



# **Policies and Procedures for Faith Formation 2020-2021**

**St. Michael the Archangel Parish  
Diocese of Madison**

8/19/2020

## **Expectations for the Return to Faith Formation in 2020-21**

In light of our current situation in this time of COVID-19, St. Michael the Archangel Parish will strive to maintain the integrity of its parish formation program while keeping the parish, children, and volunteers safe. Parish programs that are returning to live in-person formation include grade school, middle school, and high school formation and sacramental preparation (First Reconciliation, First Communion, Confirmation, and RCIA/children's catechumenate).

In order to comply with state and county guidelines, the Diocese of Madison has found it prudent to establish policies and procedures to meet the needs of the faithful in each of the 11 counties in the state.

### ***Policy & Procedures***

- In accordance with Diocesan guidelines, St. Michael the Archangel Parish has created this Policy & Procedures document, which includes: (1) Formation guidelines, (2) Protective Measure guidelines, (3) Hygiene & Cleaning guidelines, and (4) Policy & Procedures for COVID-19 Exposure & Positive Tests.
- This document will be reviewed regularly and updated as local ordinances are adjusted.

### ***Formation Opportunities***

- St. Michael the Archangel Parish will provide the opportunity for in-person faith formation at the parish for the 2020-21 school year. The formation schedule will follow the usual faith formation schedule beginning in September for children in grade school, middle school and high school.
- St. Michael the Archangel Parish will provide an at-home learning option for families who are choose not to return to in-person formation.
- In the event of another "safer at home" order or similar shutdown, all in-person classes will be replaced by an at-home study program.

## Protective Measure Guidelines

- **Children's Personal Health Check:** Parents should check the temperature of children daily before they attend any faith formation event. If children have any symptoms of sickness (temperature, cough, runny nose, vomiting or diarrhea), they are not permitted to attend the event on that day. Children should be symptom free without medicine for 24 hours before returning to the parish.
- **Adult Participants/Catechists/Adult Volunteers Health Check:** Catechists, adult participants and volunteers who assist in catechetical programming should take a daily temperature of themselves before attending formation at the parish. If adults have any symptoms of sickness (temperature, cough, runny nose, vomiting, or diarrhea), they are not permitted to attend an event on that day. Adults should be symptom free without medicine for 24 hours before returning to the parish.
- **Attendance:** The attendance guidelines (number of permitted individuals) proposed by Dane county will be adhered to and adjusted according to any changes made in county policy.
- **Social Distancing:** Parish leaders will take time each day to remind participants of proper social distancing. In each space that is used, markings will be placed on the floor and/or seating placed to indicate to participants where to sit/stand with appropriate space between each person (6 feet to the greatest extent possible). This will help them maintain an appropriate distance while attending events. Participants will have assigned seating and remain sitting in the same space when they return to a room to minimize the spread of germs.
- **Masking:** Masking is required at this time in the State of Wisconsin according to a statewide mandate issued by Governor Evers for all individuals who are age 5 and up. Those who are unable to wear a face covering for reasons of health, such as difficulty breathing, are exempt from the order, but they should keep socially distant (6 feet to the greatest extent possible) while attending faith formation.
- **Signage:** The parish will post social-distancing, face-masking, and hand-sanitizing signage at appropriate and visible locations.
- **Games:** Games that will be played during formation times will have minimal personal contact and respect social-distancing guidelines.
- **Large Group Events:** Large group gatherings will be held only in rare occasions, and county guidelines will be met with space and appropriate social distancing.
- **Classroom/Formation Spaces:** Tables, desks, and frequently touched surfaces will be sanitized at the end of each day after use. Desks and learning spaces will be set up in an arrangement that allows participants to be social distanced at 6 feet apart to the greatest extent possible.
- **Classroom Materials:** Each person should have his or her own supplies to use during formation sessions. The sharing of materials will be eliminated to mitigate the passing of germs from one individual to another.
- **Drop-Off & Pick-Up:** The parish will inform parents of procedures for entrances and exits when dropping off and picking up their children. This system will aim to avoid large gatherings of people in small and confined spaces.

## Hygiene Guidelines

- **Healthy and Safety:** The parish is committed to safeguarding the health and safety of all who enter the building. Therefore, all who attend formation should comply with the parish hygiene policy.
- **Physical Contact:** Parish catechetical leaders, catechists, and volunteers should avoid physical contact with participants and should encourage participants to maintain appropriate social distancing.
- **Hygiene Reminders:** Parish catechetical leaders and catechists should regularly (at the beginning of each event) remind participants of the importance of hygiene policies (e.g., handwashing, not touching faces, and proper sneezing, coughing, and talking in a way that does not spread germs).
- **Signage:** The parish will post visible signage outlining health and safety procedures and hygiene reminders.
- **Sanitizing Stations:** The parish will make available hand washing/sanitizing stations in frequently used spaces (classrooms, parish hall, school entryways, hallways, bathrooms, etc.) for ease of repeated use.
- **Handwashing:** All individuals should sanitize hands as they enter a classroom, after using the restroom, before and after consuming any food, and after any recess/free times.
- **Sharing Materials:** Participants in formation programs should not share materials but rather bring their own or be assigned materials for their personal use.

## Food Safety Guidelines

- **Snacks:** Food and snacks will be limited during regular classes. On the occasions when food is offered as an incentive from teachers, only individually wrapped snacks will be given out to students to be consumed at home.
- **Food Distribution:** When food is made available at a formation event, one adult will be assigned to distribute food and drinks. Individual serving is not permitted. Those who are assigned to distribute food must be wearing a face covering and gloves.
- **Sharing Food:** Individuals are not permitted to share food or drinks at the parish.
- **Sanitation:** The classroom will sanitize eating tables and chairs after individuals have snacked or eaten meals.

## Cleaning Guidelines

- **Commitment to Cleaning:** All parish staff/catechetical leaders and volunteers must be fully committed to safeguarding the health and safety of all individuals by complying with cleaning policies in each parish/facility.
- **Cleaning Instruction:** All catechetical leaders and volunteers will be instructed on the facility cleaning policy.
- **Cleaning Basics:** Regular cleaning will include (but is not limited to):
  - Using proper disinfecting solutions.
  - Wiping down frequently touched surfaces before and after every session (desks, chairs, tables, door handles, etc.).
  - Cleaning restrooms after formation sessions.
  - A regular deep cleaning schedule.

## Policy & Procedures for COVID-19 Exposure & Positive Tests

- **Transparency & Charity:** All those involved in faith formation (parish catechetical leaders, catechists, volunteers, and participants) should be transparent and honest about any health concerns related to the COVID-19 situation. We must always act in charity in our response to possible COVID-19 symptoms or concerns. For example, we would always assume in charity that someone not wearing a mask has a good reason for not doing so.
- **Response to Catechists/Volunteers Who Test Positive for COVID-19:** If an employee, parish catechetical leader, catechist, or volunteer tests positive for COVID -19, the spaces in which that person worked or resided will be closed off and deep cleaned. The individual will be expected to be quarantined for 10 days (or according to local county ordinance) and should not return to serve in the parish unless he or she meets the following criteria: fever free for 3 days (without medicine), symptoms have subsided, county requirements for quarantine have been observed, or at least 10 days have passed without any symptoms.
- **Response of Those Who Show Symptoms, Have Been Exposed or Suspect Illness:** Those who begin to show symptoms of illness or suspect illness should not attend formation sessions. A space that was occupied by the individual will be disinfected. The individual should choose a self-imposed quarantine (according to county guidelines) and seek a COVID-19 test. No one should return to service until any necessary quarantine ends and symptoms have subsided.
- **Children/Families Who Test Positive for COVID-19:** If a participant in faith formation tests positive for COVID-19, the spaces which that person occupied will be closed off and deep cleaned. The individual will be expected to be quarantined for 10 days (or according to local county ordinance). A participant should not return to the parish unless he or she meets the following criteria: fever free for 3 days (without medicine), symptoms have subsided, county requirements for quarantine have been observed, or at least 10 days have passed without any symptoms. Families who have one member who tests positive for COVID-19 should assume that all members have been exposed. Families ought to consider quarantining as a unit or having all members tested. Members of the family should not return to formation until the expected quarantine time for “no symptoms” has passed.
- **Notification to Participants in Faith Formation Regarding a Positive COVID -19 Test:** If a participant, parish catechetical leader, catechist or employee tests positive for COVID-19, the parish upon notification will immediately contact medical authority or public health officials for consultation and follow appropriate directives/suggestions, especially for those who may have been exposed to the infected person, whose identity will remain private. Directives may include notification to participants, parents, staff, etc., with appropriate instructions to individuals. Exposure cases may vary in potential severity and risk based on the situational elements at the time and place of exposure, such as the symptomatic nature of the infected person at the time of exposure, the duration of exposure, the proximity of exposure, protective measures in place at the time (e.g., facial coverings), and the confined nature of the space. The potential directives for an exposure case may vary as well, including sanitation of space, testing, monitoring for symptoms, tracing, tracking, and quarantining.