

# **Faith Formation Handbook for Parents 2016/2017**

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## **Introduction**

This handbook is designed to serve as a guide for parents/guardians, students, and catechists involved in the Faith Formation Program at St Patrick Parish. The philosophy, goals, policies, guidelines and schedule serve to communicate the content of our faith formation program.

The catechetical formation of each child is a responsibility shared both by the parent and the parish Faith Formation Program. The goal of faith formation is threefold: to present information in the content of our Catholic Christian faith, to enable formation in the values and attitudes needed to live a Catholic Christian faith, which leads to the end-goal of transformation and conversion in Christ Jesus.

The policies in this handbook have been reviewed by the Faith Formation Commission and apply to the Faith Formation Programs of St Patrick Parish. These policies give the Coordinator of Faith Formation (CFF), parents/guardians, students, and catechists a direction in responding to the religious and spiritual needs of parish families.

Rules and regulations are made to help inform the student of the rights and needs of others, as well as to help serve as a guide for his/her own acceptable behavior. Rules and regulations create and maintain an environment wherein quality religious education and the safety of every child are considered to be of the utmost importance. Parents and catechists are requested to acquaint themselves as well as the children with the contents of this handbook. Knowledge of the policies and guidelines will help achieve the goals of our faith formation program.

## **Mission Statement**

Our Mission at Saint Patrick is dedicated to supporting and assisting families and children with the development of their Catholic faith in a welcoming, nurturing and safe environment. We recognize that all children are uniquely created. We recognize that all families are uniquely created. We recognize that our faith development is unique to our own experience.

As families we are called to be light for each other. As catechists we are called to be light for others. As disciples we are called to be light for the world. We don't just keep the faith...we share it!

## **Faith Formation Program**

Parish Faith Formation Program include:

- Faith Formation classes for children in grades K to 12. A description of the program and a calendar for the year is included in this handbook.

## **Curriculum**

Kindergarten uses Our Sunday Visitor <http://rc1bstoriesofgodsllove.com/kindergarten.html>

1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades use Our Sunday Visitor, "Alive in Christ" series. <http://aliveinchrist.osv.com/family>

7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades use: Call to Faith [http://www.osvcurriculum.com/home/jh\\_theme.html](http://www.osvcurriculum.com/home/jh_theme.html)

9<sup>th</sup> grade- variety of material including the Bible, YOU and Alteration

10<sup>th</sup> grade Theology of the Body

11<sup>th</sup> grade uses Decision Point for Confirmation.

12<sup>th</sup> grade will have Bible study and leadership opportunities.

## **Sacramental Preparation Policies**

Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion will be conducted during second grade. Preparation for Confirmation will be conducted during eleventh grade. Required parent meetings will be conducted for the sacraments. Additional meetings outside the Wednesday night program may be required for students and parents. Notifications for these meetings will be provided via an email, posted on the church website and posted in the church bulletin.

Confirmation Sacramental Preparation classes are one of the few things required for a candidate to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This is because these classes help prepare the candidate as much as possible on the significance of the sacrament, prior to receiving it.

## **Faith Formation Commission**

The committee consists of the following members:

Fr. Colter	Tracey Ryan-Wiering-Chair
Denice Rausch	Theresa Johnson
Rosie Guerrero	Mike Strei
Deacon Al Weber	Sheila Combs
Suzy Luecke	Kelly Dunn
Joan Smothers	Mark Hannasch

## **Protection of Children**

Training for Protection of Children was provided for all students during the school year in the classrooms.

### **Safe Environment Training for Children Guidelines**

Under the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, all dioceses in the United States have agreed to establish age-appropriate safe environment training for children. Key components are to include information about quality relationships, proper forms of touch, actions to take in uncomfortable situations, and reporting possible abuse.

Parents/guardians will be provided the required notification letter concerning the timeline when the training will be offered; the content/curriculum of the training; information outlining the opportunity to review the content/curriculum materials; and a copy of the *Parent/Guardian Safe Environment Training Refusal Form*.

Catechists presenting the material will review the guidelines concerning their role in providing this training. Cross referencing between grade level catechetical outcomes and the outcomes of the Safe Environment Training will be encouraged for possible integration with existing curriculum.

Safe Environment Training Outcomes include:

- I am God's child.
- I must receive and give respect in the ways I talk and act and in the ways others treat me.
- I learn the difference between true friendship and false friendship
- My body is private and must be respected.
- I learn the difference between good play and bad play.
- I learn the difference between good touch and bad touch.
- Secrets are not good when they separate us from others and harm us.
- People make good choices and bad choices and I learn how to tell the difference.
- When someone does something wrong, I must tell someone I trust.
- I name people to whom I will go for help.

## **Help for Victims of Sexual Abuse**

The Archdiocese of Dubuque has established a program of pastoral assistance to people who believe they or those in their care have been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other Church personnel. This assistance will include help in informing civil and Church authorities. Victim Assistance Coordinators are trained to facilitate access to appropriate professional mental health services, social service agencies, support groups and/or individuals who can provide spiritual care. Any individual desiring help from this program is invited to call toll free (563) 556-1225 or 866-319-4636 to report an allegation or receive assistance. This program is part of the “Policy for the Protection of Minors.”

### **Victim Assistance Coordinator**

To report current or past sexual abuse by Archdiocese of Dubuque personnel, please call:  
Dr. Thomas Ottavi 563.584.3000

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Parent/Guardian**

You model your faith for your children daily. What your child will learn from faith formation class depends on your support and reinforcement at home, attending Sunday Mass as a family, and family prayer. Your interest and encouragement lets your child know you value what is being done in the faith formation class. Learning prayers and the Catholic faith cannot be done only during class time. We expect you the parents to work with your child at home and by dialoguing with your child about what is being learned in the classroom.

### **Catechist, Substitutes & Classroom Aides**

The role of the catechist is to “echo the Good News.” The Good News is the message of Jesus and the Catholic Church, prayer and worship, community with each other and within the parish, and service to all peoples. Catechists help lead the children to grow in their faith and relationship with Christ in the Church.

### **Coordinator of Faith Formation**

The Coordinator of Faith Formation (CFF) is a catechetical leader who is responsible for a parish catechetical program(s) on a particular level or for a particular group(s). This includes working with the pastor and other staff members to implement catechetical program(s) as the on-site coordinator.

## **Guidelines and Procedures**

### **Calendar Changes**

If the calendar is changed, you will receive written notice via email and a notice will be placed in the Parish Bulletin.

### **Inclement Weather**

If there is no public school for the day due to weather, faith formation classes are automatically cancelled. In the event of inclement weather after the scheduled school day, cancellation of classes for that night will be announced on KWWL and an email will be sent.

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

Classes for K-8 grades are from 6:15pm – 7:30pm and 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade is from 7:00pm – 9:00pm.

K-8 children will enter and be dismissed at the multi-purpose room (MPR, 7<sup>th</sup> Street entrance) doors at the St Patrick School building. Parents/guardians are asked to proceed westward on 7<sup>th</sup> Street in order to drop your child off on the sidewalk outside of the MPR doors. Parents/guardians are to pick up their children in the MPR where the Catechist will bring the class after dismissal. Students should not arrive before 6:00pm. Doors will be locked by 6:25pm.

9-12 grades will enter through the Washington Street entrance.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at programs and classes is essential to develop growth in your child's relationship to God, and for an ongoing understanding of our Catholic faith. *Notification of absence should be made prior to the absence or no later than 6:00 p.m. the night of class at 266 8711 for K-8 and 277-3069 for 9-12<sup>th</sup> grades* Unexcused absences will be followed up by a phone call; this is with the safety of your child in mind.

### **Special Needs**

Parents are requested to list any health concerns or special needs of a student on the registration form. This information will be communicated to the appropriate catechists.

### **Communications**

There will be written communications to parents periodically throughout the year. Children will be responsible to deliver notes to parents from catechists or the CFF. Notes ordinarily will be sent home with the youngest member of the family. Ongoing communication between catechists and parents is highly recommended. Parents are encouraged to contact the catechists or the CFF if a concern develops.

### **Property**

Respect for a person's property and for the school and parish property is expected in every area of the school. Children are required to walk in school corridors and classrooms for their safety. The property of the school's children should be respected and not disturbed.

### **Proper Dress**

Appropriate attire in the Faith Formation Program is necessary. Dress reflects attitude towards persons and the activity.

### **Lost Articles**

Lost and found articles are kept in the MPR for K-8 and in the Parish Office for 9-12.

### **Off Campus**

If an off campus event is planned, parents are required to give written permission for a child to participate. Permission forms need to be signed by the parents before departure. Parents are encouraged to assist in transportation and/or as chaperons.

## **Discipline Policy & Procedure**

The respect and dignity of all persons is valued. Discipline helps all students as it contributes to a climate of learning, loving, and living. It helps each student as it provides an environment to guide students to become a self-disciplined person. Each catechist in the classroom will clarify and set up goals for learning and establish classroom guidelines. These guidelines will be shared with the CFF. Goal-setting and positive consequences encourage students to choose appropriate behavior. Normal discipline problems are to be handled by the classroom catechist.

If there are recurrent or serious problems, the catechist discusses the situation with the CFF. The student will be dismissed from class, following this procedure:

1. The student will meet with the CFF.
2. The student will fill out a discipline form. The student and the CFF will agree on an appropriate behavior. The student and Coordinator will sign the form.

- 3. The student returns to class and the CFF will give the form to the catechist to sign and the student will take it home to obtain the parent/guardian signature.
- 4. The CFF will notify the parent/guardian of the disciplinary action.
- 5. The student is to return the signed form the next week and give it to the Catechist.
- 6. Discipline forms will be filed in the Faith Formation Office for the year. When a student has two forms on file, a conference will be held with the parent/guardian, the student, the catechist, and the CFF.
- 7. A mutual agreement with the parties involved may mean a two-week assigned work at home.
- 8. If, after returning to the classroom, the student is again dismissed from class, the student will not be allowed to attend class for the remainder of the year. A faith formation plan will be provided for the child.

**Discipline Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. Why was I asked to leave the room?
- 2. What behavior on my part contributed to this?
- 3. What will I do in the future in class?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Catechist Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coordinator of Faith Formation Signature

## Grade Level Prayers, Beliefs Summary

The following is a guide for both catechists and parents in regards to the prayers & beliefs that are introduced at each grade level.

We encourage the parents to incorporate these prayers and talk about the beliefs at home for the students to become even more familiar.

### Kindergarten

- Sign of the Cross
- Grace Before a Meal
- Our Father/The Lord's Prayer
- Hail Mary

### Grade 1

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- Grace After a Meal
- Glory Be
- Morning Prayer
- Angel of God

### Grade 2

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- Act of Contrition
- Communion Fast
- Communion Regulations
- The Ten Commandments

### Grade 3

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- Apostles' Creed
- The Rosary
- The Two Commandments of Love
- Liturgical Year

### Grade 4

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- Jesus Prayer
- Act of Faith
- Act of Hope
- Act of Love
- Seven Sacraments
- Beatitudes

### Grade 5

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- The Stations of the Cross
- Morning Offering
- Memorare
- Hail Holy Queen
- The Five Precepts of the Church
- Parts of the Mass

### Grade 6

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- The Seven Corporal Works of Mercy
- The Seven Spiritual Works of Mercy
- The Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- The Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Four Gospels
- The Golden Rule
- Holy Days of Obligation

### Grade 7

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- Nicene Creed
- Come, Holy Spirit
- Angelus
- Holy Days of Obligation
- Regulations for Fast and Abstinence
- The Three Theological Virtues
- The Four Cardinal Virtues

### Grade 8

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- Prayer of St. Francis
- Mary's Prayer (Magnificat)
- Psalm 23
- Confiteor
- The Seven Capital Sins
- The Four Last Things

**Grades 9-12**

In addition to previous instruction the following prayers & beliefs introduced at this level are:

- Prayer of Discernment
- Prayer Based on the Beatitudes
- Vocation Prayer

The prayers and beliefs can be found in more detail on the church website, under faith formation and resources.