

ST. JOSEPH PARISH  
FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM  
**POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

ST. JOSEPH PARISH, O'HARA TWP.

342 DORSEYVILLE RD.

PITTSBURGH, PA 15215

412-963-8885 EXT. 301

[CCD@STJOSEPHOHARA.COM](mailto:CCD@STJOSEPHOHARA.COM)

[WWW.STJOSEPHOHARA.COM](http://WWW.STJOSEPHOHARA.COM)

*Delia Barr - Program Manager*

**CATECHISTS AND AIDES For 2018-2019**

Kn	Kindergarten Monday	Susan Klauss
Kn	Kindergarten Tuesday	Ruth Hidek
1	First Grade Monday	Jodi Brooks
1	First Grade Tuesday	Kathy Weidner/Donna Leone
2	Second Grade Monday	Fran & Regina Donahue
2	Second Grade Tuesday	Julie Wohlgemuth
3	Third Grade Monday	Desiree Hanchar
3	Third Grade Tuesday	Susan Harchelroad
4	Fourth Grade Monday	Erin Leland
4	Fourth Grade Tuesday	Erika Bitar/Anne Clump
5	Fifth Grade Monday	Dana Friday
5	Fifth Grade Tuesday	Meghan Coyne
6	Sixth Grade Monday	Becky Urso
6	Sixth Grade Tuesday	Paula Pedan
7	Seventh Grade Monday	Martin Gazboda
7	Seventh Grade Tuesday	Greg Dolan
8	Eighth Grade Monday B	Bob & Susie Sodini

### **Absences/Attendance**

Students are expected to attend weekly sessions September through April. Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in learning. Our Catholic faith is taught in a systematic progression, requiring the understanding of each concept at a particular level. Students with inconsistent attendance will be required to complete make up work in order to progress to the next level. When a student is unable to attend due to illness, the parent/guardian is to notify the office prior to the beginning of the session.

### **Early Dismissal**

Children are not to be released early from a Faith Formation session without explicit knowledge of the parent. **Parents are to report to the office and the program manager will proceed to the classroom to pick up the child.** In the event of a court order showing exclusive custody of one parent, the custodial parent is the only individual permitted to pick up the child.

### **Access to ebooks**

Contact catechist and office for missed work

Go to [www.flourishrclb.com](http://www.flourishrclb.com)

Username: is student first initial and last name

Password: Faith1

Pin: 15215A

At this site student has access to the ebook and e-assessments to make up class work.

### **Cancellation of Program**

Cancellation of our Faith Formation sessions takes place during circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. Cancellations are broadcast on KDKA, WTAE and WPXI . Texts will sent through Remind App. You may also call the Faith Formation office to verify the status of our program.

### **Change of Address/Telephone/**

#### **E-mail**

Please notify us immediately if any of your information should change throughout the year – i.e. address, telephone, or e-mail. It is very important that every student has an up-to-date record on file in the Faith Formation office.

### **Communication**

It is our goal to maintain open communication between the parents, the students, the program manager and

our volunteer staff. Emails, bulletin announcements, phone calls and personal contact are used to achieve our goal of maintaining effective and frequent communication.

### **Conduct**

Children are expected to act as they would in any public forum. An orderly environment is a benefit to the Catechist, student, and the entire class. Our code of conduct is as follows:

- Keep hands, feet and objects to oneself
- Do let your Catechist know if you have to leave the room
- Use positive language
- Use an appropriate voice
- Show respect to adults and classmates

Additionally, the Catechist may develop rules for managing their particular class. Our Catechists will always strive to instruct our children through word and action, especially when it comes to matters of personal self-discipline.

Every effort will be made to work with the child and to provide a positive environment for the child to grow and learn in. However, if the child disrupts the class so that learning is inhibited and proper decorum cannot be maintained, it may be necessary to find alternative arrangements which include, but are not limited to:

- 1) A parent or significant adult may be asked to sit in with their child during class
- 2) Home Schooling – the student will be required to test out to progress to the next level.

### **Discipline**

Catechists have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline in the classroom. Faith Formation discipline policies are consistently enforced. When a student is having difficulty the Catechist may have a conference with the parents, use classroom disciplinary procedures, and/or counsel with the program manager of Faith Formation. Discipline will always be directed to the problem and not to the individual or class. The behavior expected from the students is a combination of common courtesy and safety. Christian behavior is expected at all times. At no time will a Catechist use corporal punishment as a means of discipline nor will children be disciplined whereas to injure or cause harm to the child's esteem. Children will never be sent home from class without the parent's knowledge. It is our

policy to maintain open communication between Catechists, parents and the program manager. Steps involved in resolving a discipline issue are as follows:

- 1) The parent(s) will be notified by the program manager on every serious discipline issue by phone or verbal contact, followed by a written description of the event.
- 2) The Catechists are to report/record any persistent classroom disruption by a student. These reports are reviewed by the program manager and strategies are discussed with the Catechist and the parent via written or verbal contact.
- 3) In the event of persistent problems, the parent(s) will be required to attend the child's class.
- 4) In some instances a parent /program manager/Pastor meeting may be scheduled.
- 5) Other means of faith formation may be arranged.

### **Doctor and Dentist Appointments**

Due to our limited session time, it would be helpful if parents make every effort to schedule visits outside of Faith Formation class hours. In the event that this is not possible, please stop in the office before going to your child's classroom.

### **Dress Code**

Students generally conduct themselves in a manner similar to the way in which they dress and groom. Any type of dress or grooming which is disruptive or derogatory is not acceptable. Shirts with inappropriate slogans or advertising are not to be worn.

### **Emergency Information**

In case of emergency, each student is required to have on file in the office the following information:

- 1) Parent(s) or guardian(s) name
- 2) Complete and up-to-date address
- 3) Home phone, and cell phone numbers
- 4) Emergency phone number of friend or relative
- 5) Medical alert information

### **Enrollment**

A Faith Formation process is offered to all children of catechetical age that are registered within the parish. Children who are from neighboring parishes may be accepted into the program on a space available basis and with written permission from their parish priest. Registration for the program begins in April for the

following year. Students who transfer into the parish must submit verification of their previous enrollment in a catechetical program.

### **Fairness for All**

Always be mindful that we are all created "in the image of God". This entitles all persons to be treated with dignity and respect. It will always be the policy of this parish to encourage and support opportunities for interaction with a diversity of children. Children will be formed in an environment that strongly promotes an appreciation of the diversity of the racial, ethnic, physical and cultural richness of our world. Any form of jokes, slurs, statements, stories, activities and material that promotes any kind of racism, prejudices, and stereotypes based on race, orientation, physical characteristics, gender, culture or disabilities by Catechists, speakers, students, parents or staff is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Reports of any intimidation because of prejudices, language, actions or materials are to be reported to the program manager or pastor.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips involve experiences in which students are away from the parish property site and have a specific identified catechetical purpose or outcome. They are structured to supplement or reinforce classroom instruction. In the event of a field trip the parent(s) or guardian will be notified in advance of the trip and asked to sign a Field Trip Registration Form and Consent to Treat Form. Supervision will be provided at a 5:1 ratio.

### **Gum**

Our Faith Formation program has a three-part policy which governs the use of gum: 1) NO GUM 2) NO GUM 3) NO GUM! Students and adults are expected to comply with this policy.

### **Homework**

On occasion there will be homework. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in class. Homework is designed to reinforce what has been learned in Faith Formation. Parents are requested to help their children by assisting them with assignments and practice. Just as you want your child to have the skills to succeed in life, you should also want them to have what they need to prepare them for eternal life.

### **Illness or Injury**

In case of illness or injury, the office staff will provide temporary care of the student. We are only permitted to render emergency first aid treatment. Parents will be contacted immediately. If parents are not available, the emergency contact will be utilized.

### **Leaving the Grounds**

Students are not permitted to leave the campus during Faith Formation for any reason without the knowledge and consent of the program manager. Permission to leave the campus will only be granted upon written or verbal request from a parent or guardian.

### **Parent Support**

We ask parents to support the efforts of our volunteer Catechists by following these guidelines for their children:

- Regularly attend Faith Formation sessions
- Regularly review at home their classroom materials
- Regularly participate in the Sunday Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

### **Parent Volunteers**

St. Joseph Parish considers its parent volunteers to be a priceless resource. Parents are encouraged to help in all classrooms, and in all programs. Please call or e-mail the Faith Formation office if you have time or skills that you can share to make our program a better place for our students to learn and grow.

### **Photographs**

Occasionally, photos are taken of our students who are participating in our program. If you do not want your child photographed, or your child's photo displayed in our photo albums or on bulletin boards, please inform us in writing.

### **Records**

The Faith Formation office keeps specific records on each student. These are attendance, progress reports, sacrament celebrations, parent correspondences, reference letters, service records and permission slips.

### **Release of Records**

The Faith Formation office will maintain records on all students. Information included in these records may not be released without written parental consent. In the event that a student requests a recommendation,

scholarship form, or service form, a copy will also be kept in the student's record.

### **Release Time – Act 175**

Within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Act 175 provides that public school officials, upon written request from the parents, shall excuse children for up to thirty hours per school year, in order to attend sessions for religious education and other catechetical and formational opportunities, such as days of retreat and programs for sacramental preparation.

The utilization of Act 175 is not only a valid option for instruction and spiritual enrichment, but is viewed as beneficial to parish programs of religious education. The program manager will consult with the local school district in the event that a Release Time Day is necessary, i.e. sacramental prep, conferring of a sacrament, etc. Parents do exercise ultimate approval regarding their child's participation.

### **Toys, Games, Cell Phones, etc.**

Children are requested not to bring any toys to their Faith Formation session unless specifically instructed to bring a particular item for a special project. Toys and electronics are a distraction to the student and classmates and are often lost or misplaced. Our volunteers and staff are not responsible for valuables or items.

Cell phones **MUST** be turned off when entering the building.

### **Visitors**

All visitors are required to report to the Faith Formation office upon entering the building. Parents are always welcome.