



ST. MONICA CATHOLIC CHURCH

# FAITH FORMATION

Family Handbook

Grades 1-5

2021 - 2022



## **St. Monica Faith Formation**

### Introduction

Here at St. Monica we are committed to the faith and spiritual development of our children. Our ethos reflects that of the United States Conference of Bishops, “to provide an atmosphere in which the gospel message is proclaimed, community in Christ is experienced, service to our sisters and brothers is the norm, and thanksgiving and worship of our God is cultivated.” (*Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Education and Secondary Schools*, Washington, D.C., 2005). Our commitment is to support the family’s life-long relationship with God in the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church.

It is worth remembering that on the day of your child’s baptism the Church reminded parents that they are the “primary teachers of their child in the ways of the Faith.” Leaving the religious formation of your children solely to the parish will not allow them to develop a real and personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Practicing your faith as a family is crucial.

The Faith Formation Programs for children at St. Monica Parish are designed to nurture an ever-growing, life-long relationship with God. The programs feature innovative, age-appropriate faith learning and life applications. Content is based on Scripture, Liturgy, the Sacraments, and Sacred Tradition. At the heart of the programs are liturgy and prayer. The programs encourage our children and youth to rely on their faith as they live in a world that does not always share gospel values.

This year, St. Monica is offering Faith Formation from Kindergarten through 5th grade, along with Middle School and Confirmation programs. It is expected that children be enrolled each year leading to acceptance in our Confirmation program. Yearly participation in Faith Formation shows the importance of your child’s deepening and developing faith as they grow and mature in years.

St. Monica Parish is in full compliance with the requirements from the USCCB regarding protection and safety of minors. All catechists receive ongoing education regarding these issues. Children enrolled in our program are required to participate in the “Circle of Grace” program that is presented during the school year. This is mandated by the United States Conference of Bishops.

***Christ calls all the faithful to proclaim the Good News everywhere in the world and to hand his message on to successive generations by professing, living, and celebrating the faith in Liturgy and prayer. (National Directory for Catechesis, p. 41)***



## **St. Monica Faith Formation** **Policies**

### **COVID-19 Guidelines**

The health and safety of our students, catechists and staff is of the utmost importance. Protocols related to the Covid pandemic will reflect the most current Contra Costa County health orders. Updates to these protocols will be provided as needed.

### **Attendance**

Children enrolled in the age-appropriate continuing Faith Formation and Sacramental Preparation programs at St. Monica are expected to attend *all* classes. Parents/guardians should communicate with their teacher concerning absences. Excused absence are limited to 3, excessive absences will be reviewed. All Sacramental Preparation students and at least one parent are required to attend all preparation events.

### **Arrival and Departure**

In the interest of your child's safety and to ensure proper supervision, students should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before the scheduled class time. This will provide time for the volunteer catechists and assistant to arrive and set up for the lesson. At dismissal, the parents will meet the children at their assigned classroom and sign out their child each week, unless you specifically state otherwise when registering your child. If you are delayed, the child will remain in the Faith Formation Office until you arrive.

### **Tardiness**

Please do all you can to insure your child's prompt arrival for class, both in person and via video conference. Participation is very important and late arrival disrupts the class in progress. A child arriving after the session begins will be marked tardy.

### **Custodial Rights**

Any issues regarding custodial rights should be brought to the attention of parish staff in a timely manner.

### **Behavior**

We are all called into relationship as human beings with God, self, others and all of creation. To help foster in all of our activities, we expect mutual respect from both catechists and children. A child's behavior must not interfere with any activity in class or on the Church premises. Everyone is expected to behave in a Christian manner, caring for and respecting one another. Children who show disrespect in class, to the catechist, or to one another will be corrected by the catechist or a member of the Faith Formation staff. A meeting with parents may be requested to resolve a problem.

Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to:

- disrespect to others
- disruptive actions or words
- intentionally injuring another person with physical or verbal abuse
- defacing or destroying Church or another's property
- bringing inappropriate items to class (including anti-Christian, dangerous, or offensive items or clothing)

At any time, families may request a meeting with Fr. Coleman. Our commitment is to help guide each child in his or her journey with the Lord. It is a commitment in love and patience.



## Sacramental Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion

*The liturgical life of the church revolves around the sacraments, with the Eucharist at the center. Catechesis for the Eucharist recognizes it as the heart of Christian life for the whole Church, for the dioceses, and parishes, and for each individual Christian. (National Directory for Catechesis, pp. 113 and 124.)*

The program to prepare your child for First Holy Communion will teach them the True and Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Below are some of the requirements worth noting:

1. First Holy Communion preparation is a two-year process.
2. The child must be at least seven years of age at the time the Sacrament of First Holy Communion is celebrated. The child must have completed one full year of Catholic Faith Formation in a parish program before beginning the second year of preparation at Saint Monica Parish.
3. If the child completed the first year of the program at a parish/school other than Saint Monica, a letter must be obtained from that parish/school and presented at the time of registration.
4. Parents or guardians must be registered members of Saint Monica parish.
5. The child must be registered in and regularly attend Faith Formation sessions at Saint Monica Parish.
6. Parents must attend special meetings and parent sessions with/for their child celebrating First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.
7. Children validly baptized in another Christian tradition will make a Profession of Faith and then celebrate First Holy Communion after having completed the entire two years of Faith Formation. Please talk with Fr. Paul if this pertains to your family situation.
8. Regular Sunday Mass attendance is required of all of our Faith Formation participants, but is particularly important for our First Communicants.



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## **St. Monica Faith Formation** Registration Information

### **Class Times**

Grades K - 5 Faith Formation classes will take place on Wednesdays from 2:15pm to 3:15pm and will run from September 15th through May 18th, excluding both religious and public holidays.

### **Tuition Fees**

Faith Formation Grades K - 5	\$195 per student
First Holy Communion Sacrament Fee	\$100 per student receiving the sacrament <u>this year</u>

*Please do not hesitate to discuss financial assistance with our office.  
All requests will be handled confidentially.*

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### **How to Register**

Please note, in order for your child/ren to enroll in any of our programs they must be from a family who are registered and attending church here at St. Monica. If you have yet to register, you may do so online at **<https://stmonicamoraga.com/registration>**. Faith Formation Registration will only be approved once parish registration has been verified. Weekly Sunday participation at Mass and contributing to the support of our parish are integral requisites to being part of the Faith Formation program here at St. Monica.

In order to complete the Faith Formation registration process you must:

- Fill out our online Faith Formation Registration form, found at **<https://stmonicamoraga.com/register-for-fall-classes>**. Here you can pay your tuition via check or credit card.
- Provide a baptismal certificate for all first-time registrants, including incoming kindergarteners and older children who are new to our program. This can be scanned and emailed to [children@stmonicamoraga.com](mailto:children@stmonicamoraga.com) or dropped by the parish office.
- Provide a letter of transfer if your child has completed the previous year's Faith Formation at another parish. This can be scanned and emailed to [children@stmonicamoraga.com](mailto:children@stmonicamoraga.com) or dropped by the parish office.

**We are thankful and look forward to journeying together in the Faith  
with you and your family this coming year.**