

# St. Anthony Parish



Faith  
Formation

## Family Handbook

2020 - 2021

## ***Introduction:***

St. Anthony's Faith Formation/Religious Education Program strongly supports the primary and essential role of parents in bringing children into a life of faith. It is by the parents' Christian example, their participation in the celebration of the Eucharist and their interest in the children's formal faith formation/religious education classes, that true knowledge and faith is developed.

### ***The Youth Faith Formation Program at St. Anthony's strives to:***

- **Help each individual involved develop a vibrant faith life.**
- **Encourage parents and children to grow in faith together.**
- **Challenge parents to continually grow in their faith as well.**
- **Recognize the gifts we all possess.**

## **Parental Covenant:**

You will be asked to sign the parental covenant, which states that, as primary educators of your children you agree to commit to sharing this responsibility with our faith community and to be an integral part of the religious education and formation of your child. By signing the covenant, you as parents are committed to working with your child at home as well as bringing your child to on campus faith formation events. You will also agree to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist on a regular basis, either in person or spiritually by attending Mass online.

## **Registration and Fees:**

Any family registered in St. Anthony's Parish has the right to enroll their children in the faith formation program sponsored by the parish. Registration is on a yearly basis. In order to plan properly, the children should be registered within the announced enrollment period.

For students preparing for a sacrament, absences are discouraged. Each lesson is very important for proper preparation. So, registration before sessions start on September 20, 2020 is crucial.

At the time of registration, please notify the Director of Faith Formation of any special needs, i.e. any dietary needs, allergies, special learning adaptations or concerns regarding your child.

Each family registered in the St. Anthony Faith Formation Program will be charged a tuition fee, as well as a sacramental preparation fee, if applicable. This fee covers the cost of learning and support materials not to mention building costs... and may be paid at the time of registration or parishioners can pay it at an arranged time. Periodic payments throughout the year is perfectly acceptable.

Any family who is financially unable to pay these fees should contact the Director of Faith Formation. A scholarship assistance fund is available for families to draw from, if finances are an issue.

If you cannot pay and would be willing to help out in one of the many volunteer opportunities available, that would be wonderful. **No child will be turned away because of inability to pay.**

## **Tuition fees for 2020 - 2021 year:**

- \$75.00 for 1 child.
- \$125.00 for 2 or more children
- \$40.00 - Home Study
- **\$50.00 per child extra charge for non-parishioners**

## **Fees for Sacramental preparation:**

- \*\$50, 00 for First Communion and Reconciliation
- \*\$50.00 for Confirmation

\*These fees are to cover the cost of extra books, materials, and events.

## **Communications**

The Rite of Baptism for Infants appropriately refers to parents as the foremost teachers of their children. It is the policy of St. Anthony's to maintain close communications with the parents as an integral part of the total formation program.

Parents' values and attitudes reflect their love for the Church and for others. Reverent reception of the Sacraments is an important part of parental teaching. This needs to be communicated by word and action.

Parents are encouraged to participate and help with special projects or as substitutes.

E-mail and texting is our most requested and direct form of communication. We are asking all parents to submit their e-mail address and cell phone number, so that we can communicate to you, important information, updates and reminders. And remember, communication is a two way street!

## **Academics:**

Parents will work with their child(ren) at the parish and at home to learn and share faith. In addition, parental assistance in helping them memorize the prayers they are to know, as recommended by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) (stated below) would be greatly appreciated.

## **Prayers and Doctrine to know: Age Specific.**

### **General Concepts for ages 3-5**

- Sign of the Cross
- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Meal Prayers
- Morning and night prayers.

### **General Concepts for ages 6-8**

- All of the above
- Act of Contrition
- Apostles Creed

*Introduce:*

- The 10 Commandments
- Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Reconciliation
- Holy Days
- Rosary

### **General Concepts for ages 9 - 11**

- All of the above
- Rosary
- Prayers of the Mass
- Nicene Creed

*Memorize:*

- Ten Commandments
- Holy Days
- Seven Sacraments
- Corporal Works of Mercy
- Spiritual Works of Mercy
- Mysteries of the Rosary

### **General Concepts for ages 12-14**

- All of the above
- Prayer of the Hours
- Psalms
- Way of the Cross

## Sacramental Preparation:

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation requires that your child be baptized in the Catholic Church or have made a Catholic Profession of Faith. We will need a copy of your child's Baptismal certificate at registration, unless of course, he/she has been baptized here at St. Anthony's. **All sacramental preparation is a two-year commitment.**

### Reconciliation

The expectation is that your child will receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist, during the second-grade year at the earliest. It is not enough to provide catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and allow parents and children to decide whether or not they wish to receive the sacrament; the normal expectation is that everyone be properly prepared and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before First Eucharist.

The focus of the Sacrament is in celebrating God's love and forgiveness. Because we experience God's love in this visible way, it enables us to also become more loving and forgiving. Your child can better understand and appreciate this if he/she also experiences forgiveness in the family.

**Your presence and participation at the following events is required and essential in helping your child to prepare properly for the sacrament. These are NOT optional.**

**Parent's/Guardians will be expected to attend the first (and all) "Families Celebrating Faith" sessions. At the first session on September 20, 2020, the whole year will be laid out. At later sessions, materials for at home preparation of Reconciliation will be handed out.**

As part of the preparation, we have scheduled a **Reconciliation Parent / Child day which will be celebrated on 2 different days and at 2 different times to lessen the numbers of people together. The days/times are January 23, 2021 from 4-6pm in Spanish and January 24, 2021 from 3- 5pm in English. If more times are needed, your family will be assigned a day/time.**

This time together will include parent catechesis as well as activities at various stations to help you and your child better understand this Sacrament.

We will then offer for the children, a communal penance service (with individual confessions) on **Saturday February 6, 2021 at 11am. (more times may be added to keep numbers of people low)**

### First Eucharist:

It is extremely important for your child to celebrate Mass in person or online during the pandemic **every week** so that he/she knows that celebrating Eucharist is something we do **as a community** on a regular basis. The word "Eucharist" means thanksgiving. We gather and are thankful for all we have in Jesus, and we are strengthened to be able to continue to live as the Body of Christ. If this has not been your pattern of worship, please take the opportunity to make this a priority. Your *example of faith* is essential to your child's *life of faith*.

**Your presence and participation at the following events is required and essential in helping your child to prepare properly for the sacrament. These are NOT optional.**

**Parent's/Guardians will be expected to attend the first (and all) "Families Celebrating Faith" sessions. At your first session on September 20, 2020, the whole year will be laid out. At later sessions, materials for at home preparation for First Eucharist will be handed out.**

## Calendar for First Reconciliation & First Eucharist

**Families Celebrating Faith (FCF) Dates:** September 20, 2020, November 1, 2020, December 6, 2020, January 10, 2021, February 14, 2021, March 21, 2021 and April 25, 2021.

Additional optional date: Sunday November 29, 2020 – Family Advent Activities

**First Reconciliation meeting & at home material handed out – December 6, 2020 @ FCF**

**Rite of Welcoming – Date TBD** This Blessing marks the beginning of their sacramental process. After this, they officially become candidates for the sacraments. It is a wonderful Rite that calls on the parents and community for a special blessing.

**First Reconciliation Parent/Child Day (retreat) – Saturday January 23, 2021 (Spanish) 4-6pm and Sunday January 24, 2021, (English) from 3-5pm. More times may be added,**

**Sacrament of First Reconciliation – Saturday February 6, 2021 at 11:00 am (Bi-Lingual)**

**First Eucharist meeting and at home materials handed out - February 14, 2021 @ FCF**

**Blessing of Candidates – Date TBD.** This special blessing celebrates the candidate's final preparation for the sacrament.

**First Eucharist Retreat (child only) – Saturday May 1, 2021. 2-4pm (English) and 4-6pm (Spanish)**

**First Eucharist Rehearsal – Thursday May 6, 2021 @ 6:00 pm in the church.**

**Celebration of First Eucharist – Saturday May 8, 2021 at 4 and 6pm Masses.**

**Celebration of First Eucharist – Sunday May 9, 2021 at 8 and 10 am Masses and at 5pm Mass.**

**Sunday June 6, 2021 - Feast of Corpus Christi. All who celebrated First Eucharist are asked to participate in the Corpus Christi Procession. (time to be announced)**

### ***Confirmation – “THE FLAME”***

Confirmation completes the Sacraments of Initiation and is celebrated in the fall of 9<sup>th</sup> grade. A student must be a practicing Catholic attending weekly liturgy (Mass) and have completed 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade faith formation and Confirmation preparation. Attendance at monthly “Confirmation” formation class is required. **Absences are not allowed for the “Confirmation” sessions as there are only 8 of them.** It is expected that all candidates for Confirmation also register for and participate in Middle School Youth Group as well as Confirmation sessions. If the candidate for Confirmation attends St. Anthony Catholic School, then he/she is not required to participate in Middle School Youth Group but is highly encouraged to do so.

As part of service to the community, Confirmation Candidates will be expected to help out at one or more, Families Celebrating Faith events, Children will be assigned a month.

The candidate for Confirmation and their parent is expected to attend all required parent meetings, as well as Confirmation retreat and rehearsal. Sponsors are welcome at any session, event... and must attend rehearsal.

**Important Dates for Confirmation Preparation: These days/events are NOT optional.**

**Confirmation Sessions: Kick off date – September 23, 2020 – Parent/Child Meeting. @ 6pm**

**Sessions - October 7, 2020, November 4, 2020, December 2, 2020, January 6, 2021, February 3, 2021, March 3, 2021, April 7, 2021, and May 5, 2021.**

Middle School Youth Ministry Sessions: In person sessions and Zoom sessions. (Location subject to change depending on pandemic)

**Saturday May 22, 2021** – Confirmation Retreat. 8am - 4pm. Parents and sponsors will join us at 4pm Mass for a special rite/blessing. Depending on numbers and the pandemic, there may be more than one date offered.

**Friday September 3, 2021** – Confirmation Rehearsal at 6:00 pm.

**Saturday September 4, 2021** – Celebration of Confirmation – 10:00 am.

Additional Rites may be included in the calendar with dates to be determined. You will receive plenty of notice about these special blessings.

**Please note\***

**Grade levels given for sacraments are the minimum guidelines. If your child is not ready, he/she may certainly wait an additional year or so. If you are concerned about their readiness, please speak with the Director of Faith Formation or the Pastor.**

## **Baptismal Preparation for Children 7+ years:**

Children will prepare through the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). Contact the Director of Faith Formation for more specifics.

## **Attendance and Absences:**

For on campus sessions, students should arrive no more than 10 minutes before class time and be picked up promptly at the end of class.

### **Absences:**

Attendance is taken. It is expected that parents will use the same guidelines as you would for your child's school attendance. If your child must be absent, please inform the parish/faith formation office. Parents are also responsible for picking up missed material from the church so that absences will not hinder the child's progress in class. Excessive absences, especially during a sacrament preparation year may necessitate a conference between the Director of Faith Formation and the child's parents.

### **Tardiness:**

As scheduled class time is short and moves quickly, it is important that parents make every effort to see that their children arrive on time and plan on staying for the entire class period.

## **Mass Attendance:**

**Faith Formation** class is NOT a substitute for our Sunday obligation to attend liturgy (participate virtually) or participate in other sacraments, such as Reconciliation / Penance. To properly form the youth in the Catholic faith, the faith formation process relies upon the children's ongoing experience of the larger faith community which includes active participation in the Sunday Eucharist, other sacraments and church traditions. Parents make a commitment recognizing the **IMPORTANCE** of the Sunday Liturgy by signing the covenant at the first parent/child gathering.

## **Class Times:**

### **Elementary – Families Celebrating Faith (FCF)**

**Dates: September 20, 2020, November 1, 2020, December 6, 2020, January 10, 2021, February 14, 2021, March 21, 2021 and April 25, 2021.** We will be offering these family session 2 or 3 times on a given date, depending on the number of families registered. Times TBD.

The rest of the weeks of the month will be done at home with the parent. This is not individual catechesis, the at home lessons are intended to be done as a family.

### **Middle School Youth Group “IGNITE” – Grades 6 – 8**

Begins with a parent/child on campus kick off – Wednesday **September 23, 2020** from 6pm – 7:30.

Meet in person 2020 - 9/30, 10/14, 11/11 and 12/9.

2021 - 1/13, 2/10, 3/10 and 4/14.

Time/Location – FDC from 6pm -7:30 pm.

Meet virtually 2020 – 10/21 and 28, 11/18, 12/16. 2021 – 1/20 and 27, 2/17 and 24, 3/17,

and 4/21 and 28.

Time/Location – 6pm – 7:30 on Zoom,

### **High School Youth Ministry**

**Sunday following 5pm liturgy**

## **Inclement Weather:**

If severe weather warning has been issued during class time, children will not be allowed to leave the building unless their parent or guardian accompanies them.

## **Disciplinary Procedures and Policies:**

We are establishing a specific behavior code. We hope that by establishing guidelines for behavior, we will be able to maintain a thoughtful and orderly learning environment. Our intent is to provide our children with a truly spiritual faith formation opportunity.

## **Child Pick up and Drop off:**

Elementary faith formation always has a parent present.

Middle school children will be released to find their parent in the parking lot. Catechist will be a part of this process, and will wait and watch until every child is picked up.

Parking Lot: We realize that schedules are crazy now a day, but please keep in mind that there are children walking through the parking lot. Please drive slowly and carefully. Just imagine if you are the cause of someone or something getting hurt.

## **Code of Student Behavior:**

It is up to the parents to go over this policy with their child(ren) before sessions begin, and for the catechist to repeat this Code of Student Behavior at the beginning of the year:

- Students will always be polite and respectful toward the faith formation staff and catechists, as well as other students. There will be no use of abusive or insulting language or any conduct unbecoming a Christian student.
- No cell phones or other electronic equipment in class.

- Students will behave appropriately and respectfully and will not be disruptive in class.
- Classroom materials are to be used properly, not damaged, destroyed or wasted.
- Students will not interrupt catechists or other students.
- Students are to remain in the classroom unless given permission to do otherwise.
- For the safety of all, no roller blades, skateboards or roller shoes are allowed in the building.
- Students will come to class prepared.

### **Actions Taken to Correct Inappropriate Behavior:**

1<sup>st</sup> offence: Verbal warning from catechist after taking the child aside.

2<sup>nd</sup> offence: Verbal warning from catechist, and child's removal from class. They will be taken to the Director of Faith Formation. If a satisfactory solution has occurred, the child will be escorted back to class. Parents will be called and made aware of the situation.

3<sup>rd</sup> offence: After 3 accumulated class removals; the parents will be called and asked to come in for a conference with the student, parent, catechist and Director of Faith Formation. If the child is not responsive to these actions, the parents will be asked to attend the sessions with their child. (We will do all we can to assure this does not happen, however, we need to keep this option open.)

*St Anthony Catholic Church \* 2020 -2021*



# Parental Covenant

**Parents are always the primary catechist (teacher) for their children in matters of faith. Faith formation classes build on and enrich what you are already doing in the family.**

**Therefore,**

**You agree to commit to sharing this responsibility with our faith community here at St. Anthony's and to be an integral part of the religious education and formation of your child(ren).**

**Also, by signing this covenant, you as parents agree to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist on a regular basis.**

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Children:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Remember parents ... faith is *not taught*, so much as it is *caught*.**