



All Are Welcome!

FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK

St. Pius X R. C. Church
"To Restore all things in Christ."
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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to guide all who participate in the Faith Formation Program at St. Pius X. 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. Please acquaint yourself and your child(ren) with the guidelines in the handbook before the next session begins. Knowledge of the policies and guidelines will help achieve the goals of the program.

***Covid restrictions: To maintain the safest environment for all, the following protocols will be in place: Each class will be limited in size to accommodate for social distancing. Students and staff will be required to wear masks, dividers will be provided at desks and hand sanitizer will be used before entering and leaving the classroom. We have the ability to take temperatures if required by protocol at the time the session begins.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- To support parents in the formation of their child's faith since the home is the most influential force in the life of a child. The family has the primary responsibility for forming the faith of children.
- To provide a program that develops the participant's knowledge of the Catholic faith. The Faith Formation program *supplements* the family's faith development process.
- To nurture a student's desire to develop a personal relationship with Jesus.
- To enrich their spiritual life through prayer and the sacraments.
- To encourage families to actively participate in the parish life.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Guardians – 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 developing knowledge of the Catholic faith cannot be done only once a week in class. Parents/guardians are expected to work with their child(ren) at home each week to review lessons and complete homework and/or projects.

Catechist – 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.

Director of Faith Formation - The Director of Faith Formation is a catechetical leader who is responsible for a Faith Formation program from levels Pre-K through 8. The Director works closely with the Pastor and other staff members to implement the catechetical program on-site.

TUITION

Current rates will be listed on the registration information and on the parish website.

CLASS INFORMATION

Due to the current covid pandemic, class sizes will be limited to provide for social distancing. It will not be possible to add students once the limit has been reached. In addition, we are currently in need of catechists to staff our classes. Lack of catechists or lack of enrollment will affect whether a class is offered.

Classes will be in-person for 2021-2022. If for any reason quarantine protocol is necessary for an entire class, classes will be held via Zoom. Classes will be held in the Faith Formation classrooms of St. Pius X School and on occasion classes may visit the Church.

COMMITMENT OF PARENTS

Parents made the commitment at the time of their child's Baptism to be responsible for the development of the faith life of their child. It is only through collaboration with parents that we can achieve our purpose and goals – that being – to assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility. Parish Faith Formation is the mutual effort of the Parish and the family. It is anticipated that parents/guardians support the faith development of their child(ren) by:

- Participating in Mass **every** weekend, including:
 1. Family Liturgy: Monthly Family Liturgy (September through May) followed by Hospitality. **
 2. Youth Mass: Monthly Youth Mass (September through May) for Levels 5-8.
** Refer to Faith Formation calendar for dates and times. **
- Attending all parent meetings. Parents with children in one of our 2-year sacramental preparation programs (Levels 1, 2, 7 & 8) are responsible for attending parent meetings which will provide information about the sacrament and its celebration.
- Encouraging your child's faith life at home.
- Making attendance at Faith Formation classes and parish youth/family events a priority.
- Contributing to the Parish through Stewardship commitment of time, talent, and treasure to the extent that you are conscientiously able.

GRADE LEVEL PRAYERS/CONCEPTS

In any relationship, communication is the key to success. When you communicate, you are able to know more about a person. This also applies to your relationship with God. Through talking to God, we learn more about who He is. To understand our Father, we need to pray and read the Bible each day both as individuals and as a family. It's the only way we can lead a life of intimacy with God. Children are gifts from God, and it's the responsibility of parents to instill in them the values and characters they need to become good Christians. Below is a summary of the prayers/concepts the children will learn while enrolled in the Faith Formation Program. Students at each level are expected to be able to recite the prayers/concepts below to demonstrate their readiness to advance in the program.

- Level Pre-K-K: Sign of the Cross, Glory Be, Grace Before Meals
- Level 1 – Hail Mary, Our Father (and all previous)
- Level 2 – Act of Contrition, Prayer Before Communion (and all previous)
- Level 3 – Guardian Angel prayer, The Joyful Mysteries (and all previous)
- Level 4 – Ten Commandments, The Glorious Mysteries (and all previous)
- Level 5 – Apostles Creed, The Sorrowful Mysteries (and all previous)
- Level 6 – The Luminous Mysteries, Parts of the Mass (and all previous)
- Level 7 – Memorare, Precepts of the Church (and all previous)
- Level 8 – Holy Days of Obligation, Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy (and all previous)

CURRICULUM

Levels 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 **Christ Our Life** by *Loyola Press*

Website: www.loyolapress.com/faith-formation/christ-our-life/christ-our-life-2016

The focus of the Christ Our Life series is to bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others. This goal calls Catholics to continue to hear the Good News at every-grade level. The call to holiness, given to every Catholic through Baptism. The core of the series, Scripture, revolves around the four fundamental themes of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: Creed, Sacraments, Morality, and Prayer. Catholic social teachings are woven into every grade level. With Scripture, doctrine, prayer, and Church teachings integrated into every lesson, the children can more easily relate Catholic beliefs, sacred Tradition, and, most importantly, their faith to their lives.

- Level 1 – God is Good – learning to love God, our Father & Jesus
- Level 3 – We Believe – learning some of the basic beliefs of the Catholic faith.
- Level 4 – God Guides Us – learning about the Ten Commandments & the Beatitudes
- Level 5 – We Worship – learning about the seven sacraments
- Level 6 – God Calls a People – learning about the Old Testament
- Level 7 – Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life – learning about Jesus Christ

LEVEL 2 - **BLESSED** by *Dynamic Catholic*

Website: dynamiccatholic.com/blessed

Blessed is a dynamic new program that provides content that meets children where they are and leads them, step-by-step, to where God is calling them to be. Cognitive retention in children between the ages of 6 and 9 is directly linked to emotional connection. And nothing connects with children at this age quite like animation. So, the Blessed program is designed to engage children's senses to enhance their learning and help them apply simple, practical lessons to their own lives. Blessed is also designed to draw parents into the process.

- Level 2 – Blessed – preparing to receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion

Levels 7 & 8 - **CHOSEN: Your Journey Toward Confirmation** by *Ascension Press*

Website: shop.ascensionpress.com/collections/chosen-your-journey-toward-confirmation

CHOSEN provides everything needed to prepare our youth both intellectually and spiritually to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and to become lifelong disciples of Christ. All too often we see teens drift away from the Church after Confirmation, CHOSEN seeks to reverse this trend by winning over the hearts of teens at a critical time in their lives and keeping them firmly planted with the faith community of the Church.

HOMework, PROJECTS, EVENTS, NOTIFICATIONS

Students will regularly bring home assignments and notifications. Please make sure you ask your child each week what they have to share and check their folder from any notes from the Faith Formation Office or their catechist. Prayers should be practiced every day.

We realize that each child's schedule is hectic, but outside work is necessary since classes only meet once a week. Homework, projects and events encourage parents to work with their child to participate in the faith journey of their child(ren).

SUNDAY MASS and MASS REFLECTION FORMS

Sunday Mass is a big deal. Keeping the Sabbath holy isn't just about rest. It's about so much more than that – it's about giving the Lord the praise He is due, it's about remembering all that He has done for us, it's about spending time with the family God gave us, it's about making sure we keep the Lord as God, and not work or money...it's about a thousand or so wonderful things that Jesus has done and wants to do in your life.

We refer to the Mass as the 'source and summit' of our faith (CCC1324 – the source, because everything else flows from it, and the summit, because there's nothing greater than it.)

All that sounds really good- nice church talk, solid theology. But if we're trying to keep it real, I know that those reasons aren't quite exciting enough to get most people out of bed in the morning. So why go to Sunday Mass? Easy: because Jesus is there. For real.

Refer to the Faith Formation calendar for dates and times of the Family Liturgy and Youth Masses as well as retreats, events, etc.

Mass Reflection Forms – The tradition of reflecting on the Word of God is an ancient one and the priest offers his reflection of the Gospel in his homily. A Mass Reflection form is a spiritual tool used to help us be more attentive during Mass and analyze the Word of God. We need to practice listening so we can hear God clearly.

Each student is to attend Mass on a weekly basis and listen carefully to the Gospel. Use the bulletin to read along with the priest to help with a deeper meaning of the lesson. What do you think Jesus was trying to say?

Once a month, each student is required to complete a Mass Reflection form to be turned in at their next scheduled class. One Mass Reflection sheet is to be completed by each child for each month while Faith Formation classes are in session. Mass Reflection forms are to be turned in promptly and no later than two weeks after the end of the preceding month. Forms can be found at the parish website under the Faith Formation tab.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

An attendance policy has been set up in order for participants to move through the program and celebrate their Sacraments; therefore, attendance will be recorded for ALL events relating to the Faith Formation program. Partial attendance will be considered non-attendance.

Attendance is the responsibility of the parents. Please establish Faith Formation as a top priority so that your child recognizes the importance. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, Masses, retreats and meetings to establish their readiness to receive the Sacraments and/or move to the next level. Students are to arrive before the predetermined start time of class and be in their seat, ready to work once class starts. Interrupting a class once it has started is disruptive to the catechist and students who are already working. A child arriving late also misses part of the lesson and it is difficult to determine work that each student must make-up. Therefore, no one will be permitted to interrupt a class once it has begun. Entrance into the building for class later than 5 minutes after the predetermined time will not be permitted. Students will be considered absent if they are not in class at that time. In addition, to minimize disrupting the class community and to respect the time offered by the volunteer catechists, we ask that students NOT be picked up early unless there is an emergency. Early dismissal will be marked as a partial absence.

ABSENCES

When a child is absent, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the Faith Formation office, by telephone or e-mail. A reason for the absence must be provided. If a child was absent for an illness, a Doctor's note will be required to confirm that the illness was not covid related.

For any covid related absence, quarantine protocols will be followed and may require the student and/or class to move to remote learning (Zoom) during a quarantine period.

Students with multiple absences will be required to have their parents meet with the Pastor and Director to determine the readiness of the child and may delay moving to the next level or delay receipt of a Sacrament.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Please convey to your child(ren) that our catechists are volunteers who give of their time to share their faith. They do this because of their love for God and their love for God's children. They deserve to be treated with respect.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a Christian manner, showing respect for all catechists

and other students at all times. No electronic devices will be permitted to be used and must be stored during class in the off position. If this is ignored, the device will be confiscated and the parent will need to contact the Faith Formation Office and make arrangements to retrieve the device. Disruptive behavior will be brought to the attention of the Director and the parents will be asked to meet with the Director and Pastor to determine the readiness of the student to continue in the program.

FOOD

Food is not permitted in any of the classrooms. If there is a medical need, a plan will be put in place to accommodate the child's needs. A letter from that particular child's physician will be required for the file to document the child's needs.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

All students are required to bring the following to class EACH week. Students will not be able to share books due to social distancing and extra copies are not available.

All grades: Textbook, notebook or 3-ring binder with paper, writing utensils, 2 pocket folder, appropriate Level prayer/concept packet, appropriate worksheet packet. (Prayer and worksheet packets will be available for download under the Faith Formation tab on the parish website.)

Grades 1-3: Pencil case with sharpened pencils, small box of crayons, scissors and glue stick.

Grades 4-8: Students are required to bring the Bible they received in level 4 to ALL classes.

Replacement Bibles can be purchased (\$30) but should be ordered to be available for the first class. Lost workbooks can be replaced at a cost of \$25 per book.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please be prompt in dropping off and picking up your child(ren). Children should be dropped off 5- 10 minutes before class begins to insure that they are in their seat and ready to work at the predetermined time.

Based on recent restrictions, only students, assigned volunteers and staff members will be permitted inside the building during class. If you wish to observe a class and learn the responsibilities of becoming a catechist, arrangements can be made through the office. Students will be met at the door and walked to their classroom. For dismissal, students will be dismissed at a location to be determined.

Please use extreme caution in the parking lot, as there will be many people coming to and from the building.

BATHROOM USE

Please see that your child uses the bathroom at home before class. Since the building has other tenants during class time, they will need to be escorted to the facilities and depend on hall monitors availability. If your child has a physical condition that requires several trips to the bathroom, please notify the Faith Formation office and provide a doctor's note.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents or guardians may designate another adult (18 years or older) to pick up their child. A transportation authorization form must be filed with the Faith Formation office. No child will be released unless a designated person is present. Any custody issues are to be discussed with the Faith Formation office and a copy of any custody agreement provided.

DRESS CODE

Appropriate dress reflects a reverence for Our Lord and assists our young people to develop a respect for the virtue of modesty and promotes a sense of self-respect and mutual respect for one another. Anyone who dresses inappropriately will contact their parent to be picked up and be marked absent.

- No crop tops, tank tops, spaghetti strap tops or sports team tank tops.
- No words or designs on clothing that can be deemed offensive
- No short skirts, shorts or dresses. Clothing must be fingertip length or longer.
- No sagging pants that display undergarments
- No leggings with cropped tops. If leggings are worn, shirt must be fingertip length.
- No hee-lies.
- No pajamas or pajama pants
- No headwear of any type (hoods, hats, bandanas, etc.)

HEALTH, MEDICATIONS and FIRST AID

Parents are required to complete medical and emergency contact information when registering their child(ren). This information is confidential and will assist us in better serving each student in cases of medical emergencies.

If an injury occurs, staff members are only authorized to apply a band-aid or ice. No one is permitted to administer medications. In the event where additional aid is required, parents, or medical personnel if necessary, will be notified. Please advise the Faith Formation office if your child has the need for an EPI pen to make appropriate arrangements.

In case of emergency, we will use prudent judgment in determining action, and in all cases, make every attempt to contact a parent or designated adult and in serious matters "Emergency personnel" will be contacted.

CALENDAR CHANGES and INCLEMENT WEATHER

If dates/events on the Faith Formation calendar are changed, you will be notified by e-mail. Parents will receive a Zoom code on days of inclement weather to prevent cancellation of classes. Inclement weather will be announced via:

- Phone call from your child's catechist
- E-mail from the Faith Formation Office
- Parish website: www.stpiusxrc.com
- Parish Facebook page: www.facebook.com/stpxplvw
- NEWS12: <http://news12.com>
- Parish App: *Iphone* Text: ParishApp1 to 800-950-9952
Android Text: Parish App2 to 800-950-9952

We recommend that you download the Parish App to keep up-to-date on the latest information.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire drills and sheltering in place drills will be practiced throughout the year to ensure that all are prepared should an emergency occur. An approved Evacuation Plan is in place and we work closely with the Nassau County Police Department and Homeland Security to provide the safety of our students and volunteers. St. Pius X subscribes to the RAVE application which supplements calls to 911 and provides a quick method for lateral communication within our facilities directly to the Nassau County Police Department. This system, when activated, enhances the Police Department's ability to respond to critical incidents should one occur.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs of children and catechists will be taken on several occasions, and for different purposes, including displaying on bulletin boards and used in the Sunday bulletin and parish website. If you do not wish your child to be photographed, please submit a request in writing.

CHILD LURES PROGRAM

Children in the Diocese of Rockville Centre will receive safety training by the use of the Child Lures Prevention Program – Think First & Stay Safe. The program is designed to help children recognize personal safety risks, how to make healthy and safe choices and ask trusted adults for help when needed. For program specifics, visit <https://childluresprevention.com>

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance abuse is defined as the possession of, use of, selling of, or distributing any unauthorized, illegal drug, chemical, alcohol, or tobacco-like substance, which can be introduced into the body through ingestion, inhalation, or injection. Any student found in possession of an illegal or unauthorized substance on parish property or at a parish-sponsored event, will be immediately removed from the program. A conference with the student, the parent, the Director and the Pastor is mandatory for re-admittance into the program. Any student selling or distributing, will be turned over to the local authorities.

WEAPONS OR FIREARMS

No firearms or weapons of any type are permitted on parish property at any time. No toy resembling any type of weapon or firearm is permitted. Any student found in possession of any such item on parish property or at a parish-sponsored event, will be immediately removed from the program. A conference with the student, the parent, the Director and the Pastor is mandatory for re-admittance into the program. Any student in possession of a weapon or firearm will be turned over to the local authorities.

STAY CONNECTED

Staying connected with you is a priority! Please read all e-mails from the Faith Formation Office thoroughly. St. Pius X provides a variety of social media platforms to engage and communicate with our parish family and beyond. We recommend that you download the St. Pius X App to stay up-to-date with parish events. *See Appendix I for details.*

APPENDIX I – Social Media



@ St. Pius X



PARISH WEBSITE: www.stpiusxrc.com



FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/stpxplvw



TWITTER: twitter.com/StPiusXRCCChurch



INSTAGRAM: www.instagram.com/stpiusxny



PARISH APP

iPnone: TEXT: ParishApp1 to 800-950-9952

Android: TEXT: ParishApp2 to 800-950-9952