

Parent Handbook

St. Patrick Faith Formation



Welcome to St. Patrick Faith Formation

Dear Parents,

We are thrilled to have your family as a part of our faith formation community this year. We know that God has entrusted you with a great responsibility to raise your children to know and love him and we are blessed that you have entrusted us to be a part of that process.

But we are just a part of that, which is why we make an effort to involve you in our faith formation program. This year we will have a family teaching Mass, a Family Movie Night, and a Lenten Family Day. We hope you will find the time to join us for all of these events.

Please take time to read through the enclosed information. Know that we are praying for you and always happy to support you in any way possible. Do not hesitate to reach out to us if there is anything that you need.

God Bless,



Dianne Marshall

Director of Formation for Youth and Children

Meet Our Team

Dianne Marshall

DIRECTOR OF FAITH FORMATION FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN

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Yasmin Alba

FAITH FORMATION ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

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Fr. Patrick Kizza

PARISH PASTOR

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General Policies

Site Location

All classes will be held in the O’Gara Center in the Main Parish building. During class times, this area will be secured. On Sundays, interior doors to specifically the O’Gara Center will be locked. On Mondays, exterior doors will be locked.

Center Entrances

You may enter using the double doors on the side near the O’Gara center. Parents are welcome to park and walk their children in, especially for younger children. If your child is late for class, the doors may be locked. If the exterior doors are locked, you can ring the doorbell to gain access.

Parent Involvement

“Parents are the principal and first educators of the faith” (CCC #1653). We will have 2 sessions where parents will attend with their children, our Advent Teaching Mass and our Lenten Family Class. Other opportunities may be made available throughout the year but we ask that you make every effort to attend these class days with your child. There are other meeting dates for students in their second year of sacramental prep so please be sure to make note of those dates and have at least one parent attend.

We also ask parents to make sure their children attend class regularly, talk at home about what children are learning, attend Mass, pray together and encourage your children to find opportunities to do service. Our new textbooks have QR codes with videos that you can watch together and even a podcast for parents to listen to in the car!

We have lots of opportunities for parents to help in the classrooms and with special events. Let us know if you can help.

Attendance

Consistent attendance is essential for effective learning. If your child will be absent due to illness or other reasons, please call the Faith Formation Office (847-234-2179) or send an email to Yasmin Alba (yalba@stpatrick-lakeforest.org) before class begins. You may leave a message if no one is available to take your call. If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, you may receive a courtesy call to see if your child is OK. Look at your list of objectives and chapters for each class (received on first day of class), and take a textbook home so your child can make up the work that was missed.

Tardiness

Since faith formation classes meet only once a week, we need to use our short time together wisely. Please instruct your children to be in their classrooms and ready to participate on time. Any student who arrives later than the start of class will disrupt class progress. If your child is late for class, the doors may be locked. Please come to the doors with your child and ring the doorbell so that Yasmin can let you in.

Class Cancellation

If Lake Forest District 67 cancels school, faith formation classes will automatically be cancelled. Inclement weather or power outages may make it necessary to cancel class. We will send an email to all parents as well.

Class Times/Dismissal

- Classes will begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. on Sundays and 4:30 p.m. on Mondays
- Dismissal will be at 9:45 a.m. on Sundays and 5:45 p.m. on Mondays For their safety, children in Year 1 and Year 2 of first communion prep must be picked up in the classroom by a parent. All parents are encouraged to pick up their children in the building to ensure safety in the parking lot. If you designate someone else (an older sibling or another adult) to pick up your child, please be sure to tell your child's catechist. Please wait in the hallway until the catechist finishes class and lets you in.
- If you arrive early, please be patient and allow your child's catechist to finish his/her lesson.
- Students are encouraged to use the bathroom before class times begin

Visitors

Parents who wish to observe classes are welcome to do so. Also it is OK for your child to bring a friend or relative to a class. Please notify the Faith Formation Office ahead of time as to which class the visit will take place.

Textbooks

Year 1, 3rd Grade–7th Grade – Loyola Press's Christ Our Life. Students' textbooks are theirs to keep, so they may write in them. Ideally it is best for the books to be left in the classroom so that they are not forgotten between classes.

Year 2 – In addition to Christ Our Life, students will also be using Rejoice Reconciliation and Rejoice Eucharist by Loyola Press

Student Bags

This year all students will be taken home every week and they will be responsible to bring them back for classes. We may have an extra book for students who forget theirs, but they cannot write or draw in these books and will miss out on some of the activities as a result, so don't forget! Each student will receive their own bag at the beginning of the year. This is a great place to keep books for a quick grab on the way out the door! Be sure to check these bags to take out any class projects, crafts, or handouts after class. Students who lose or forget to bring their books multiple weeks in a row may be asked to purchase a new one.

Special Classes

Virtus Class – The Archdiocese of Chicago requires that all students be offered Safe Environment training every year to help keep them safe from abuse. The second half of our Advent class will be used for this. These lessons are available to view on our catechist resource page. Parents are allowed to opt their students out of this lesson and will thus leave class early that day.

Teaching Mass– This year Fr. Patrick will be doing a teaching Mass for all our families. This will occur during class on December 13 and 14. Families are invited to join students during this event. It will be a regular Mass so for our Sunday students, this will fulfill their Sunday obligation. Fr. Patrick will stop at different points of Mass to explain what is going on.

Lenten Family Class– On February 7 and 8 we will have a class made for families to attend together! All activities, crafts, games, etc are intended to be done as a family. So please plan to be there if at all possible. We can pair students whose parents cannot attend with other families as necessary.

Reconciliation– During Lent, students in grades 3–7 will have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Communication

At times, notes, flyers or other information may be sent home with the students. Parents are the key to a great faith foundation for their children. We will try to assist you in the best way possible. Please ask about and read any notes or flyers.

Please check your e-mail. E-mail is the easiest way for us to send you reminders and changes in schedule. You will also be receiving a monthly newsletter with upcoming events and other ways to grow in faith as a family.

Always feel free to phone or email the Formation staff with any questions or concerns you have.

Learning Prayers

This year we will have a strong focus on memorizing some of our prayers. Each grade has prayers that they are encouraged to learn. If at any time a student feels that they have memorized the prayers for their grade, they can go to a staff member, recite the prayer, and receive a prize.

The prayers for each grade are listed below:

- Year 1: Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary
- Year 2: Act of Contrition, Prayer before Meals
- Grade 3: Apostles' Creed
- Grade 4: Beatitudes and 10 Commandments
- Grade 5: Nicene Creed
- Grade 6: Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila "Christ has no body..."
- Grade 7: Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Classroom Conduct

It is our expectation that all children in the faith formation program will behave appropriately at all times, just as if they were in their normal day school classrooms. It has been our experience that the majority of misbehavior during faith formation class can be adequately handled by the catechists, and if necessary, by the Formation staff.

It needs to be clearly understood that misbehavior of any kind will not be tolerated. If a child becomes disruptive in the class and will not respond appropriately to either the catechist or the Formation staff, the child will be removed immediately from the classroom and the parents may be called to pick the child up. The child will not be allowed to return to the classroom until a meeting between a Formation staff member and the child's parents has occurred and a mutually satisfactory decision concerning the child's future conduct has been agreed upon. If necessary, the Formation staff may require a parent to accompany a child to faith formation classes to guarantee good behavior.

iPads, Toys, Cell Phones, Etc.

We discourage students from bringing any item to faith formation classes that is not directly related to the class subject. However, if a child chooses to bring an item to class, such as iPads, toys, sports equipment, or cell phones, that item must be put away (pocket, backpack, etc.) before the child enters the building, and cannot be used during class time. If a child attempts to use such an item during class, it will be confiscated by the catechist or a Formation staff member and returned only at the end of class. St. Patrick's takes no responsibility for any lost or damaged items.

Sickness/Injury During Class

If your child gets sick/injured at faith formation classes: Your child's catechist will notify the Formation staff and the child will be brought down RE office. We will then call you, or if necessary, the emergency contact listed by you on your child's registration form. Arrangements will be made for your child to be picked up from the center immediately.

If your child needs immediate medical care

God willing, this situation will never happen. If your child is seriously injured or ill, and we determine that he or she needs professional medical care right away, we will do the following:

1. Call 911 for medical assistance
2. Call you or the emergency contact
3. Accompany your child at all times, until you or the emergency contact arrives.

Abuse Awareness

As mandated by the Archdiocese of Chicago, instruction is presented each year to the students in all grades concerning safe environment awareness. Parents may opt out of this if they choose. All of our volunteers attended a Safe Environment Education session, so they are aware of abuse issues.

Change of Contact Information

Please call the faith formation office for any change of contact information so that we can keep you informed about the program activities.

Fees

- The fees for Religious Education this year are as follows: 1 student is \$475, 2 students are \$700, 3 or more students are \$775. Families registering before July 1 will get a \$100 Early Bird discount. There is a \$60 sacramental fee for Year 2 (First Reconciliation and First Communion)
- The registration fees can be paid either at the time of registration online or by check to the office. If you need to set up a payment plan, please speak to the formation office.
- If, for some reason, it is not possible for you to afford the registration fees, please contact Dianne in the faith formation office.