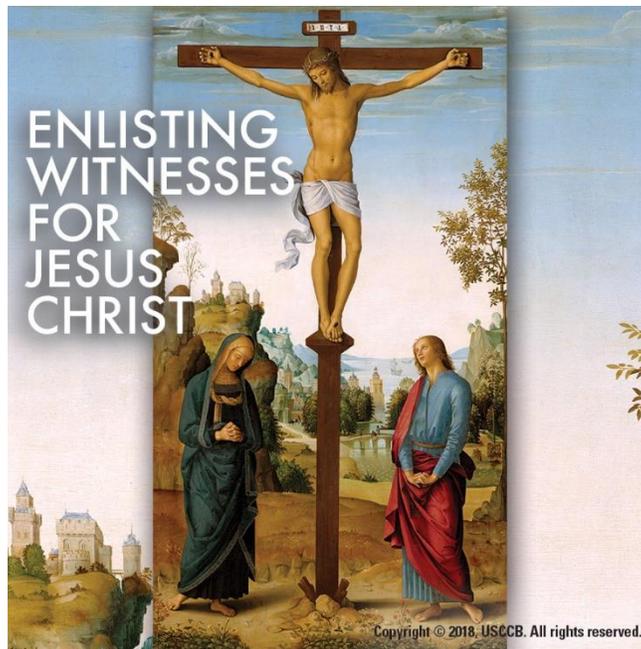




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# ST. MARY OF THE ANNUNCIATION



# FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK

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2020-2021



**Faith Formation Staff (bilingual)**

**Friar Mark Weaver** ..... **812-944-0417 X 102**  
Pastor **pastor@stmarysna.org**

**Laura Hanks** ..... **812-944-0417 X 108**  
Director of Religious Education **laurahsmna@gmail.com**

**Parish Office Hours**

Monday- Friday 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

**Parish Office Address**

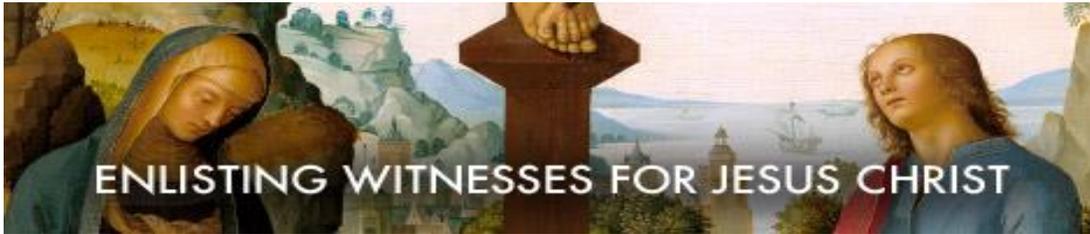
415 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
New Albany IN 47150

**Parish Website**

[www.stmarysna.org](http://www.stmarysna.org)

**Facebook**

“St. Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church”



## **Letter from the Director of Religious Education**

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

Welcome to St. Mary's Parish Children's Faith Formation (CFF) Program! We are so humbled that you have chosen to allow us to accompany your family as we work together to pass on the Catholic faith to your children. This is an incredible gift and responsibility. This mission of our program is to assist you as parents/guardians in your vocation to form and educate your children in the Catholic faith. This is done by providing class gatherings for Kindergarten (age 5) through twelfth grade. Parents are the primary educators of their children in the Catholic faith. The parish staff and our Catechists are partners with you in handing on the Catholic faith to your children.

At the heart of faith formation is our own witness. Children may forget information and facts that they discuss in class, however, children remember the lived *witness* of caring adults in their lives, particularly their parents. Your own witness of discipleship is what will ultimately shape and give life to your own children's faith commitment.

We as a Faith Formation team are committed to helping you to model and inspire an authentic witness of faith in your children. We have prepared a great year of teaching, service, prayer and discipleship for your children. We ask you to become actively involved in your children's faith formation. This happens by talking with your children about their classes, teaching them the traditional prayers of our Catholic Faith at home, attending sacramental meetings, and serving your faith communities to provide an example to them. At the summit of all these things though, is our calling to draw close to God in prayer and the sacraments. When we really make a commitment to go to Mass as often as we can (and at minimum on Sundays and holy days), go to confession, and make time for prayer (especially in front of the Blessed Sacrament), we are not only opening ourselves up to His graces; we are striving to live that authentic Christian life which God calls us to.

When we choose to do these things for ourselves, we are also choosing to pass the faith on to our children through our remarkable witness. Therefore, I would like to urge you all to challenge yourselves this year to more deeply live out your Catholic faith, not only for your own sake but for the young ones who follow our example.

Please read this handbook carefully, so that you can familiarize yourselves with various policies. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself, or another member of the program staff. May all of us be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ. May we follow in His footsteps and bring all we meet into an encounter with His love.

Yours in Christ,

**Laura Hanks**

Director of Religious Education & Youth Ministry

## SCHEDULE

Children's Catholic Faith Formation Classes meet most Wednesday evenings, 6:30pm-7:45pm from late August until the beginning of May. All classes are held in the Pastoral Center (old school building). For a complete schedule of classes, please consult the calendar. Extra copies are available in the parish office.

## ARRIVAL + DISMISSAL

### ARRIVAL

Please be conscious of the beginning and ending times for classes (6:30pm-7:45pm). This year, to comply with social distancing recommendations, the arrival process will be slightly different. Children in grades 1 through 4 will meet their catechist in the school gym by 6:25pm so that classes can begin on time. *Children in grades 5 through 12 should go to their classrooms immediately upon arrival to the school*, where their catechists will be waiting for them. If you arrive to the gym after the catechist and children are already gone please take your child to his/her classroom. **Never drop your child off at the door. You need to bring them inside the building for safety reasons.** Children are not allowed in the classrooms without their catechists.

### DISMISSAL

Parents will need to come to one of the three dismissal doors to pick up their children at dismissal time, 7:45pm. In order to prevent unnecessary crowding, you may exit the school building through the gym door, the cafeteria door, or the angel door (by the playground). Please emphasize to your children the importance of not leaving the school building until they are with their siblings from other classrooms and they *know* their ride has arrived. Parents with younger children must come inside the gym door to collect them. Please try to be on time for dismissal out of respect for catechists.

## CLOSING/CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

In the event of bad weather conditions, power failure, or any other problems, which necessitates the cancellation of classes, you will be notified the day of class no later than 4:00pm via text and/or email message from our communication system. *\*Please make sure we have your current mobile number and/or email address on file\**

## CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT

As a community of faith, our primary goal is the safety and wellbeing of children. Child abuse and neglect are serious and harmful realities. We need all parents to know that we have a moral and a legal responsibility as Catechists and parish staff to report suspected abuse and or/ neglect of children. Common policy is that any staff member or catechist who suspects a child may be the victim of child abuse will notify the Director of Religious Education or other parish staff who will then notify the Child Protective Services, the pastor, and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

All Catechists have read and signed the Code of Conduct established by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in light of their policy on Child Abuse, "To Be Safe and Secure". Furthermore, all Catechists and Faith Formation volunteers have passed a federal background check and have taken the Archdiocesan safe environment class, "Safe & Sacred" which helps them to recognize signs of abuse and neglect. Lastly, we will continue to use the "Circle of Grace" program to help our children be aware and protect themselves from certain situations. If you have questions about this process, please call the Director of Religious Education.

### **Circle of Grace Program**

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has mandated a safe environment program consisting of 1-3 lessons (depending on the grade level) for grades K through high school. These lessons focus on the dignity of the human person- body and soul. They also teach children to identify and name situations where they feel unsafe in age-appropriate language. These lessons will be facilitated in the second semester. A parent packet will be distributed beforehand with additional information. If you have any questions or wish to withdraw your child from these classes, please contact the Director of Religious Education.

### **REGISTRATION + FEES**

To be enrolled in St. Mary's Faith Formation Classes, you need be a registered member of St. Mary's Parish. We accept children between the ages of 5 and 17 years, or those that are still enrolled in high school. Pre-Registration for CFF is held prior to the beginning of class to know the number of books and supplies needed. The fees for are as follows: 1 child--\$45.00 (*\*\$55.00 if a child will receive First Communion that year*), 2 children -- \$75.00 and 3 or more children -- \$100.00. The fees are due on or before the first day of class. The fees are used to pay for the textbook and supplies (the added cost for First Communicants also covers retreat expenses). **If there is a difficulty with the fee, please contact the Director of Religious Education. No one is turned away to learn about his or her faith for financial reasons!**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Regular attendance is expected for all students. If you know in advance that your child will be absent from class, please tell your catechist and he/she may give you the next lesson to do with your child at home.

If for any reason your child is unable to attend class, please call or email the Director of Religious Education, Laura Hanks, at 812-944-0417 x108 or [laurahsmna@gmail.com](mailto:laurahsmna@gmail.com) If there is a serious reason for the absence (i.e.: death in the family, injury or serious illness, etc.), please let us know so we can count the absence as, “excused”.

We know that schedules are tight but regular attendance is very important to create a learning environment in our classrooms. Catechists will take attendance. **More than 3 absences will result in a conference with the Director of Religious Education to determine a make-up plan and/or determine whether the year should be repeated. A student who has more than 4 unexcused absences may be required to repeat the catechetical year.**

**FIRST COMMUNION CHILDREN** -- Children preparing to receive the sacraments of Confession and First Communion must be present for all classes unless there is an emergency such as sickness or death in family. It is very important that children do not miss class. If your child needs to miss a class, please talk to the Director of Religious Education.

**MASS ATTENDANCE POLICY-** The Holy Eucharist is the, “source and summit” of all we are as a Church community. It is essential that all children participating in our CFF program attend and actively participate in Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. We will be monitoring your family’s Mass attendance throughout the year. The way that we do this is through the collection envelopes. During the CFF sign up process, you will register at the parish, if you have not done so already. All registered parishioners receive collection envelopes mailed to their house. Every week— regardless of how much money you put in the collection envelope— you should put your family’s envelope in the basket during Mass. This is how we will know that your family attended Mass that week. Please speak directly with the DRE if you have a unique circumstance (if you attend Mass at another parish, for example). **More than 3 Mass absences may result in a conference with the Director of Religious Education. A student who has more than 4 unexcused Mass absences may be required to repeat the catechetical year.**

## **PARENT FORMATION**

***You cannot give what you do not have.*** As parents, it is important to take time for your own spiritual, theological and moral formation. The best way to grow in your own faith is through prayer, the sacraments, and intentional faith fellowship. Partake frequently in prayer, confession, adoration, and reception of the Eucharist. Continue your own education and studies of the faith as much as you are able (Bible study, reading, research, attending talks, etc.). Please make the time to enrich your own formation so that you can better assist your children to know and love their faith.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Communication is essential for effective collaboration between you as parents and our team of catechists and staff. We will communicate regularly with you to provide updates, reminders, or information about our Faith Formation programs. Regular communications will be made through announcements in the gym during class as well as through talking with your child's catechist. Aside from this, we will also communicate with you remotely when necessary. Unless you opt out, we will automatically enter your phone number in our system so that we can communicate with you. You can respond directly to the Director of Religious Education if you respond to the text message or email on your mobile device or tablet. We will also make phone calls to you if we have something more detailed to discuss with you. Feel free to call the Faith Formation office if ever you have a question or need clarification at 812-944-0417 X 108.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students, catechists and parents agree to the following: Treat all people in the Faith Formation program with respect, kindness and care. Show appreciation for parish personnel, parish property, equipment, and facilities at all times. Help create and maintain a safe and positive learning environment. Inappropriate behavior and bad language will not be tolerated.

## **CURRICULUM**

### **Grade Level Curriculum**

Grades 1 through 12 cover the same concepts appropriate to their grade level. They will be using the *Faith & Life* Series from Ignatius Press. All of these classes will learn at different depths an overview of salvation history, emphasizing the profound love of God throughout all lessons. Every chapter accomplishes this through reading, activity & prayer, all with an emphasis on the Bible and lessons from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Kindergarten class will use the Alelu! Series from *Our Sunday Visitor*.

### **Student Textbooks Responsibility**

Each student will receive their own textbook(s) and activity book for their class. It is the student's responsibility to care for and keep track of their religious education books. *If a student loses, damages, or fails to return their books to the classroom, their family will be expected to pay full price for the purchase of new books for their child.* This includes the full cost of the book as well as shipping and handling fees. Please do your best to make sure your child takes care of their books.

## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

### Reconciliation

Children who have completed the first year of their sacramental preparation will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the second semester of their second year of class. (See calendar for date.) There will be a parent meeting in the weeks leading up to the Penance Service, date TBA.

### First Eucharist

Children in the second grade receive their First Eucharist on Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at a special bilingual liturgy at 11:00am. **Mandatory** meetings for parents and their child(ren) begin in January 2021. It is very important that parents take their child(ren) to Mass each Sunday as part of the formation process for First Eucharist.

*\*There will be an assessment of readiness to receive the sacraments at a grade appropriate level. \**  
Details are below.

### Children Who Need to be Baptized (Rite of Christian Initiation for Children)

Children who are over the age of seven who have not been baptized will attend the class corresponding with their grade level. Just as with First Communion preparation, they must be enrolled in one year of catechesis before they begin their year of sacramental preparation. (2 years total). They will receive Baptism at the Easter Vigil Mass during their second year of formation. If your child has not been baptized, contact the Director of Religious Education as soon as possible to discuss further details.

### Confirmation

Young people who attend 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades may begin preparation for Confirmation (one year). Classes are held on Wednesday evenings 6:30pm-7:45pm. As good stewards, Confirmation students assist with various service projects during the year outside of class time. Confirmation candidates will also get the opportunity to attend an overnight retreat at Mount St. Francis. The confirmation class is unique, in that, classes will not start until mid-October. Their classes will end in May, just like with the other classes, however, all confirmation students are expected to return to class in August 2021 and continue their preparation until they receive the sacrament in October 2021. The reason for this difference is that the archdiocese has scheduled our confirmation to take place in October every year, so class schedules have been adjusted accordingly.

### **Prayers & Basic Concepts Learned in Faith Formation Program**

*Please pray regularly with your children. That is the best way for them to learn their prayers & key concepts. Here is a condensed copy of the prayers & “basics” of the faith that we expect First Communicants, and all children to know.*

*Those who begin their sacramental preparation this year must know these prayers and concepts before they receive their First Communion in Spring 2021. There will be a test in Spring 2021.*

*Although the catechists will speak of these things, it is your responsibility to ensure that your child/children know this information. The study guide for you is contained in the following pages.*

#### **SIGN OF THE CROSS**

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

#### **OUR FATHER**

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.

#### **HAIL MARY**

Hail Mary, Full of Grace, The Lord is with thee. Blessed art 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 our 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.

#### **THE 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.

#### **CONFESSOR**

I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore, I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

#### **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.

#### **HAIL HOLY QUEEN**

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! Amen.

## **ST MICHAEL PRAYER**

St. Michael the Archangel defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and to thou, oh prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

### **THE FIVE PRECEPTS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy days.
2. Confess mortal sins at least once a year, if in danger of death, and before receiving Holy Communion.
3. Receive the Eucharist during Easter time.
4. Fast and abstain from eating meat when the Church requires it of us.
5. Help the Church in her needs.

### **THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

1. I am the Lord your God: You shall not have strange Gods before 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 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 SACRAMENTS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

The first, BAPTISM

The second, CONFIRMATION

The third, EUCHARIST

The fourth, RECONCILIATION

The fifth, ANNOINTING OF THE SICK

The sixth, HOLY ORDERS

The seventh, MARRIAGE

### **BASIC CONCEPTS + QUESTIONS**

1. How many gods are there?
  - a. There is only one true God.
2. Where is God?
  - a. God is in Heaven, on Earth and everywhere.
3. Who made Heaven and Earth and everything that exists?
  - a. God made Heaven and Earth and everything that exists.
4. Who is God?
  - a. God is our Creator and the Lord of all.
5. How many Persons are there in God?
  - a. God is one God and three distinct Persons- the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
6. Are these persons 3 different Gods?
  - a. No, there is only One true God.
7. Does God have a body like we do?
  - a. No, because God is pure spirit.
8. Which of the three Divine Persons became a man?
  - a. The second, the Son that we call Jesus Christ.

9. Who is Jesus Christ?
  - a. Jesus Christ is true God and true man.
10. Where and how did Jesús Christ become man?
  - a. In the Virgen Mary's womb- she is truly the Mother of God.
11. Why did the Second Person of the Trinity (Jesus) become man?
  - a. To save us from our sins.
12. What did Jesus do on Earth to save us?
  - a. He died on the cross.
13. When Christ died on the cross, which part of him died; man, or God?
  - a. Christ died to his human body; God can never die.
14. When man dies, does his/ her soul perish or does only the body perish?
  - a. Only the body, the soul cannot die
15. Do our bodies remain dead forever?
  - a. No because on the Day of Judgment, our souls and bodies will reunite and be resurrected so as to never die.
16. Where do the souls of Good people go after the person dies?
  - a. To glory, to rejoice in God forever.
17. Where do the souls of those who die in a state of mortal sin go after the person dies?
  - a. To Hell, to be separated from God.
18. Why do we go to Confession/ Reconciliation?
  - a. To receive forgiveness for our sins.
19. What is necessary to make a good Confession?
  - a. Think about our sins.
  - b. Repent of our sins.
  - c. Make a firm commitment not to commit these sins again.
  - d. Tell our sins to our confessor.
  - e. Accept and complete the penance that he gives to us.
20. If a person does not confess a sin because they are embarrassed of it, is this a good confession or is it wrong?
  - a. No, this person commits a sin and they are obligated to return to confess the sin they did not confess.
21. Who is the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar?
  - a. Jesus Christ, our Lord
22. What is the Host and what is the Chalice before the consecration?
  - a. The Host is bread and the Chalice is wine
23. What is the Host and what is the Wine after the consecration?
  - a. The Host and the Wine AFTER the consecration are the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ.
24. If you divide the Host or the Chalice, do you divide Christ into parts?
  - a. No, Christ remains entirely present in every part of the Eucharist.
25. What do we need to do in order to receive the Eucharist?
  - a. Be in God's grace and anyone who is not should go to Confession.
26. What can we do to love Christ more fully in the Eucharist?
  - a. Receive Holy Communion with great faith, humility and love.
27. Can you drink water before receiving Holy Communion?
  - a. Yes, you can drink water but no soft drinks, or food for an hour before receiving Holy Communion.