H. Sadlier's ***One Faith, One Lord*** (for older children) and ***Our Catholic Faith*** (for younger children) present key doctrinal features of Catholicism with an emphasis on relationship with Jesus and His Church.
- The annual safety program required by the Seattle Archdiocese, ***Circle of Grace***, is offered one Sunday, during class, on **October 11, 10AM -11:30AM**. We presume all students will participate unless parents notify our department in writing after receiving the COG Parent Letter **prior to** the start of the October 11th class. *COG opt-outs do not affect the three (3) allowable Sacrament absences for the program year.*

Our registration fees are as follows:

- Registration fees are waived for parents who serve as a Catechist, Catechist Aide, Group Leader, or who volunteer for all five days of Vacation Bible Camp (VBC) 12:30-4PM.
- \$140 per family for families who volunteer at one parish event during the year.
- \$180 per family for families who choose not to volunteer.

Finally, please prayerfully consider volunteering as a teacher, assistant or sub, teaching experience is not required, and everything is provided – we welcome your time and talent in service of God and community!

Respectfully in Christ,

Melissa Stewart
PA for Faith Formation
St. Monica Catholic Church
Veritas et Virtus



[Click here to register](#)

St. Monica Faith Formation

2026-2027

Elementary Faith Formation (FF)

1st Communion

OCIC

Confirmation

August 26						
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August 27						
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September 26						
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REQUIREMENTS Days for 1st Communion (Not Prerequisite Year)

* First Communion Parents (Parish/School) are REQUIRED to attend TWO parent meetings with Fr. Nagel Dec 6, 2025 or December 13, 2026, at 10AM and April 11 or April 25, 2026, at 10AM. First Communion child and a parent are REQUIRED to attend the First Reconciliation Retreat on Jan 10, 2026, from 10AM-11AM.

REQUIREMENTS Days for Confirmation (Not Prerequisite Year)

*Confirmation (Parish & School)REQUIRED Parents September 13, 2026. Parish and School Confirmation students are required to attend an combine Parish/School Confirmation Retreat March 13-14. Parish/School First Communion and Confirmation Students are REQUIRED attend their rehearsal. *Confirmation Mass is determined by the Archbishop, once we know we will let you know!



- FF & 1st Com. (Sunday, 10 -10:50PM)
- OCIC (Sunday, 11:10AM -12:10PM)
- Confirmation - All Day Retreat- see Conf. packet
- Multiple events per day
- Vacation Bible School
- Holiday - no classes or programs

AUGUST

14 Registration OPEN thru 09/21

SEPTEMBER

13 Conf. Retreat (pt 1)

20 FF & 1st Com. OCIC Classes Begin

21 Registration CLOSED for 1st Gr, 1st Com & Conf.

OCTOBER

4 9AM Mass of Enrollment: children's blessing at Mass

11 Circle of Grace (safe environment class) - by discretion

NOVEMBER

1 FF All Saints Day Parade

8 OCIC Rite of Welcome for St. Monica

15 OCIC Rite of Welcome for Sacred Heart

22 Thanksgiving Break thru 11/29

DECEMBER

13 11AM: Guadalupe Perform Mass & Cocoa Reception

20 Christmas/ Winter Break thru 1/2

JANUARY

10 First Reconciliation Retreat

10 Conf. Retreat (pt. 2)

16 First Reconciliation

17 No Class MLK weekend

24 OCIC Rite of Sending St. Monica 9AM

31 No Class

FEBRUARY

7 Class/OCIC Rite of Sending Mass Sacred Heart 9AM

11 7PM: Rite of Elect - OCIC Class meets at St. James

14 No Class - Mid-Winter Break thru 2/21

MARCH

21 OCIC Last Class

13- 14 Conf. Retreat (pt. 3)

27 OCIC Easter Vigil Rite (10AM Practice: 8PM Mass)

28 Easter Break thru 4/10

APRIL

18 No Class - Spring Break thru 4/24

MAY

2 Last Class; Crowning of Mary Perform. Mass at 11AM

7 First Communion Rehearsal 5:30PM-6:30PM

8 First Communion Mass 10:30AM

TBC Confirmation Rehearsal/ Mass (decided by Archbishop)

JUNE

21-25 Vacation Bible Camp

CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.



Department of Faith Formation

4301 88th Ave SE Mercer Island WA 98040
Phone: 206-232-2900 / Website: Stmonicami.org

August 2026

Dear First Communion and Prerequisite First Communion Families,

Thank you for your continued dedication to the faith formation of your children. As they prepare for the beautiful Sacrament of First Holy Communion, please know that your family is in my prayers during this special journey of faith. Please carefully review all requirements for your child's First Communion preparation during both years. As we all walk with your child as they prepare to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

Program Overview for Parish Families (1st and 2nd Grade)

- ☐ **Duration:** First Communion is a two-year program beginning with the prerequisite year in **1st Grade** and culminating in **2nd Grade** with the reception of the Sacrament. Parish classes run September–May.
- ☐ **Classes:** Parish classes meet Sundays from **10:00–10:50 AM**.
 - **1st Grade:** *Word of Life*
 - **2nd Grade:** *Signs of Grace*
- ☐ Students are allowed **three absences** each year.
- ☐ Parish family fee: **\$140** (\$180 if opting out of volunteering). Catechists, Assistants, and VBC Leaders with a full-week commitment are charged \$0.

Program Overview for St. Monica School Families (1st and 2nd Grade)

- ☐ Sacramental preparation takes place during the regular school day.
- ☐ Families with children in the **2nd Grade First Communion class** must register through the parish website for the **reduced fee of \$75**, which covers materials and retreat costs.
- ☐ **1st Grade St. Monica School students do not need to register.**
- ☐ St. Monica School may have additional requirements, such as evening meditations or activities. Please contact the CGS Catechist for more information.

Requirements for All 2nd Grade Families (Church and School)

- ☐ Two Parent Meetings with Father (one in December and one in April — see the Faith Formation Calendar highlighted in pink for dates)
- ☐ Participation in the Reconciliation Retreat (one parent and 1st Communion student)
- ☐ Regular Sunday Mass attendance
- ☐ Attendance at the First Communion Rehearsal
- ☐ **Parent Role:** Parents are the primary educators in the Faith. The best preparation for First Holy Communion is regular attendance at Sunday Mass and continued conversations about the faith at home.
- ☐ **Baptism Certificates Due: November 16, 2026** (emailed copies excepted)

Important Dates

- ☐ **Late Fee Begins:** September 13, 2026 (\$50)
- ☐ **First Day of Parish Classes:** Sunday, September 20, 2026, at 10:00 AM following the 9:00 AM Mass.
- ☐ **Registration Closes:** September 21, 2026 (**After this date, families must wait until the following year.**)

A QR code for registration for both Parish and School programs is included for your convenience. Thank you for allowing us to walk with your family as your child prepares to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

May God bless you and your family,

Heather Miller Martin
Pastoral Assistant of Sacraments & Faith Formation



[Click here to register](#)



St. Monica
Catholic Church



August 2026

Dear Confirmation Families,

Sharon and I are excited to welcome you to the 2026–2027 Confirmation year at St. Monica and Sacred Heart! We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside your family during this important step in your child's faith journey as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Our Confirmation program is centered on helping students encounter Jesus Christ in a deeper and more personal way while growing in their understanding of the Catholic faith and life of the Church. Rather than relying primarily on weekly classroom instruction, our program focuses on retreats, small groups, prayer, and community-building experiences designed to foster authentic spiritual growth and discipleship.

Throughout the year, candidates will participate in a series of retreats that explore key aspects of the faith and the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each student will also be placed into a small group during our first retreat. These groups are led by adult mentors who accompany the students throughout the year, helping provide community, encouragement, accountability, and opportunities for deeper discussion and reflection. Each small group will have three meetings in between each retreat to continue to grow in relationship and community with each other. The dates of the small group meetings will be determined by the availability of everyone in the group but will occur during the weeks designated below.

Our hope is that this preparation process becomes more than simply completing requirements for a sacrament. We desire for each student to build a lasting relationship with Christ and to recognize Confirmation as the beginning of a more active and mature life of faith within the Church.

Below are the dates for our 2026–2027 Confirmation retreats and small groups:

- Retreat #1: Sunday, September 13, 2026
- Small Group #1: October 3–10, 2026

- Retreat #2: Sunday, November 1, 2026
- Small Group #2: December 5–12, 2026

- Retreat #3: Sunday, January 24, 2027
- Small Group #3: February 20–27, 2027

- Retreat #4 (Overnight Retreat): Saturday, March 13–Sunday, March 14, 2027

- Confirmation Mass — TBD, May 2027

Please note that attendance at all retreats and small group meetings is **required** to fulfill the preparation requirements for Confirmation. Because there are so few, and each retreat builds upon the previous one, participation and engagement throughout the year is extremely important, so we ask families to prioritize these dates.

Each candidate will also be responsible for submitting the required sacramental paperwork, sponsor information, saint project, and service hours throughout the year. Additional details and deadlines regarding these requirements will be sent separately.

As a reminder, Confirmation preparation at St. Monica and Sacred Heart is a two-year process. Before entering the Confirmation year, students are required to complete one full year of participation in youth group or attendance at a Catholic school as their prerequisite year. The standard age of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Seattle is 13, but our program is designed for any student in grades 7-12 who have received their Baptism and First Communion and completed their pre-requisite year and need to receive their Confirmation. If your child is in middle or high school and still needs to receive Baptism or First Communion, or if you are an adult and wish to receive Confirmation, please inquire about our OCIA/OCIC classes.

Registration for Confirmation is **separate** from registration for youth group. The Confirmation registration link QR code is at the bottom of this letter and is open for both St. Monica and Sacred Heart families.

Parents play a vital role in the faith life of their children, and we encourage families to stay involved throughout the year through prayer, conversation, regular Mass attendance, and participation in the sacramental life of the Church.

Please pray for our candidates, sponsors, families, and team members as we prepare for this year together. We are excited to see the ways the Holy Spirit will work in the lives of our students throughout this journey.

In Christ,

Kelsey Heintz and Sharon Phillips
Confirmation Coordinators
St. Monica Parish and Sacred Heart Parish



[Click here to Register](#)



St. Monica Catholic Church



August 2026

Dear Sacred Heart and St. Monica Families,

I am excited to welcome your family to another year of Emmaus Youth Ministry with our middle school youth group, J-Walkers, at St. Monica and Sacred Heart! Middle school is such an important time in a young person's life, and my hope is that this ministry becomes a place where students feel known, supported, and encouraged as they continue growing in their faith.

Our youth group will meet weekly on Wednesdays from 4:00–5:00 PM, beginning October 7, 2026. Each gathering is designed to help students build friendships, deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith, and experience the joy of being part of a Christian community. Throughout the year, students can expect games, discussions, prayer, small groups, service opportunities, and conversations about how faith connects to everyday life.

For families who are thinking ahead toward Confirmation, our Sacrament preparation at St. Monica and Sacred Heart is intentionally structured as a two-year journey. Although students most commonly receive the Sacrament of Confirmation during 7th grade, every student must first complete one year of regular participation in youth group by attending at least 10 youth ministry events before beginning formal Confirmation preparation classes. This first year is meant to help students develop a stronger foundation in their faith, become involved in the parish community, and grow in their relationship with Christ before preparing to receive the sacrament. Confirmation is not simply a milestone to complete, but an invitation into a deeper and lifelong relationship with God and His Church. My desire is for students to encounter Christ in a meaningful way and to know that they belong here in our parish community.

Program registration fees for the year are:

- Registration fees are waived for parents who serve as a Catechist, Catechist Aide, Group Leader, or who volunteer for all five days of Vacation Bible Camp (VBC) 12:30-4PM.
- \$140 per family for families who volunteer at one parish event during the year.
- \$180 per family for families who choose not to volunteer.

Thank you for entrusting us with your middle schoolers this year. I am looking forward to an amazing year of faith, fun, and community!

Blessings,
Kelsey Heintz
Middle School Youth Minister
Sacred Heart Parish and St. Monica Parish



[Click here to register](#)

Emmaus Youth Ministry
at St. Monica and Sacred Heart

J-WALKERS

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

2026-2027 CALENDAR

Key

	J-Walkers Night
	Youth Mass and Dinner
	Youth Ministry Event
	Parish Event
	Confirmation Event **
	Holiday Breaks/No Youth Group

SEPTEMBER 2026						
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DECEMBER 2026						
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MARCH 2027						
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JUNE 2027						
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AUGUST 2027						
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Fall

Sept 13 th	Confirmation Retreat #1 **
Oct 7 th	Emmaus Kick-off
Nov 1 st	Confirmation Retreat #2 **
Nov 23 rd	Youthsgiving

Winter

Dec 21-Jan 6	Christmas Break
Jan 24 th	Confirmation Retreat #3 **
Feb 15-19 th	Mid-Winter Break

Spring

Mar 13-14 th	Confirmation Retreat #4 **
Mar 28-Apr 2	Easter Break
Apr 14 th	No Youth Group-Spring Break

Summer

Jun 4	Feast of the Sacred Heart Bonfire
Jun 21-25 th	Vacation Bible Camp @ St. Monica (volunteer opportunity)

More events will be announced later in the year



St. Monica
Catholic Church



August 2026

Hello St. Monica and Sacred Heart families,

I'm thrilled to begin my third year serving as High School Youth and Campus minister! It has been a great gift to encounter you and your children, and to grow in faith together as we foster this youth community. I want to share some insights from the past two years as well as my vision for the year ahead!

In the past two years, it's fair to say that our High School group has been small but mighty. We have shared updates on our lives, learned what prayer life looks like, studied Scripture, and served various service projects. It has been my hope through it all that the youth who come feel welcomed, supported, and encouraged to grow in their relationship with our Lord.

As we continue to build this parish family youth ministry, I have been discerning a shift in the program structure. Weekly youth group has been lovely as a consistent day and time every week to gather; but I believe that to grow our program and broaden the accessibility to our busy high schoolers, a different structure is needed. For the year ahead, I am planning to shift from a weekly youth group to a series of monthly events – a monthly youth mass or holy hour, service project or social activity, and a formation night learning something about our faith and Christian life. The idea is that every month our youth program can come together to grow in prayer, charity, wisdom, and fellowship – AKA pray, serve, learn, and have fun! I am very excited about this shift, as we will be able to schedule events on various days and times of the week, and hopefully expand our accessibility to high schoolers with varying schedules and availabilities.

I want to thank you for your support of this program – I want this to be an invitation that goes *out*. Whether it's another parishioner, a friend from school, a teammate, a sibling, all of these relationships might be someone in your life looking for something more. It would be a great privilege to serve you this year and whoever our Lord inspires to come along the way! As you know, our program is called EMMAUS, and it's so important to remember that the disciples were walking in a pair – we need community to walk with Jesus and to ask each other that important question, "*were not our hearts burning within us?*"

To stay in the loop this fall, please pay attention to our parish websites, bulletin boards, and join our email list to stay in the loop! All information can be found by emailing me at sharon@stmonicami.org and I'd be happy to help where I can. For now, mark your calendars for these key events this fall:

Sunday Sep 20th – School Year Kickoff
Saturday Oct 24th – Pumpkin Patch & Corn Maze
Fri Nov 6th – Cemetery Prayer Crawl

Looking forward to a fruitful season for our community ahead!

Peace and blessings,
Sharon



[Click here to register](#)



Interested in **BECOMING CATHOLIC?**

Fr. Nagel would like to invite all those interested in becoming Catholic to learn more about the Faith, starting Monday, September 14, 2026.

Father will be teaching a combined class with St. Monica & Sacred Heart from 6:30 to 7:30 PM.

Interested?

Please call Heather at 206.232.2900 ext. 130, [Register Online](#), or Scan the QR Code Below!

