



**Family Faith Formation**

**Helping each other to holiness**



# **Saint William Parish**

## **Family Faith Formation**

### **2025-2026**

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## Family Faith Formation Program Overview

Saint William's Family Faith Formation meets twice a month during the school year providing families with a springboard to continue their formation in a family setting. **At least one parent attends with their child(ren).**

Children are introduced to God by the knowledge that everything around them comes from God. Growing within the security of their family is the opportunity for parents to begin introducing stories of Jesus. When you take your young children to Mass with you, they begin to realize this is a special place where we can gather with friends. Special actions and events happen gathered in this place. They watch you approach the alter to receive Jesus and they also want to be a part of Eucharist.

Faith filled events also permeate all of family life. This is where faith happens, within the family. We, at Saint William's recognize that you, as parents, are blessed to foster your children's spiritual growth. We wish to be your partner and helper in this journey with your family. We offer opportunities through our Family Faith Formation for you, the parents, to be nourished in your own adult faith. This will allow you to be able to likewise nourish your children in their journey.

We present a practical approach to faith formation recognizing the schedule demands on today's families. We offer a program your whole family can attend at one time, while still providing age-appropriate catechesis.



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## Parent/Guardian Pledge

As the parent or guardian of our family, and as such the primary catechist of my child, I promise to:

***Instruct my child in the practice of the faith by***

- attending Sunday and Holy Day Mass
  - participating in family prayer time
- living out our Catholic Christian values

***Teach*** my child to pray using age-appropriate memorized prayer and spontaneous prayer from the heart.

***Discuss*** and review as a family the principles we are learning in the Family sessions

***Devote*** regular time to faith formation as a family using resources provided

***Regularly Attend*** the monthly family sessions

***Participate*** as a family in the Family sessions at Saint William.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent or Guardian)

# Saint William Parish Pledge



As the office of Faith Formation here within the parish community of Saint William, we promise to support your role as primary catechists of your children by:

***Instructing*** your child in the traditions of the Catholic Faith.

***Presenting*** the teachings of the Catholic Church grounded in the Sacred Scriptures.

***Offering prayer*** and liturgical opportunities for your family, including Sunday and Holy Day mass and seasonal prayer opportunities.

***Offering guidance*** to your family in methods of instructing your own children, including both instructional and material needed for at home study and tips for informal teaching moments during regular life.

***Being a resource*** to your family in matters of faith.

***Offer*** regular and seasonal programming throughout the year, and opportunities to learn with our parish community.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Emily Perry Director of Family Faith Formation

Saint William Parish



## **Saint William Parish Mission Statement**

As a Christ- centered Catholic community, St. William Parish responds to the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of God's people through active programs to address the issues of spiritual life, social justice, and the needs of our youth. The primary concerns of our parish will be: Spiritual Life and Worship, Social Ministry, Youth, Young Adult, and Mature Adult Ministries.

## **Family Faith Formation Statement of Purpose**

Saint William's Parish Family Faith Formation works together with families to provide faith formation opportunities for children and adults. Catechesis is that activity which enables faith to become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction – especially sharing God's word in Scripture and the Tradition of the Catholic Church. Catechesis is a life-long process for each individual as well as the work of the entire Catholic Christian community.

The church teaches that the **primary responsibility for the spiritual growth and development of the children rests first and foremost with the parents.** Parents may share this responsibility with others, but they do not relinquish it.

*Our program strives to work together, with you to become closer in Christian community to live as Jesus taught us: through love, faithfulness, scripture, faith sharing, and example*

We at Saint William feel that passing on our faith to the next generation is a high priority. We recognize that we are in this together and are willing to undertake the work to make that happen. Passing on Doctrinal knowledge is important and necessary, but fostering loving, faith filled homes is the key that makes that faith knowledge come alive and last a lifetime. Together we need to keep the following goals in mind:

- Celebrate Mass together
- Get to know Jesus- Reading the Bible, use an age appropriate Bible for your children and have one readily available in your home
- Talk to Jesus- Praying together and teaching your children to pray by themselves. Begin with prayers you know or learned as a child, use spontaneous prayer, “Help me Jesus” or “Thank you Jesus”
- Family Time- Sharing mealtime is a wonderful way to work this time in. Everyone eats, do it together at least once a day. Car time is another time that many families are together, going to and from games, practice, after school activities etc.
- Share your faith- this is simply talking about your daily life, thinking about how God works in all the daily events and activities of your lives together

Every family will approach using ***Finding God*** at home in a different way because we are all different. We all live and pray differently. Some families will spend time each week working on ***Finding God*** and some will spend an hour before class. How much time and effort you choose to spend with your child will indicate how much they will absorb. I do encourage you to do one thing above all else and that is to **ATTEND WEEKEND MASS AS A FAMILY**. That is the most important thing you can do as a family: take the long view, and know that regular attendance at Mass will make a difference in the faith of each member of your family.

### ***Getting Started At Home***

- 1.) Choose a time you will work together on ***Finding God***. Choose a day of the week and a time when you can meet consistently. A regular day and time will be easier for your family to adhere to a regular schedule.
- 2.) Choose where you will work on ***Finding God***. Would it work better for your family to work at a table or to sprawl on the floor? Keep in mind that TV and phones are tempting distractions- it's best to silence them during this time.
- 3.) Choose a place for your family to pray. It would be good to have it be a different location than your work location. Changing location and posture will help you all transition in to a

prayerful mood.

4.) With your children, choose some items that you can use for your prayer environment. You might like to use a cloth that changes with the liturgical seasons or the seasons of the calendar year. You will need a Bible and a candle for prayer.

5.) Young children will need some assistance when reading and working in their textbooks. You may need to work with them or ask an older sibling to help. Take turns reading aloud with young children and offer encouragement as they complete the activities.

6.) Remember by **working and learning together** as a family, your family will grow in faith together. Your family's spirituality will be greatly enhanced. You will have opportunities to share important stories and pray together on a regular basis.

7.) Consider partnering with another family (or two!) and getting together to work on the textbook and at home activities. Parents and children can help each other on the activities. Forming friendships in faith can increase your families enjoyment too!



## **Grade Objectives**

When your child finishes Kindergarten they should know who God is and that God loves them. God sent his son, Jesus, who also loves us. The church is a family who prays together and helps each other. Your child should be able to make the Sign of the Cross correctly and recite the Meal Prayer.

When your child finishes First Grade they should know who Jesus is and that Jesus shows us how to care for each other. One way we learn about God and Jesus is through the Bible. The Commandments are introduced as rules showing us how to live. Your child should know how to recite the Hail Mary and the Our Father.

When your child finishes Second Grade they should know about the Trinity (God, the Father, the Son, Jesus and the Holy Spirit). The Church celebrates God's love and forgiveness as we are forgiven our sins. Jesus gives himself in Eucharist, which we receive. In receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation your child should be able to recite the Act of Contrition and know all the responses used during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

When your child finishes Third Grade they should know more about the Trinity. We worship in Church to show our gratitude to God. The Church is the Body of Christ. They learn about the Seven Sacraments and that they are signs from Jesus for us.

When your child finishes Fourth Grade they should know God's plan is for peace and harmony among all people. Jesus teaches us to love God and others. Human life is sacred because it comes from God. God's forgiveness is without end.

When your child finishes Fifth Grade they should know God speaks through the Church. God sent his son, Jesus, to bring us salvation and new life. The Sacraments give us grace to follow Jesus. The Eucharist unites us to Christ and to our community.

\*See a later page of this booklet for the prayers and age appropriate time of learning.

## **People of Faith Adult Component**

At the heart of all we are and do as Catholic adults is the revelation of the Good News of Jesus. Our faith is lived in discipleship to Jesus and His message. It is in living out this message of the Gospel we learn to be Christian disciples in our own time, place and circumstances.

The calls to holiness, to community, and to service of God and our neighbor are “facets of Christian life that come to full expression only by means of development and growth toward Christian maturity.” This maturity of Christian faith can blossom at any age. We see it in children like Samuel who hear and respond to God’s word (1 Samuel 3:1-18). We see it in your people like Mary who ponder and say “yes” to God’s call (Luke 1:26-38). We see it in adults and marvel especially at the beauty of faith in those who have persevered in following the Lord over the full course of a lifetime.

Like all living things, a living faith needs nourishment, which the mature adult disciple finds in union with Christ. We receive this nourishment chiefly by active participation in the liturgy. But, it is also maintained by • frequent reading of the word of God, sacred writing of our tradition, and documents of the Church

- involvement in the community life and mission of the Church
- personal prayer
- participation in the works of justice and service to the poor
- fulfilling our human obligations to family and society

A living faith is a searching faith – it “seeks to understand.” Adults need to question, probe, and critically reflect on the meaning of God’s revelation in their unique lives to grow closer to God.

It is this faith that St William Family Faith Formation wishes to enable you to reach. We invite you to actively participate in our program to see your faith life come alive.

## **Sacraments at St William's Parish**

### **Diocesan Guidelines**

*The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify, to build up the body of Christ, and finally to give worship to God. Because they are signs they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen and express it.*

*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #59*

Sacraments are signs of God's presence among us. They are actions of Christ in the community of the church. By encountering Christ in these actions, we experience the presence and power of God and God's saving grace. The place where this encounter happens is in the gathered assembly of the church.

It is necessary that conversion of heart in response to God's action in our lives precedes the celebration of the sacraments and that commitment to on-going conversion follows. Ritual actions unaccompanied by an on-going journey of faith with the community are stripped of their richness and fullness of life. Sacraments are meant to be actions and celebrations of the entire parish.

### **Significant Principles in Catechizing And Celebration of Sacraments**

- 1. A faith-relationship with Christ in the church and an on-going conversion of life.**
- 2. A process of journeying together as church to determine readiness for reception.**
- 3. The involvement of the family of the candidate in the preparation process and in the celebration.**
- 4. The participation of the parish community in the preparation and in the celebration.**
- 5. Two years of preparation prior to the reception of the sacraments.**

## **Sacrament Preparation at St. William Parish**

### **First Reconciliation & First Eucharist**

Sacramental preparation is a separate preparation from the Family Faith Formation program. It is a two year preparation culminating in the reception of the sacraments. During the first year, children regularly attend Faith Formation classes or Catholic School. During the second year, children continue those classes and add the separate sessions to prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist during that year. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is prepared for during the fall of the year and celebrated in January. The Sacrament of First Eucharist is prepared for in the winter and celebrated in late spring.

**For more information on preparing for First Communion, contact Emily Perry.**

### **Confirmation**

The preparation period for the Sacrament of Confirmation is also a 2 year period. In the Diocese of Venice, a candidate may not be Confirmed before the 10th grade. We suggest, therefore, the preparation period begin in the 9th grade. During the time of preparation, the candidate will attend both the High School Ministry Program (encouraged even if enrolled in a Catholic School and the Confirmation Preparation sessions during each year.)

**For more information on preparing for Confirmation, contact Linda Giacalone.**

### **Baptism**

If your child is under the age of 7, please contact the main office to arrange for the baptism classes: 261-4883. If your child is over the age of 7, please contact Emily Perry : 963-4795.

## **Catholic Prayers**

Praising God is a part of our Catholic faith. God is our touchstone and we need to be learning to communicate with our God from our earliest age. As Catholic parents, we begin by modeling prayer in our homes, at meal times, bedtime, and other important moments in our daily lives. Reminders of God, the Blessed Mother and the Saints of our church, such as a crucifix, the Bible, statues, holy pictures, should be in our homes. A special prayer space or table is recommended complete with the bible and a seasonal liturgical color might be a part of that space. Your children need to learn the following prayers at the earliest age possible. These are the expectations for your child:

***Kindergarten:*** Sign of the Cross Meal Prayer

***First Grade:*** (Add) Hail Mary Our Father

***Second Grade:*** (Add) Act of Contrition

***Third Grade:*** (Add) Apostle's Creed

***Fourth/Fifth Grades:*** All of the above

### **The Sign Of the Cross**

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

### **Grace Before Meals**

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

### **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.

## **Catholic Prayers (continued)**

### **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. Amen.

### **Act Of Contrition**

**\* This Act of Contrition is the modern form. If you wish to teach your child the form you may have learned, that is also okay.**

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.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,

and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day, he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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