

Sacred Heart & St. Bernadette Faith Formation Handbook

2020-2021



The Family Ministry Team's goal of Catholic Faith Formation is to deepen the awareness of God's presence in our lives, to foster an atmosphere of love and respect for others, to serve those in need, and to encourage spiritual growth through prayer and the Sacraments.

Family Ministry Team
at
Sacred Heart & St Bernadette Parishes

September 2020

Hello and welcome to a new year of Faith Formation! We look forward to building and growing in faith with your family this year. Allow this handbook to be a guide in regards to policies and goals for the year.

The theme for our program this year is *Be Fishers of Men*. Together, parents and catechists will work on building up the faith of each student and helping them to grow in their relationship with Jesus. Catechists and their assistants will be helping your child/ren throughout the year to learn about their Catholic faith and have an encounter with our Lord. As supporting parents and the first teachers of the faith, we expect this to be a priority at home as well.

When you enroll your child (children) in our Faith Formation program, it is implied that you agree and comply, to the best of your ability, to volunteer with our program and to adhere to the policies set forth in this handbook. Please make sure you look through this document *carefully* and contact us if there are any questions or concerns.

Within our faith, the Rite of Baptism states that **parents are the first teachers of the faith**. Therefore, the focus of our program is to lend support and encouragement to the parents in the faith formation of their children that has already begun at home. This means that parental interest and participation in the program is essential:

We know this year will look different from any other, and we are willing to be flexible if you are! We also know that Jesus is with us yesterday, today, and tomorrow - we need to follow Him! This will be a great year for Faith Formation! May God continue to bless our program as we, through the intercession of Mary and the Saints, say YES when He calls our name (Matthew 4:19).

Blessings,

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Arrival and Dismissal Guidelines

Faith Formation staff and volunteers require safe, orderly and timely procedures for the arrival and dismissal of all students under their care.

Students should arrive on time and if a student is arriving late, he or she must check-in before reporting to the classroom.

Parents are asked to wait outside of the building or in their vehicles in the parking lot when picking up their child/children from class. Please do not park in front of the building as this creates a safety hazard for those going into the parking lot. During the winter months, please encourage your student(s) to wait inside the building to be picked up. If a student has not been picked up after 10 minutes after class has ended, a parent/guardian will be contacted.

Missing all or part of scheduled sessions does impact a student's faith formation. If a student must be absent, please call the parish office during regular (8:30 am – 3:30 pm) office hours prior to class. Notification is also required for late arrival and/or early dismissal. A written note from the parent to the Faith Formation staff prior to class is a welcomed alternative whenever possible. Phone calls will be made to homes of absent students who have given no prior notice to ensure students safety.

If Public Schools are closed on a Wednesday due to a snow day or other inclement weather conditions, Faith Formation classes will also be cancelled. An announcement will be broadcast on **Channel 2 WBAY** television station. If weather gets bad during the day an announcement on television will be made by 5:00 p.m. We will also post on our Facebook group, send a text through the Remind app, and send an email home.

Similarly to our area schools, if there is a case of COVID-19 in our program, parents of children within the specific class will be notified. These families will be asked to participate in faith formation at home until the local health officials give the "OK" to return in-person.

Discipline Guidelines

If a child's behavior disrupts the learning process for him or herself or for others, the steps listed below will be followed to ensure that class participation may continue.

- At the first incident the student will be reminded of expected behavior and the consequences of misbehavior set by the catechist and students.
- After the third incident, the student will be sent to the office for a discussion with the staff and/or Pastor about appropriate behavior. The student will be allowed the opportunity to rejoin the class if an understanding can be reached as to how all involved may continue to learn and grow in their faith.
- After returning to class, if inappropriate behavior continues, the student will be sent to the office to do his or her class assignment. The student's parent/guardian will be contacted to have a meeting with the Director of Catholic Formation and the pastor, if necessary.
- Once parents are contacted alternate plans will be made if the child cannot behave in class.

Health Concerns

It is understood that from time to time children will not feel well or accidents will happen during Formation classes. While we have good first aid supplies, it is essential for us to have emergency contact information for each student if necessary. Children who are not feeling well may call a parent/guardian for early pick up. An adult will stay with the students while s/he is waiting. No medication will be distributed to any child without a written request from the parent. In the event that medication is necessary, arrangements must be made with the Staff.

Because we have children coming from different schools, notification is essential when children are exposed to COVID-19, lice, chicken pox, or pink eye so that all parents/guardians can be made aware.

Child Abuse

See the policy set forth by the Diocese of Green Bay entitled, "Safe Environment Social Communication Policy." Copies of this policy are available on the diocesan website www.gbdioc.org.

Curriculum

Growing in and learning about faith doesn't stop with receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation or completing a particular grade; faith is ongoing and our study of it is as well.

Students in grades K-5 meet on Wednesdays from 4:45-6:00 pm at the Sacred Heart site, and grades 6-11 from 6:30-7:45 pm at the St Bernadette site.

Wednesday Faith Formation curriculum is in compliance with the standards set forth by the Diocese of Green Bay. These standards are on file in the Faith Formation office. Therefore, it is expected and essential for families to participate in Life & Faith evening/videos (especially grades K-7) so that as parents, you are modeling good participation for your children.

The following are the texts for each grade for the 2020-2021 year:

Grades K-5

Texts: Family of Faith and Spirit of Truth
Published by Sophia Institute

Grades 6-7

Texts: Family of Faith and Spirit of Truth
Published by Sophia Institute

Grade 8

Texts: Encounter (Bible Timeline) and History of the Diocese of Green Bay
Published by: Ascension Press and Editions du Signe

High School (grades 9-10)

Text: Did Adam and Eve Have Belly Buttons?
Published by: Ascension Press

Confirmation (grade 11/12)

Text: CHOSEN
Published by: Ascension Press



Sacraments

Reconciliation

As primary catechists, parents are encouraged to practice forgiveness in the home and to be an example to their children in both the teaching and reception of the Sacrament. Formal preparation for reconciliation at the parish begins in the first grade with the child learning about Jesus and his role in salvation history. Further catechesis takes place in second grade in **both** the classroom **and** the home. Parental formation is essential in this process as it is the choice of the parent as to whether or not the child is ready to receive this sacrament. Meetings for parents are held in the fall and families preparing for this sacrament are expected to attend the retreat. Students are expected to attend Faith Formation classes on a regular basis.

If your child is beyond second grade, please inform the Faith Formation office.

There will be opportunities throughout the year for students in grades 3-Confirmation to receive this Sacrament during class time.

Eucharist

Parental involvement in preparation for First Communion is essential. Children learn from hands-on experience; therefore, family meals around the table and participation in Sunday liturgy are the most important points of preparation for this sacrament. It is within the home that preparation starts for the reception of this sacrament. Catechesis in second grade focuses on receiving Jesus in the Eucharist and experiencing Eucharist within the family. Parents will attend meetings during the winter and spring to receive materials for home preparation that enhance what the children are learning in the classroom. In the spring the children and their parents will attend "Jesus Day," a fun-filled morning retreat to help us focus more intently on the First Communion day and what Eucharist means to the family.

First Communion is generally celebrated in the spring. The readiness of the child for this sacrament is the decision of the parent. Further catechesis is available for a child who might not yet be ready for First Communion in the second grade.

Contact the parish if your child has not received Communion and is beyond second grade.

Confirmation

Confirmation is the completion of baptism, with the Holy Spirit coming more fully into the lives of believers. The sacrament is celebrated at St. Bernadette with those students who are seniors/juniors in high school. Those wishing to be confirmed must be baptized, have received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion and should show *"a sincere desire to know Jesus better, a sufficient understanding of the meaning of Confirmation, a willingness to participate in the life of the Church, a desire to deepen their faith through prayer, and be studying with regular attendance at Mass."* Candidates will be expected to have an interview with the pastor at some point towards the end of the process.

The Confirmation process, along with all previous sacraments, requires parental involvement in order for growth and development to occur for the candidate. Parents are expected to attend an initial meeting in the fall to learn about the process; parents are to aid their son or daughter in choosing a sponsor and to fill in at events when the sponsor is not available.

As in Baptism, sponsors are requested and play an active role in the Confirmation preparation. A sponsor must be a practicing Catholic of at least 18 years of age or older who has been Baptized, and received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion and Confirmation. This person is one who is sufficiently mature enough to carry out the responsibilities and requirements of the sponsor. The sponsor, who must be someone other than parents, attends Mass regularly and is supportive in matters of faith. This sponsor can come from many resources including grandparents, neighbors, parishioners, older siblings, godparents, or religion teachers. The sponsors are asked to attend occasional special classes with candidates throughout the year, and attend Confirmation rehearsal and the Confirmation liturgy.

Since the earliest days of the Sacrament of Confirmation, candidates have been asked to select a patron saint's name; the saint serves as their model for life. By choosing a saint's name, they are asking not only that the particular saint to guide and direct their actions, but that the Church recognizes them through a Christian name. Research on saints is required by the students and a selection of the saint's name must be decided during the process. Baptismal names may be used for a Confirmation name as long as the candidate does research on that saint.