



FAITH FORMATION

Parent/Catechist
Handbook

Dear Faith Formation Families,

The Faith Formation program at St Francis of Assisi is here to walk with parents, the primary teachers of a child's faith life, in teaching the Catholic faith to their children.

We feel it is important to assure parents that they are not alone in this endeavor. Your faith community is wholeheartedly here to support you.

The Faith Formation program is here to present traditional Catholic doctrine, prayer, Sacramental preparation, Catholic Social Teaching and community building. Parents are encouraged to continue this foundational work by their example in daily life and participation in the faith life of their child.

Thank you for entrusting your precious gifts with us!

Cindy Buckland



Faith Formation Staff and Contact Information

Cindy Buckland, Director of Faith Formation, Safe Environment Coordinator

Email: cindyb@stfrancislsbcmn.org Office Phone: 651-436-7817

Office Hours:

Monday—Wednesday 8am to 3pm

Wednesday evening during Faith Formation 5pm to 8pm

Thursday 8am to 2pm

Communication with the Faith Formation office:

The Faith Formation office uses email, texting and Flock note as the primary form of communication with parents. Be sure we have your correct contact information on file.

Safe Environment

All paid staff and volunteers must complete Essential 3 training through the Archdiocese of St Paul/Minneapolis which includes a Background check, signing of a Code of Conduct and online training on child protection topics.

Your Safe Environment Coordinator at SFA is:

Cindy Buckland

cindyb@stfrancisscmn.org or 651-436-7817

Prayers

Since the arrival of COVID and our normal lives have been turned around some things have taken a back burner. One of them is for our students to learn their basic Catholic prayers. This year we will strive to step that up. At the beginning of FF each student will be given a booklet, *Prayers and Guidelines for Young Catholics*, that contains the basic Catholic prayers each child should know (age appropriate) and more, such as the Ten Commandments, Stations of the Cross, how to say the Rosary. These will be taught and used in class and your child will be asked to memorize them with your help at home. The booklet is also a good resource for parents if you are a bit rusty.

The First Grade class will have their own version of the prayers that they would need to learn. It is a Lapbook which they create in class and helps them to learn at their own pace, since they are emerging readers, their prayers.

As your student continues to grow in their faith, he/she will be introduced to more forms of prayer, such as Guided Meditation, Lectio Divina, Spontaneous Prayer, Prayer of Intercession and opportunities for Adoration in the Chapel.

Tuition & Fees

- Faith Formation Registration fees are \$60.00 per child in grades one & grades three—five.
- First Reconciliation/First Eucharist fee is \$100.00 per child.
- Confirmation, the Retreat at the ARC is \$100.00 per child.
- Families must be registered in the parish to enroll. We offer discounts for all catechists and assistants.

Faith Formation Sessions (classes)

Classes are on Wednesday nights from September—May 6:30– to 7:45pm

The first night Faith Formation classes will open with the first of many Family Events in Berg Hall. Come and hear our theme song for the year!!

Family Events

This year the SFA Faith Formation program would like to introduce our Family Event nights. We are planning 5 or 6 events throughout the FF year. The first one being the Opening Night of classes. Watch for more information on Live Rosary, Trunk or Treat, All Saints Day, Advent, Ash Wednesday, Live Stations of the Cross and our Passover Seder.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

The Children's Liturgy on Sunday mornings during the 9:30 Mass is also a part of Faith Formation. All children ages 4 + are invited to join us. There is no registration. Come and share the Word of God with us.

FF Supper Nights

We will again offer supper and some free time before Faith Formation each night of class. Supper will be served from 5:30 to 6:15. @ \$3.00 per person. Parents come and join us! Just think no meal prep or clean up!!!

Faith Formation arrival & departure

Parents are asked to bring children in grades 1 - 4 directly to the classroom and to also pick them up at the classroom door. Children will remain in classroom until picked up. Older siblings are allowed to drop off & pick up.

Grade 5 - 9 should enter the building when they arrive and remain in building until parent or designated person arrives.

Please make every effort to be on time and to stay for the entire class.

If early dismissal is necessary, notify their Catechist at the door or contact the Faith Formation office.

Attendance

We ask that you make every effort to have your child in class each week especially if it is a Sacrament year. (First Eucharist & Confirmation)

We understand that there will be times of illness or family emergencies. Please contact the office at 651-436-7817 or email at cindyb@stfrancisxcbmn.org.

Class Cancellations

SFA follows the Stillwater Area School District closing guidelines. If school is cancelled because of bad weather then FF classes will be cancelled too. If you are not sure please use your own discretion.

Curriculum

Grades One & Three—Five will continue to use the *DISCOVER* program from Saint Mary's Press.

Grade 2—First Reconciliation/First Eucharist will also continue to use *GO SEEK FIND* from Saint Mary's Press.

The Confirmation program will be a hybrid mix of “*Anointed in the Spirit*” by Saint Mary's Press and *YDisciple* small group meetings.

Classroom Environment

At SFA we want to provide a Christian atmosphere where students, staff and catechists can witness the commandment of Christ—***Love one another.***

All students are invited to actively participate in class discussions, all comments should be appropriate to class topics. Violence, bullying, harassment or foul language will NOT be tolerated. Cell Phones/Entertainment devices are not allowed during class time. (unless directed by Catechist for reference)

Disruptive Behavior

- First step: Catechist will speak to child in class.
- Second step: The catechist/DRE will call parents and notify them of the situation and ask that they speak to the child.
- Third step: A parent and child will meet with the DRE in order to resolve the situation.

Sacramental Preparation

First Reconciliation & First Eucharist typically happens in 2nd grade. **In the case where a child has not had any formal faith formation, we ask them to take an extra year and begin in 1st grade and then make their sacraments the next year.** The sacrament prep year is divided into two parts. Reconciliation which culminates in January and then Eucharist the last half of the year with a Family Retreat & First Eucharist Mass in early May. Please watch for dates.

Confirmation preparation begins the fall of their 9th grade year with the celebration of Confirmation in the Spring at the Cathedral of St Paul. During the year, candidates will review familiar teachings they have learned over the last 8 years of FF, BUT they will also consider new ideas, such as how the gifts of the Holy Spirit can help you to be, as Matthew Kelly reminds them, ***The best version of yourself.*** The year begins with a parent/candidate meeting, service opportunities, choosing of a Saint name and a sponsor to help them on their faith journey. Early in the Spring it is time for our retreat to the ARC Retreat Center in Oseloa, WI. Detailed information is provided at the first meeting. NEW this year, we are adding *YDisciple* small group meetings throughout the year. This will supplement our current curriculum “*Anointed in the Spirit*” by Saint Mary's Press.