



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.

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 their 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 a child's spiritual life through prayer and the sacraments.
- To encourage families to actively participate in the parish community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Guardians – You model your faith for your children daily. What your child will learn in their Faith Formation class depends on your support and reinforcement at home. Attending Sunday Mass as a family and family prayer are essential parts of your child's faith journey. Your interest and encouragement lets your child know you value what is taught in the Faith Formation program. 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 practice prayers, review the week's lesson and complete any assignments 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. Catechists volunteer their personal time to nurture the spiritual growth of your children.

Faith Formation Coordinator - The Faith Formation Coordinators work with the Pastor and Faith Formation Administrator to provide leadership in developing the Faith Formation program for all levels Pre K through 8 and provide support and guidance to catechists.

Faith Formation Administrator - The Faith Formation Administrator works with the Pastor, Coordinators, Catechists and families to organize, communicate and implement all aspects of the Faith Formation program.

TUITION

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

CLASS INFORMATION

We are always 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. Classes will be held in the Faith Formation classrooms of St. Pius X School and on occasion classes may visit the Church or our grotto. Children may not request to change classes during the year due to sports events/registration.

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. The parish Faith Formation program 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, Sunday 10:30 am Family Liturgy (September through May). Participation by Levels 1-8. **
** Refer to the Faith Formation calendar for dates and times.
- Attending parent meetings. In addition, parents with children in our sacramental preparation programs (Level 2 - Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, Levels 7&8 Confirmation) are responsible for attending additional parent meetings which will provide information about the sacrament and its celebration.
- Encouraging your child's faith 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 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 God 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 should be familiar with while enrolled in the Faith Formation Program. Students at each level are expected to be able to recite the prayers/concepts to demonstrate growth in their faith. A complete list of Prayers and Concepts is available on the parish website under the Faith Formation tab.

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

Website: dynamiccatholic.com/blessed

Blessed is a dynamic 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 8 – **Confirmed by the Spirit** by *Loyola Press*

A sacrament program that provides preparation for Confirmation. Sessions include Confirmation Q & A, Spotlight on Scripture, and Liturgy Connection. Also includes Saints and Holy People, Symbols of the Holy Spirit and Gifts of the Holy Spirit. In addition, Level 8 students will engage in service projects and church related events to broaden their service to God and the Church.

HOMEWORK, PROJECTS, EVENTS, NOTIFICATIONS

Students may be asked to work on certain assignments at home. Please make sure you ask your child each week what they have to share and check for e-mails from the Faith Formation Office or their catechist. Prayers should be practiced every day and can be found on the parish website under the Faith Formation tab – “Prayers and Concepts”

We realize that each child’s schedule is hectic, but outside work is sometimes necessary to reinforce concepts or maintain continuity. Homework, projects and events also gives the opportunity for parents to participate in the faith journey of their child(ren).

SUNDAY MASS and GOSPEL REFLECTION FORMS

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.)

Why do we go to Mass? Jesus is there! Along with a community of faithful, we receive the Holy Eucharist, the Body and Blood of our Lord, who through His love and mercy, offers us an everlasting life.

Refer to the Faith Formation calendar (found on the Parish Website) for dates and times of the Family Liturgy as well as retreats, events, etc.

Gospel 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 Reflection is a spiritual tool used to help us analyze the Word of God. We need to practice reflecting so we can understand 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?

Students in Levels 4-8 will be required to complete 4 Gospel Reflections. One during Ordinary Time, one during Advent/Christmas, one during Lent and one during Triduum/Easter. Levels 4-6 will complete their Reflection in their notebooks with the help of their catechist during class. Levels 7 & 8 will use the Gospel Reflection form and complete their reflection form with the guidance of their catechist during class. Children in Levels 1-3 will listen to a Bible story and participate in a class discussion.

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 required to attend all scheduled classes**, Masses, Reconciliation, retreats and meetings to establish their readiness to receive the Sacraments and/or move to the next level. **Students with an excess of absences will be required to repeat the Level.**

Students are to arrive before the class start time, be in their seat, and ready to work once class starts. Based on incidents that are occurring at schools, the building will be locked 10 minutes after the class starting time and no one will be permitted to enter after that time for security reasons. Doors will be reopened at dismissal only for security reasons.

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

Please do not leave until you make sure that your child was able to gain entrance into the building. If your child is late and unable to enter the building, they will be marked absent and it is the parent's responsibility to safely transport the child home.

ABSENCES

When a child is absent, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the Faith Formation office by a written e-mail explaining the reason for the absence.

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Please convey to your child(ren) that our catechists and staff volunteer 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 electronics or associated devices will be permitted at any time (phones, earbuds, computers, I-pads, I-watches, etc.) unless requested by a catechist for a class assignment. If this is ignored, the device will be confiscated and the parent will be required to make arrangements for a meeting and retrieve the device. Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will be brought to the attention of the Pastor and the parents will be asked to meet with the Pastor to determine the readiness of the student to continue in the program.

FOOD

Food is not permitted in any 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. GUM is not permitted in the building. Please do not send in food or goody bags of any type for birthdays or holidays. Many of our students have allergies and some toys are not acceptable for distribution.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

All students should have the following supplies:

Grades 1-3: notebook, writing utensils, folder

Grades 4-8: notebook, writing utensils, student Bible. (Level 4 receives their Bible at a ceremony in October.)

If needed, replacement Bibles can be purchased (\$30) but should be ordered to be available for the first class.

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 school incidents at schools, only students, catechists, assigned volunteers (hall monitors and Teaching Assistants) and staff members will be permitted inside the building while classes are in session.

BATHROOM USE

Please see that your child uses the bathroom at home before class. Since children are required to be escorted within the building and catechists are not permitted to leave their classes unattended, use of the facilities depends on hall monitor availability. Hall duty is required 2 times per year (1 Spring, 1 Fall). A link will be posted on the Faith Formation Website as soon as the calendar is finalized. If your child has a physical condition that requires frequent 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 which lists ALL designated people 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. A parent (or guardian) is required to pick up their child(ren) inside the building, using the entrance to Faith Formation. Children will NOT be released to the parking lot.

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. Please refer to your public school guidelines for Dress Code since our dress code is similar. In addition, no headwear of any type is permitted in the building (hoods, hats of any type, bandanas, skull caps, etc.) Any student being dropped off after sports practice must wear appropriate pants/shirts before entering the building. Anyone who dresses inappropriately will contact their parent to be picked up and marked absent or appropriate clothing provided.

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.

If schools are closed due to inclement weather, we will follow the cadence of the POB school district.

Inclement weather will be announced via:

- Phone call from your child's catechist and/or 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

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 through the Thoughtful and Safe mandated video program. 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. If you wish to have your child opt-out, written notification is necessary from a parent.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance abuse is defined as the possession of, use of, selling of, or distributing any unauthorized, illegal drug, chemical, alcohol, vaping 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, 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, 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.*

Please make sure your cell phone server recognizes our e-mail to avoid missing messages that go to SPAM. faithformation@stpiusxrc.com

CONTACT INFORMATION

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APPENDIX I – Social Media



PARISH WEBSITE: www.stpiusxrc.com



FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/stpxplvw



TWITTER: twitter.com/StPiusXRCCChurch



INSTAGRAM: www.instagram.com/stpiusxny



PARISH APP

iPhone: TEXT: ParishApp1 to 800-950-9952

Android: TEXT: ParishApp2 to 800-950-9952