

Teach me, Lord, your way
that I may walk in your truth,
single-hearted and revering your name.
I will praise you with all my heart,
glorify your name forever,
Lord my God. (Psalm 86:11-12)

Our Lady of the Mount Parish
Welcome, Worship, Witness

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNT CHURCH

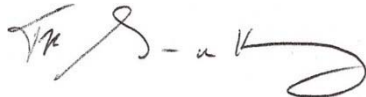
Office of Faith Formation

Dear Parent:

We are happy you have chosen a Roman Catholic faith formation program for your family. Our program teaches the doctrine of the Catholic Church, upholds current documents, including The Catechism of the Catholic Church, and utilizes Diocesan programs to train volunteer catechists.

In selecting the Faith Formation program at Our Lady of the Mount you have made the decision to prepare your child(ren) in the best way possible for full initiation into the Catholic Church through the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. These sacraments call us all into full communion with Jesus in the Church and full participation in the life of the community.

Please carefully review the handbook, print out, sign and return the Parent Handbook Agreement with your registration forms. Your registration is due by June 20 to the Office of Faith Formation either in person or by mail. The signed form indicates that you have reviewed the program's policy and procedures.



Rev. Sean W. Kenney

Pastor

Emma DeBorja

Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL)

Rev 3/2018

OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION MISSION STATEMENT

Faith formation is the presentation of doctrine and traditions of our Catholic faith. This presentation seeks to nurture the development of the whole person, where respect, dignity and faith in God will be developed in a Christian community. We strive to help children establish a personal and loving relationship with Jesus. We provide challenges and opportunities to integrate Gospel values in their everyday lives.

GOALS OF THE OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION

We are committed to assisting parents in carrying out their role as the **primary educators** of their children. In order to achieve this end, we ask parents to join us in stressing the importance of the following goals:

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- Regular attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days
- Participation in faith formation classes
- Development of personal prayer life
- Frequent reception of Holy Communion and
- Reconciliation

FOSTERING PROPER CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- Proper reverence at liturgical functions
 - Respect and courteous behavior in class
 - Proper attire for attendance at liturgies and class

The responsibility of the education of children belongs by right to the parent. The Office of Faith Formation **assists** parents in this responsibility. Parent participation is vital to the overall educational process. This includes attendance at the scheduled parent events as well as the support of Christian values in and outside of the classroom. Additional programs to assist parents may be made available by the Parish upon request.

ATTENDANCE AT LITURGY

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states “The Eucharist is the heart and summit of the Church’s life, for in it Christ associates his Church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father; by this sacrifice he pours out the graces of salvation on his Body which is the Church.” (CCC #1407) The Eucharist nourishes our spiritual life. We are obliged as Catholics to attend Mass weekly and on Holy Days of Obligation.

Faith formation classes are a reinforcement of weekly Mass attendance, not a substitution for Mass. Parents are expected to bring their children to Mass and to emphasize the importance of attending Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. **For grades 2,7 and 8, Mass attendance is expected on a regular basis and signed booklet/bulletins must be submitted to class teacher on a weekly basis.**

BEHAVIOR

Student behavior at faith formation classes is expected to be exemplary. **Respect for the catechist and fellow students is required of every student.**

The Office of Faith Formation has established a process to address unacceptable behavior during faith formation classes. At the beginning of each school year each catechist establishes a set of classroom guidelines. If misconduct occurs or the rules are not followed, our policy is:

- 1) for the first occurrence the student will be issued a warning
- 2) for the second occurrence the student will be sent to the office and asked to write a note to their parents describing why they were sent to the office. After class, the catechist, student and PCL will speak about the situation. At this time, a telephone call may be made to the parent
- 3) after a third time to the office, a conference will be scheduled with the Pastor, PCL, parent and student. The student **will not** be permitted back into class until after the meeting. A make up lesson will be assigned and must be submitted prior to returning to class.

DRESS CODE

The students are expected to display modesty and respect when entering the House of God either to attend weekly Mass or faith formation classes. The following attire **will not** be permitted:

- Clothing with inappropriate, profane, derogatory, offensive or violent wording or graphics
- Clothing that is tight, revealing, or suggestive
- Shirts that are midriff, backless, see-through or off the shoulder
- Pants or sweatpants that have wording on the seat
- Hats of any type

The Pastor, parish catechetical leader and catechists will monitor the dress code on premises. Those students who do not comply with the policy will be sent home. Your participation in helping us enforce our dress code is greatly appreciated.

ABSENCES

The Office of Faith Formation allows for a **maximum of (3) three excused absences for the year**. Parents should call the office when a student will not be in class. Missed class work must be completed. Parents should contact the catechist directly or through the office to obtain the make up assignments. **Please avoid scheduling conflicting appointments on the day of faith formation classes.**

Those **students who exceed three absences** will be required to make up missed work during the summer before advancing to the next grade level.

HOMEWORK

Due to the limited amount of class time, homework may be frequently assigned. Homework should take no more than ½ hour. The homework, unless otherwise indicated, will be due at the next scheduled class. Homework will be used to reinforce the material reviewed in class.

If homework is missed more than five times, an unexcused absence will be recorded.

TESTING

Periodic testing, either oral or written, will be administered in all classes. Each student must have satisfactory knowledge of the material presented in his/her grade level in order to advance to the next year.

At the end of seventh and eighth grade, the students will be tested on their knowledge of the course material. A score of 70 or above should be obtained in order to advance to the next level.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be issued twice a year - January and May. The areas of evaluation will include attendance, attitude, conduct, effort, class participation, homework and testing.

Parents are welcome to meet with their child's catechist or the parish catechetical leader about any matter. These meetings will take place at a time convenient for both the parent and catechist or parish catechetical leader.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS POLICY

The reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation are special times in the life of a young Catholic and his/her family. Our Sacrament Programs therefore require mandatory attendance. Those who are to receive their First Penance and First Eucharist must begin classes in first grade. **After the reception of these sacraments in second grade, faith formation must continue without interruption in order to receive Confirmation in the Fall of eight grade.**

Those students who attend parochial school must register and attend the Sacramental Preparation year (second and eighth grades) in order to receive their sacraments.

In addition to the regular class schedule, several special events are planned for the sacramental years. Attendance at these events is mandatory. **A signed booklet/bulletins must be submitted to class teacher on a weekly basis.**

PARENT MEETINGS

Parent meetings are held during the sacramental preparation years. Attendance is mandatory in order to give parents and/or guardians the necessary information concerning schedules and program content that pertain to the individual sacraments.

Grade 1 – Parent Gathering is held in the Fall

Grade 2 – Parent Gathering will be held in the Fall (Oct. & March)

Incoming Grade 7– TBA in Spring

Grade 8 – TBA in the Fall

OPERATING INFORMATION

Catechists/Volunteers - The Office of Faith Formation relies on the generosity of our faithful parishioners who devote their time, talent and treasure to providing our young people with a quality Catholic education. We are grateful for their commitment to our program and are blessed to have them volunteer their time.

Please note we comply with the Diocese of Metuchen Protecting God's Children program to provide a safe environment for all children. **Any volunteer, 18 years of age or older, must be screened through the Diocesan program. Volunteers are required to fill out a volunteer application form and attend a training workshop. In addition, a background check will be performed and fingerprints taken. There is no cost to the volunteer.** We appreciate your cooperation with the Diocese and our parish.

If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact the office at 908-647-1075 X112/113.

Text – At the discretion of the catechist, the textbook may be sent home from time to time. The text **must** be brought back to the next scheduled class. **A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for lost or misplaced textbooks.**

Food Allergies – Food allergies are a growing health concern for children across the country. Even a miniscule amount of the allergenic food is sufficient to cause a life-threatening reaction and inadvertent contact (via nose, eyes, mouth) can be sufficient to put a child in danger. It is the goal of OLM to provide an allergen free environment for children with food allergies, so that they may enjoy a safe and respectful place to grow in the faith.

Consequently: **NO food and drinks of any kind are permitted during parish religious education programs.** Edible treats of any kind, **snacks, gum or candy will not be permitted to be distributed during religious education. This includes Holiday Parties!**

Holiday parties can include Christmas or Easter crafts. The Diocese suggest “Non-Food” items such as stickers, holy cards, pencils, etc. can be handed out. Contact your child’s catechists to determine what would be appropriate.

Parents and guardians of highly allergic children **MUST** make known the special needs of their child to the parish catechetical leader and catechist, so that all precautions will be taken.

Office Telephone and Hours

Our telephone number is 908-647-1075 X112 or 113.

The hours during the school year are

Monday, 1:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.; Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.,
Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Thursday, 10:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Friday - CLOSED

OUR CLASS TIME WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
<u>MONDAY</u>	1 – 5	4:15 – 5:30
	6	4:15 – 5:30
	7 – 8	7:00 - 8:15
<u>TUESDAY</u>	1 – 5	4:15 – 5:30
		4:15 – 5:30
<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	1 – 5	NOT AVAILABLE
	6 – 8	4:30 – 5:45
<u>THURSDAY</u>	1 – 5	4:15 – 5:30

Emergency parent/guardian numbers – We utilize the Honeywell Instant Alert system. In order for your child to participate in our program, you must register with the system as Our Lady of the Mount, Warren. The system will be used for emergency closings notifications as well as non-emergency updates and reminders.

Snow policy – When the Warren schools close for snow or inclement weather, Faith Formation classes will be cancelled. If Warren schools dismiss early due to inclement weather, classes will be cancelled. Please make arrangements with your child in the event classes are cancelled during a school day.

Arrival/Dismissal information – please read carefully

Please drop off students at the **Shepherds Hall entrance**. Students are to go directly into the building. Students are not allowed to wait outside the building after they are dropped off. Students must be picked up by an adult, parent or designated adult, in Shepherds Hall. **Students are not permitted to go to the parking lot unattended.**

Late Pick Up - Please pick up your child(ren) on time. We are aware that emergencies arise. If a parent is going to be late, please call the Office of Faith Formation at 908-647-1075 X112 or 113 ASAP.

Fire Drills - Fire drills will be administered in the beginning of the school year. The procedure for exiting the building is posted in each classroom.

Registration – All registration information and forms will be available online during April. A notice will also be placed in the bulletin when registration packets are available. **For new students and those attending parochial school**, please contact the Office of Faith Formation to schedule an appointment to pick up a registration packet.

Grade 1-7- Begins Month of April

Registration deadline is July 31

Grade 8 - Begins Month of April

Registration deadline is July 31

Re-registrations **received after deadline** will be assessed a **\$60.00 late fee** for re-registrants only.

Families must be registered in the Parish to be registered in the Office of Faith Formation.

Students who attend parochial school must register for the Sacrament preparation years (grades 2 and 8).

Home School – Parents may choose to home school their child, with the exception of a sacramental preparation two-year programs. In October, date TBA a meeting will be held to discuss the material to be covered as well as testing. Please call the office for further information. This option of Home Schooling may not be done for consecutive years.

The home school option must be decided upon prior to classes beginning in September. Please consider all after school activities that might present a conflict with our schedule.

Calendar - Copies may be obtained in the Office of Faith Formation, Office bulletin board and at www.olmwarren.org in June.

Fees –

For **Grades 1-7**: The registration fee is **\$200.00** for the **first child**, **\$50.00** for **each additional child**. A \$60.00 late fee is charged for registration past due date. **No child will be denied religious education due to finances. A payment plan option is available. Please contact the parish catechetical leader for further information.**

There is an **additional \$75.00 fee** for students preparing for First Eucharist to be paid at the second parents' meeting in March. This fee is not paid at the time of registration.

For **Grade 8: Registration/ Confirmation Fee is a ONE TIME FEE (inclusive of gown, retreat, Liturgy, pins, flowers, music and miscellaneous expenses.)**

Visitors - Other than students, catechetical personnel and parish staff, no persons are permitted in the hallways, classrooms or restrooms during class sessions without the authorization of the Office of Faith Formation.

All visitors must enter at the Office of Faith Formation door and report to the office located on the second floor. Parents are always welcome, but **must register with the office first.**

Catechists are expected to notify the office if they notice anyone other than authorized persons in the building.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

If a catechist or the parish catechetical leader suspects a child has been abused, NJ State Statutes require that the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) be notified immediately. Failure to make such a report is punishable as a disorderly persons offense.

Catechists are required to notify the office immediately in the event of any student-on-student violence.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, WEAPONS

Students are forbidden to use or possess drugs, cigarettes, alcohol and weapons on Our Lady of the Mount property. If a student is found to be in possession of drugs, alcohol or weapons, the police will be notified. Suspension or expulsion from the program may be enforced upon review and consultation.

In addition, a catechist or the director will not send a student home with a driver who is visibly impaired. The parish catechetical leader reserves the right to call the emergency contact number.

RECORDS AND TRANSFER POLICY

The Office of Faith Formation maintains a permanent record card for each student in the program. This card contains important information that includes the records of sacraments that have been received.

Those entering the program must submit a copy of their baptismal certificate and record of religious education from their previous parish.

For those students moving to another parish, parents may request a copy of their child's records. Please provide the Office of Faith Formation with at least 10 days notice in order to prepare the form.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

RCIA (adapted for children) – Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults – The program is adapted to meet the needs of a child who has had little or no formal faith formation training. Please contact the parish catechetical leader.

Special Needs – . Please notify the parish catechetical leader of any special situation your child may have such as a learning classification and/or food allergies. This information will be kept strictly confidential and shared with the catechist with your permission. The information is used in order to provide the best learning situation for your child.

CURRICULUM

Our program utilizes the following Publishers. Parents are always encouraged to review the text and resources we have in the Office of Faith Formation .

Grade 1—Pflaum Gospel Weeklies and Promise

Grade 2—Sadlier Reconciliation and Eucharist

Grades 3 - 5—Our Sunday Visitors Call to Faith

Grade 6 - Our Sunday Visitor Alive in Christ

Grade 7—Catholic Dynamics—Decision Point - Part 1

Grade 8 - Catholic Dynamic– Decision Point - Part 2

RETREATS

Grade 2—TBA in the Fall

Grade 6—TBA in the Fall

Grade 7—TBA

Grade 8—TBA in the Fall

SERVICE HOURS/ FORMS

Grade 7—8 hours + 2 hours Soup Kitchen = 10 Hours Total
With **4** Christian Service Evaluation

Grade 8—8 hours + 2 hours Soup Kitchen = 10 Hours Total
And **4 Spiritual Encounters** using Sacramentals

Service Forms /Evaluation/Encounter Forms
will be made available

The Family Life Program

In addition to the basic course of study each year the RCL

Benziger Family Life Program is presented throughout grades one through eight. Five core themes are presented at each level based on the maturity and the comprehension of the children: Family Living, Personal Growth and Self-Understanding, Respect for Life, Catholic Christian Sexuality and Social Living.

Parents of students in grades 5 and 7 are notified by mail before the Family Life units begin.

Grade 7 and Grade 8—All Monday and Wednesday

students will have to attend a talk scheduled on the last quarter of Faith Formation school year. **These talks are mostly**

scheduled on a Monday. There will be no Wednesday class that same week in lieu of their Monday attendance.

Family Catechesis/ Activities

Engaging in service with one's family can be a powerful opportunity for experiencing God's love and growing in faith.

During the course of the year, there will be Parish events/and talks to be held.

Families are REQUIRED to participate in **3 of these events.**

Listing to be available by September.

The love of a family
is life's greatest
Blessing

Child(ren)'s Name _____

Grade Level(s) _____

I, the parent or legal guardian of the above mentioned child(ren), have read, understood, and agree to comply with all the policies and procedures listed in the Religious Education Parent Handbook:

Attendance at Liturgy
Behavior
Dress Code
Absences
Homework
Food Allergies
Testing
Progress Reports
Sacramental Programs Policy/Parents Meetings
Operating Information – see individual listing
Child Abuse Policy
Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons
Records and Transfer Policy
Curriculum

I understand and agree that my or my child's failure to abide by all of these policies and procedures may result in my child's suspension or removal from the program.

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____

(Checking **YES** in the ONLINE Registration Form means that you do understand and agree to the above stated policies.)

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