



ST. PIUS V

Engaged in our Catholic Tradition

Cannon Falls, Minnesota

Last May, we closed out the Faith Formation program optimistic about our ability to significantly modify COVID-19 health and safety policies for the upcoming 2021-2022 Faith Formation year. As we now move into full preparations for the new Faith Formation year, we recognize that COVID-19 still poses risks for our community. At the same time, the circumstances are very different from last year. You may have read that the State of Minnesota no longer legally mandates specific COVID-19 mitigation strategies for schools. As we maintain vigilance, our church will still need to implement a health and safety plan to mitigate the spread of all infectious diseases, including COVID-19. We are prudentially evaluating all public health recommendations and implementing those that will best serve our Faith Formation students, staff, and entire community.

While our situation is different today than one year ago, we continue to be committed to maintaining the health and safety of our church community. We are taking an approach that includes a broad number of steps. Here are some of the mitigation strategies you can expect this upcoming school year:

- **Staying Home When Sick:**

We continue to require all individuals to stay home when they are sick. We are asking all parents to do a health check before sending your child to Faith Formation. Students can return to classes once they are feeling better and their symptoms have substantially improved (including being fever free for 24 hours with no fever-reducing medication). We will not require children/youth to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to classes.

- **Reinforcing Good Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

- **Physical Distancing**

We will encourage physical distancing during the class times when it does not disrupt the development and faith formation of our students.

- **Lab-Confirmed Cases of COVID-19**

State law requires us to report to Minnesota Department of Health any cases of COVID-19 that occur among children/youth or staff in our church facility. If your child has COVID-19, we will require that they not return to Faith Formation or related activities until they are no longer contagious. This means:

- They feel better. Their cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms are substantially improved;

- It has been at least 10 days since they first felt sick or tested positive for COVID-19;
- They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers fevers.

Like other infectious diseases, we will notify impacted families of a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 from Faith Formation.

- **Quarantine:**

The Minnesota Department of Health no longer requires individuals who have been potentially exposed to COVID-19 to quarantine. In general, our programs will not exclude any healthy individual from the Faith Formation environment, unless we are specifically told to do so in the particular circumstances by public health officials.

- **Face Coverings at Faith Formation:**

Last year, the Governor through an Executive Order required all individuals in public and nonpublic school buildings to wear face coverings. In our commitment to obey rightful legal authority, last year we implemented the face covering mandate at church. This legal mandate ended over the summer. Districts, schools and churches across Minnesota are making decisions based upon the actual COVID-19 circumstances that are present in their respective communities. The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis does not have a policy requiring face coverings in Catholic schools or churches. For the start of the 2021-22 Faith Formation year, we are putting the decision for a child to wear a face covering in the hands of each parent. Parents and guardians are well positioned to determine if their child should wear a face covering while outside of the home. We ask all parents and guardians to consider what is best for their child in making this decision while also being vigilant in the monitoring of symptoms and the health of their child. We know that there are a variety of positions and opinions on the use of masks, for children in particular, and so our Catechists and staff will be working diligently to eliminate any bullying or stigmatization for wearing or not wearing a face covering. We ask that you help us in this goal.

- **Vaccination:**

Our parish and Faith Formation program will not be mandating any community member to receive the COVID-19 vaccine nor provide documentation of vaccination.

We are excited to welcome our children and youth back to Faith Formation. In conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Health and the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, we will be monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic closely and will be promptly communicating any updates to this plan.