

2022-2023 Tuition Policy Frequently Asked Questions

Dear Parents:

This FAQ document is intended to be a quick reference into the tuition process. We are here to answer any questions that we have not addressed with this document. I can be reached at 414-425-2174 or email me at hansend@stmaryhc.org. As a parent of three St Mary kids. I can appreciate the blessings brought to my children by a St. Mary education. I'm delighted to work with you and your family on the tuition process.

*Dan Hansen
Director of Administrative Services, St Mary.*

What's new this year?

- Last year we offered electronic payment options for all of our families through Blackbaud Tuition Management (formerly SMART Tuition). This year, we're implementing Blackbaud's online enrollment feature allowing parents to enroll online as well. We continue to streamline the process to save parents' time and reduce our labor costs. Reduced labor costs makes more dollars available for education with fewer dollars going to administrative paperwork.
- We will be assessing your tuition bill starting April 1, 2022. But, we cannot bill you for tuition until we know whether your family will be taking advantage of the parishioner discount.
- As in the past several years, **you must be a registered parishioner and make an annual stewardship pledge to support the Parish by March 31, 2022 to get the parishioner discount on tuition.** If you missed that deadline call us or drop by the Parish Office ASAP.

What if I just want to pay with a check?

- You are always free to bring a check to the Parish Office. You will still have a Blackbaud account. The Blackbaud system will generate your tax statement in January of 2023 so you get credit for tuition paid in the 2022 tax year.

What is the easiest way to get the lower Parish Subsidized Tuition Rate and not pay more this year?

The shortest answer is: Be a member of the parish and support the parish.

We want four things for every school family.

1. We want you to enjoy and grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ and come together as a family once a week at Sunday Mass.
2. We want families with children in the parish school to grow in their relationships with one another by participating in the ministries of the parish and the educational, athletic and social activities of the school. It takes a time commitment, but it's time well spent. We are a parish faith community with a school, not two separate communities. We want you to be a full part of the richness of our community life making memories and friendships as your children grow.
3. We want you to be registered as members of the Parish which entitles you to the sacraments and support of the parish that brings you closer to one another and closer to Christ.
4. We want you to have an investment in the parish, to contribute and to make St. Mary your parish.

In order for us to continue providing an amazing private school experience at an exceptional value, parishioners cover half the cost of educating your children. This success depends on a strong and supportive parish community in which you play a part.

Why would I pledge by ACH?

ACH is the most economically effective way for families to make monthly contributions to the Parish Operating fund.

- ACH is an ongoing debit to your checking or savings account every month.
- ACH is quick and easy.
- As an ongoing commitment for a monthly transfer, an ACH is considered to be your monthly pledge amount until you cancel it.
- With an ongoing ACH monthly commitment you do not have to fill out a pledge form every year. We consider your active monthly ACH agreement to be your pledge for the year.

What am I expected to give?

We strongly encourage school families to meet or exceed the suggested minimum donation amount of \$1,000 per year per family. Years ago when my family started at St Mary School, the suggested minimum was \$750. Although the suggested minimum has increased a little bit over the years, it has been at the \$1,000 level for a number of years.

What if we can't afford \$1,000 per year?

First we encourage you to break that number down to a monthly contribution or a twice monthly contribution and be realistic about what is important in your budget. It comes to only \$83 per month or a little over \$41 on the 1st and 15th of the month. **We're essentially asking \$2.75 per day.** When we examine where our money goes, most folks can come up with \$20 per week for the things we care about. If, however, your family absolutely cannot afford \$2.75 per day to support your parish, then simply pledge according to your ability in good faith. We will accept all thoughtful pledges.

What if I'm not a member of the Parish?

Well, first things first. We would absolutely love to welcome you into the Parish community. To join the parish one of the parents/guardians must be a baptized Catholic. Drop by the parish office and we will register your family.

What if we are new to the School, but we are not Catholic / not parishioners?

Welcome to St. Mary! If neither parent/guardian is Catholic, or you elect to remain at another Catholic parish and your children are here only for our wonderful private Catholic school experience, the non-parishioner rate would apply. This rate is set to be very competitive with what other Catholic schools charge their non-parishioners and it is based on the average rate of tuition and operating support our Parish member school families are paying. Your first child's tuition will be \$1500 higher than the first child parishioner discounted rate. The rates for your second and third child are the same as the parishioner rates, but there is no "free" tuition for the 4th, 5th 6th etc. You will still be paying about \$1,000 less than the cost of the education your children receive and you will not be expected to make a pledge. Most importantly, your child or children will have access to amazing educational opportunities and a meaningful chance to grow in faith as well.

What about Tuition Assistance?

If you are struggling with the cost of tuition there are options available to support you in providing a Catholic education to your children. Tuition assistance is intended to help on a temporary basis, rather than for the full 11 years your child is enrolled at St. Mary Parish School. We raise and allocate a pool of dollars based on need and the number of applications we receive. Often the amount of aid awarded declines over time as families get a stronger hold on their financial situation. The application will be due June 1, 2022 and tuition assistance will be awarded by June 15, 2022. Final tuition is due on August 1, 2023.