

Faith Formation Parent Packet

(For non-sacramental preparation
classes)



St. Patrick's, Anchorage, AK

2021-2022

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Introduction

Welcome to St. Patrick's Faith Formation program! Our program is designed with the overarching goal of helping children establish and explore their relationship with the Lord. At each grade level, we will work on teaching about the personhood of God, how to pray, and how we are so loved by God. While we do try our best to make Faith Formation fun and exciting, it is class. We strongly encourage our families to attend our parish and family activities whenever possible.

Our primary objective is the safety of everyone at our church at all times. The safety of our students, volunteers, parents, and staff should never be compromised. Should you feel uncomfortable or have questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact the parish office.

This packet is designed to inform and prepare you for the Faith Formation year. Each step is designed to follow the Archdiocesan norms.

Your child will be provided a book (if age appropriate) and a calendar at the beginning of the year.

If at any point in time you have questions, concerns, or comments, please reach out to Mary Allison, Director of Catechetical Ministry (DCM) at mallison@st.patsak.org.

Parish Registration:

If you are NOT a registered parishioner and do not wish to change your registration, but you would like your child's Faith Formation to occur at St. Patrick's, we require a letter from your pastor granting permission ANNUALLY.

Please see the back of this packet for more information on Safe Environment, parish policies, communication information, prayers to know, and more.

Preschool/Kindergarten

NOTE: While available for ages 3 and 4, all children should be potty-trained before being registered.

Available Options

Conventional Faith Formation

Preschool and kindergarten students enrolled in conventional Faith Formation will complete *Image of God, Ignatius Press*. A calendar will be provided at the beginning of the year. We run on a two year cycle, so as to allow variety between age 3 and 4. This is an interactive program designed to teach preschoolers who God is.

Due to facility and registration status, we are combining these children into one class.

Home/Catholic School

If you would prefer to work with your preschooler/kindergartener at home, we are happy to provide the resources to support that decision. Please register as “homeschool” and contact Mary for more information.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)

Some families may choose to enroll their preschooler/kindergartener in CGS. This is a Montessori style Faith Formation option. Like conventional Faith Formation, this is an interactive experience. However, they run on the liturgical year as opposed to the book. CGS uses a child’s developmental and psychological profile to lead them to the Lord.

3rd-8th Grades

Available Options

Conventional Faith Formation

3rd through 8th Grade will work through the *Faith and Life series*. Parents should read the chapter with their child at home (or confirm their child read it) before the class and sign in the corresponding location. We will, throughout the year, randomly check the calendars and reward students with signatures with a surprise of some kind (often a donut).

We ask that you do not staple or otherwise mark up at the book, as your child will return it at the end of the year.

These grades are combined as well: 3rd and 4th, 5th and 6th, and 7th and 8th. Each class uses the book for the lower grade (it's written a grade above, so they suit both ages).

Home/Catholic School

If you would prefer to work with your child(ren) at home, we are happy to provide the resources to support that decision. Please register as "homeschool" and contact Mary for more information.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Some families may choose to enroll their children into Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS). This is a Montessori style Faith Formation option. Like conventional Faith Formation, this is an interactive experience. However, they run on the liturgical year as opposed to the book. CGS uses a child's developmental and psychological profile to lead them to the Lord.

Only students who have been in CGS in previous years may register for Level 3. Thank you for patience as we build our program.

Additional Requirements

All families are expected to regularly attend Sunday Mass.

We ask that parents sign up as a parent helper at least twice during the year. This helps us maintain a safe environment for everyone. Parents are invited to sign up as many times as they like and are always welcome in our classrooms. If your child's catechist says otherwise, please inform Mary immediately.

Post-Confirmation

NOTE: This is for high school students only, who have received the Sacrament of Confirmation and wish to explore their faith more.

This is a student led class, in which the catechists work with our post-Confirmation teens to explore what they want to learn. This can range from apologetics to Scripture to lives of the Saints. While this class has a huge social component (murder mystery dinner, etc) it is still a class.

Faith Formation Policies

Attendance

Children are expected to attend each class. Two absences are permitted, barring emergencies. **We ask that parents bring children in 6th grade and under directly to their classroom and pick them in their classroom for safety's sake. 7th through 8th grade students may be picked up at the cloister door.**

COVID

After serious consideration, we will follow the ASD and Catholic School guidelines in regard to masks. Therefore, **everyone attending Faith Formation must wear a mask while indoors.** We will also do our best to maintain the 3 foot distancing guideline. As we have several catechists and a handful of students who are considered high risk, these guidelines are essential to protecting our youth, our volunteers, our parents, and our staff.

Communication

All communication will come from Flocknote.

Please text **"ireland"** to **84576** to join our Flocknote group. Be sure to join the 1st Communion group. All reminders, emergency notifications, etc. will be sent via Flocknote. Should we need to cancel class for any reason, we will notify you via Flocknote.



Safe Environment Policies

1. Archdiocesan norms

All adults who work with youth are required to be background checked AND pass Safe Environment training. Adults who choose not to go ahead with these, are asked to step back from working with our children.

There should always be **two** adults with children.

2. Parish Policies

Catechists are required to, in addition to the Safe Environment training, take a one hour training with Mary.

Parents are permitted and encouraged to attend class with their child. **NOTHING WE DO IS SECRET!**

Those working with youth should be at least 21 years old. College students who wish to work with youth should do so with other adults to mentor them.

Parish Policies

1. Students Arrival/Dismissal

Students in elementary school **MUST** be dropped off and picked up from their classroom(s). Middle school students may be dropped off and picked up by the Cloister doors.

2. Discipline and Rules

We understand that little ones like to wiggle around, ask incessant and sometimes inappropriate questions, and have a hard time paying attention for long periods of time. Catechists should use their best judgement as to when a child is just being a child and when they have crossed a line in behavior. We ask catechists to be as patient as possible; **HOWEVER**, they should never feel like they are overwhelmed, are being abused by their students, or disrespected. As such, they will use their first class session to go over the rules and expectations.

1. Safety is the most important rule. Children and adults should never do anything to compromise the safety of themselves or others.
2. We treat each other with respect and compassion. We give each other our personal space, we share when possible, we raise our hands so everyone has a chance to be heard, and we are respectful of other people's ideas, bodies, and property.
3. We respect the property we are using.
4. We respect God. There should never be any blasphemy.
5. We respect those in authority.
6. No cell phones in class.

OUR DISCIPLINE POLICY AT ST. PATRICK'S IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. First time a student misbehaves, the catechist should issue a warning. This should include an explanation of which rule was broken and how, why we have this rule, and what happens should the child continue to misbehave. Mary is informed after class, unless the situation is dangerous.

2. Second time a student a misbehaves, we call their parents. The catechist will again inform the student which rule was broken and how, why we have this rule, and that Mary will be calling home to discuss this with their parents. Mary will be informed immediately following class.

3. Third time a student misbehaves, we ask that they study at home OR a parent comes to each class with them. The catechist should again inform the student which rule was broken and how, why we have this rule, and that Mary will be calling their parents. Mary will be informed immediately after class.

8. Family issues

Unfortunately, in today's times, many of our students come from broken homes. Sometimes, we are faced with a situation in which a child may not be permitted to be near one parent by law. In this case, the parent/guardian must inform Mary and the parish office of the situation as much as necessary to protect our youth.

Please contact Mary at any time you have questions, comments, or concerns!

We can only help solve a problem if we know there is one. Please do not hesitate to contact the office or email Mary at mallison@st.patsak.org

Prayers to Memorize

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women, and blest is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us,
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Grace Before Meals

Bless us, oh Lord,
And these, thy gifts,
Which we're about to receive
From thy bounty,
Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Guardian Angel Prayer

Angel of God,
My guardian dear,
To whom God's love
Commits me here
Ever this day
Be at my side
To light and guard,
To rule and guide. Amen.