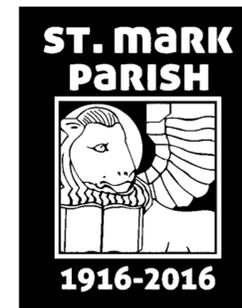


FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

PARENT HANDBOOK

ST. MARK PARISH
203 S LOCUST STREET
EDGEWOOD, IOWA 52042

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Mission Statement

St. Mark Parish

Invite, enrich, and support faithful followers of Jesus Christ who will worship God, through sacrament and word, and offer the Love of God to the world around us.

Director of Religious Education (DRE)

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Introduction

This handbook is designed to serve as a guide for students, parents, and catechists involved in the Faith Formation Program at St. Mark Parish. The philosophy, goals, policies, and rules contained in this handbook need to be understood and placed in the proper perspective.

The religious education and formation of each child is a responsibility shared by both the parent and the parish Faith Formation Program. The goal of religious education is not only to dispense information, but also to help form a person in his/her capacity to live a full life as a Catholic Christian

The policies in this handbook have been adopted by St. Mark Faith Formation Commission and apply to the religious education programs at St. Mark Parish. These policies have been adopted by the commission to give parents, students, and catechists a sense

www.catholicexchange.org Catholic news and articles.

www.catholic.net Good all-purpose information site.

www.catholic.org Catholic news and information

www.catholiceducation.org A resource center with great Catholic articles.

www.catholic-pages.com Huge resource for almost everything Catholic.

www.catholicgoldmine.com Site with a lot of Catholic information.

www.catholicgreetings.org Free Catholic e-cards.

www.americancatholic.org Movie reviews, daily and seasonal features, saints, and more.

www.domestic-church.com Ideas and articles for Catholic families.

www.masstimes.org Mass times and maps throughout the country and world, especially useful when traveling. Call to confirm times before you count on them.

www.volunteermatch.org. Enter a ZIP code for names or organizations that need volunteers in your area.

www.ewtn.com Devotions, Mass readings, etc.

www.gardenofpraise.com/bibleles.htm Bible lessons, stories, and activities for kids.

www.sermons4kids.com/colorpg.htm Children's sermons, lessons, and coloring pages.

The Seven Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Counsel the doubtful.
2. Instruct the ignorant.
3. Admonish sinners.
4. Comfort the afflicted.
5. Forgive offenses.
6. Bear wrongs patiently.
7. Pray for the living and the dead.

Internet Resources

The following sites are provided to assist families in helping your children at home:

- www.vatican.va** Official website of the Vatican. Papal information, letters, exhortations, encyclicals, Catechism of the Catholic Church, Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, etc.
- www.usccb.org** United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website. New American Bible, Catechism of the Catholic Church, church documents, life issues, social issues, Mass readings, and movie reviews.
- www.dbqarch.org** Archdiocese of Dubuque website. Media resources are available under Archdiocesan Pastoral Center > Media Services > Education Resource Center.
- www.newadvent.org** Catholic Encyclopedia online, St. Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologica, Early Church Fathers, and more. The encyclopedia is a fantastic and detailed resource for anything Catholic.
- www.catholic.com** Catholic Answers website. Good library of Catholic tracts that explain the faith in a concise manner.

of direction in responding to the religious and spiritual needs of parish families.

Rules and regulations are made to help inform the students 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 help to 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 rules of this handbook will help achieve the goals of our faith formation program.

We are so pleased to have you and your child/children register in our Faith Formation Program. We have an exciting year ahead of us. Thank you for all your support.

Faith Formation Session Times:

First Session—Grades 1-6 6:00-7:00 p.m.
Second Session—Grades 7-12 7:15-8:15 p.m.
Children's Liturgy of the Word offered at 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m.
Masses

Tuition: Registered parishioners—\$50 per student—maximum of \$150 per family
Non-registered parishioners—\$100 student—maximum of \$300 per family
Children's Liturgy of the Word—No charge

Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of Parents/Guardians

The church teaches that parents have the privilege and responsibility of being the primary educator of the faith of their children. This education and formation in faith occurs in many ways: by modeling faith in daily actions, by modeling good moral judgments, by sharing regular family prayer times, and by attending Sunday Mass as a family.

The religious education program can only reinforce what is taught and modeled in the home. If interest in and encouragement for the program is shown in the home, then students will have that same enthusiasm for their faith, and will come to classes willingly.

During the brief time catechists have students for class, it is not possible to teach everything about our faith or to help them learn all their prayers. Therefore, it is essential that parents work with their children at home to learn these things and that there be dialogue between parents and children regarding what is being learned in the classroom.

The support of parents is evident in an all-encompassing way when they volunteer to help as a catechist, a classroom aide, or a volunteer. Please consider offering time in this way as an added support for the children.

Attendance

Regular attendance at the Faith Formation Program is essential for students to make progress both spiritually and morally. Parents are responsible for the regular and prompt attendance of their children. All attendance policies are to be followed.

Students are expected to be in their locations on time with the required materials ready. Children arriving tardy tend to disrupt

4. Jesus meets his mother.
5. Simon helps Jesus carry the cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus meets the women.
9. Jesus falls the third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is placed in the tomb.

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

The Seven Corporal Works of Mercy

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Clothe the naked.
4. Shelter the homeless.
5. Visit the sick.
6. Visit the imprisoned.
7. Bury the dead.

- Profession of Faith (Creed)
- General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Preparation and presentation of the gifts
- Prayer over gifts
- Preface
- Holy, Holy, Holy Lord
- Eucharistic Prayer (during this prayer the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus)
- The Great Amen
- Communion Rite
 - ◆ The Lord's Prayer
 - ◆ Sign of Peace
 - ◆ Breaking of the Bread
 - ◆ Lamb of God
 - ◆ Reception of Communion
 - ◆ Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rite

- Blessing
- Dismissal

Regulations for Fast and Abstinence

- Fasting is refraining from food or drink to some degree.
- Abstinence is refraining from eating meat.
- In the United States, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence, and all Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.
- The obligation to abstain from meat binds all Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to fast, limiting oneself to one full meal and two lighter meals in the course of a day, binds Catholics from the ages of 21 to 59.

The Stations of the Cross

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
2. Jesus accepts his cross.
3. Jesus falls the first time.

the entire session. If your child needs to arrive earlier than expected, please let us know.

In the case of absence, a phone call from the parent is necessary to let us know that your student will be absent. This will help us ensure the safety of all students.

Discipline

Students are expected to follow St. Mark Faith Formation Policy.

Policies

Policy for the Protection of Minors

The Archdiocese of Dubuque has established a program of pastoral assistance to people who believe that 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 and 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 **800-803-6758** to report an allegation or to receive assistance.

Property Use

All property used for the utilization of the program is to be respected and left undisturbed. Any damage caused will be paid for by the individuals responsible.

Weather Related Cancellations

If Ed-Co schools are dismissed early or cancelled due to **weather conditions** on the Wednesday of faith formation, sessions will not be held. If classes need to be cancelled due to poor weather on a day school was not cancelled, we will do so via group text message and notice on St. Mark's Faith Formation Facebook page.

Feel free to call Jody Kerns on her cell (563-920-4836) for a check on cancellations.

Sacramental Preparations

All children are required to be enrolled in the Faith Formation Program (or attend Catholic school) prior to sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation. Parents, as the primary educators of their children, are expected to fully participate in the sacraments themselves and sacramental preparation of their children in the following ways: regular church attendance and celebration of reconciliation, participation in parent meetings, and participation in other formation events. Continued participation in religious education and faith formation is critical and expected following the reception of sacraments.

Local Faith Formation Policies

Discipline Policy

First Time: The child will be sent to the office and will phone the parent from the office. The child and DRE will discuss the actions in relationship to why they were wrong and how they hurt others.

Second Time: Parent is called to come and attend classes with the child until the catechist or DRE determines that the child will no longer disrupt the class.

Senior Graduation Policy

All St. Mark's graduating high school seniors who are actively participating in their respective religious education programs are eligible to participate in the Baccalaureate Mass. Seniors must attend 70% of the classes.

Holy Days of Obligation—On these days, there is an obligation to attend Mass and to refrain from servile work as much as possible.

- Mary, Mother of God—January 1
- Ascension of the Lord—40 days after Easter or the following Sunday (celebrated on the Seventh Sunday of Easter in the Archdiocese of Dubuque)
- The Assumption of Mary—August 15
- All Souls Day—November 1
- The Immaculate Conception of Mary—December 8
- Nativity of our Lord or Christmas—December 25

Liturgical Year

- Advent/Christmas Season (Christmas Day until Sunday after Epiphany)
- Ordinary Time
- Lent (Ash Wednesday until Holy Saturday)
- Easter Season (Easter Sunday until Pentecost, 50 days after Easter)
- Ordinary Time

Parts of the Mass

Introductory Rites

- Gathering Song
- Greeting
- Penitential Rite (or blessing and sprinkling with holy water)
- Glory to God
- Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading (usually from the Old Testament)
- Responsorial Psalm
- Second Reading (usually from one of the letters of the New Testament)
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel
- Homily (an explanation of the readings)

- Blessed are the clean of heart (or pure of heart), for they will see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness (or righteousness' sake), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

Communion Regulations

- As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently.
- In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should be conscious of no grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour.
- A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (CIC, can. 916).
- A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

Communion Fast

- We are expected to fast from food or drink for at least one hour prior to the reception of Holy Communion.

Four Gospels

- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

Pick-Up/Drop-Off Student Policy

To ensure the safety of all the students, the Faith Formation Commission passed the following policy/procedure for students being dropped off and picked up from classes. (Approved by the Commission 7/2006)

1. No students will be allowed to arrive before 5:50 p.m. Students arriving early will either be sent home until the appropriate time or sent to the classroom to rest with head down until class time. Exceptions to this rule will need to be cleared with the DRE.
2. A driving lane will be established for the purpose of picking up and dropping off elementary students. No students will be allowed to cross the driving lane to enter into a vehicle. All elementary students must be picked up in the driving lane.
3. Students riding bikes to class are to park bikes on the blacktop on the west side of the parish center and then use the sidewalk to enter the parish center. Students riding bikes home after class will not be dismissed until the pick-up traffic has cleared. This may delay your child by 5-10 minutes.
4. All high school students driving to classes are to only use the parking lot to the south side of the rectory or parking on the north side of the church. No parking will be allowed in front of the parish center!
5. These policies have been set forth for the safety of ALL children, including YOURS. Please respect them!

Parents may park their car and walk OVER to the parish center and escort their child back to the car, if they prefer not to wait in line. This will be the ONLY way children will be released.

THIS IS A SAFETY ISSUE FOR YOUR CHILD!

Please also observe the following:

During the winter, before and after class, there will be **no** snowball throwing.

No food or drink is allowed in the classroom except on special occasions or as sanctioned by the religion teacher.

Students are expected to participate in a cooperative and respectful manner in all religious education activities.

Students are expected to show respect for other persons and property at all times. Disrespectful behavior will be reported to parents immediately.

Role of Catechist, DRE, Faith Formation Commission

The role of the catechist is to extend the presence of Jesus to his/her students by the designated curriculum. The catechist will endeavor to lead the children to a better understanding of the Catholic faith. The DRE and Faith Formation Commission function to support and guide the catechists in their ministry. This support occurs in the form of providing catechetical materials and resources, as well as in-service opportunities to each catechist.

Teaching of Basic Catholic Prayers and Practices

It is the responsibility of parents, as the primary educators of their children in the ways of faith, to ensure the learning of the following age-appropriate prayers. As such, parents are responsible for the teaching of memorized prayers and the general spiritual support and guidance of their children. The catechists will introduce the prayers as well as assess the progress being made.

Sorrowful Mysteries (used Tuesday and Friday)

The Agony in the Garden
The Scourging at the Pillar
The Crowning with Thorns
The Carrying of the Cross
The Crucifixion

Glorious Mysteries (used Wednesday and Sunday)

The Resurrection
The Ascension
The Descent of the Holy Spirit
The Assumption
The Crowning of Mary Queen of Heaven and Earth

Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us O holy Mother of God. **Response:** That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Beliefs and Practices Formulas of Catholic Doctrine

Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.
- Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
- Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

The Rosary

How to Pray the Rosary

1. Make the Sign of the Cross.
2. Holding the Crucifix, say the Apostles Creed.
3. On the first bead, say an Our Father.
4. Say a Hail Mary on each of the next three beads
5. On the fifth bead, say the Glory Be, then announce which set of mysteries is said that day, say the first mystery, and then the Our Father.
6. Go to the main part of the rosary. While fingering each of the ten beads of the decade, say a Hail Mary while meditating on the mystery. Then on the single bead, say a Glory Be.
7. After the Glory Be, announce the next mystery, say the Our Father, and then continue in the same way as before until each of the five mysteries of the selected group or decades is said.
8. On the medal at the end, say the Glory Be, then say the Hail, Holy Queen.

Mysteries of the Rosary

Joyful Mysteries (used on Monday and Saturday)

The Annunciation
The Visitation
The Nativity (Birth of Jesus)
The Presentation
The Finding in the Temple

Mysteries of Light or Luminous Mysteries (used on Thursday)

The Baptism of Jesus
The Wedding Feast of Cana
The Proclamation of the Kingdom, with the Call to Conversion
The Transfiguration
The Institution of the Eucharist

Common prayers are included in this handbook to assist parents in this role.

Prayers

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father/The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. (traditional wording)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen. (found in the Liturgy of the Hours)

Angel of God

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here. Ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

Grace Before a Meal

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace After a Meal

We give thee thanks, for all thy benefits, Almighty God, who live and reign forever. Amen.

Morning Prayer (younger children)

God, my Father, I give you today all that I think and do and say. I'll work and study, have fun and pray. Jesus be with me all through the day. Amen.

Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, for the salvation of souls, the reparation for sins, the reunion of all Christians, and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father this month. Amen.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into

heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.