

FAITH FORMATION

2024 - 2025

PARENTS HANDBOOK

GROWING IN FAITH



Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic Church
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Dear Parent/Guardian:

It is great to begin another year in our Faith Formation program at St. Catherine of Siena!

As the Faith Formation Catechetical Leader, I am excited to continue the wonderful work of promoting the spiritual development of your child/children so that they may grow into strong faithful Catholics. Faith Formation is first the responsibility and privilege of the parent. The role of the parish and of the Faith Formation program is to support and assist parents in the catechesis of their children.

The Church teaches that parents should take great care of their children's development and knowledge of the Catholic faith. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "Parents are the firsts responsible for the religious education of their children" CCC #2223.

The parish also has the role of providing opportunities for Sacramental preparation and adult faith formation.

For this reason, communication is vital. With the aim to provide faithful and engaging curriculum for the entire community. Faith Formation classes are in accordance to Diocesan standards approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. You will find general information about the program, policies, and procedures in this handbook.

If you need any information or help during the year, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rosalynn Fernandez Catechetical Leader

Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. (Luke 18:16)

ADMISSION/REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION

All students must be registered in the Faith Formation program in order to be allowed in the classroom. Students who are currently enrolled should pre-register in the Spring. Families are to be registered in the parish and the Faith Formation program.

STATEMENT OF GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

It is expected that each family become actively involved in St. Catherine of Siena Faith Formation Program and Parish in order to model a living, conscious and active Christian faith and to reinforce the values and attitudes for living that faith. The family and their children also agree to act in accordance with these values and attitudes.

SPECIAL NEEDS Children with special needs are always welcomed to our Faith Formation Program. We will do our best to make accommodation to meet your child's needs. Please contact Rosalynn Fernandez, Catechetical Leader for more information.

FEES

Tuition – Cost for one year of Faith Formation for families:

- \$60 for one student
- \$110 for two students
- \$150 for three students

All fees are to cover the cost of books and material used in the program for your child (s). This fee is to be paid at the time of registration. No fee refunded after October 1st, 2024.

Additional Fees: Students who are in their second year of Faith Formation, who are preparing to receive the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation have an additional fee of \$80.00 per sacrament. This fee must be paid with registration.

Please contact the Faith Formation Office if the registration fee is a financial burden. No one is denied the opportunity to attend Faith Formation!

TEXBOOKS/MATERIALS

The curriculum for **kindergarten** is "**Promise**" Pflaum a weekly study on the Gospels.

The curriculum for grades 1-8 this year will include "Finding God" from Loyola Press. Finding God: Our Response to the Gifts® of it is rooted in Scripture, Catholic doctrine, and Ignatian spirituality. Built for today's learner, children are offered a new model of catechesis that embraces technology, responds to the continual invitation to enter into a deeper relationship with God, and encourages them to encounter God in all things.

High School Curriculum: Understanding the Catechism of The Catholic Church: Creed, Liturgy, Morality and Prayer. **Additional resources:** Formed. Org & The Catechism of The Catholic Church.

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

ARRIVAL AND DISSMISAL PROCEDURES:

For the safety of all individuals on the premises, under no circumstances are students allowed to be dropped off/picked up anywhere on the premises. At time of dismissal parents must pick up their child at the classroom. Please see the map provided which indicates each classroom area.

Not abiding by these regulations are grounds for disenrollment from the Faith Formation Program. All doors will be locked within 15 minutes of class commencement time.

ARRIVAL SIGN-IN:

There will be a sign-in sheet on clipboard on the wall by the class entrance. Please make sure your child is signed in before entering the classroom.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/Guardians must attend adult catechesis during their child's time in class. This catechesis is available in English and Spanish.

CLASS ATTENDANCE:

Regular attendance is necessary. In the event that your child will be absent, it is your responsibility to complete the absence form on the parish website (Faith Formation) to notify that your child will be absent. After four absences, your child will risk repeating the year of sacramental preparation and being removed from the program.

MASS ATTENDANCE:

It is our obligation as practicing Catholics to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. It is a vital part of the religious formation of all, regardless of age. It is essential that Catholic children participate in the liturgical life of the parish through weekly attendance at Mass.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION SESSIONS (Reconciliation, Eucharist & Confirmation)

STUDENTS IN SECOND YEAR OF FAITH FORMATION:

In addition to regular formation classes, parents and students should attend the sacramental preparation sessions that are scheduled Thursdays: Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. And on Thursdays: Sacrament of Confirmation. Please keep an eye on your email for the day and time of the class.

DRESS CODE

Appropriate clothing must be always worn.

GENERAL INFORMATION

RETREAT AND EVENTS:

It is also expected that families attend certain events or parish retreats. You will be informed of these ahead of time. For example, we ask that all families attend two retreats during the Faith Formation Year. It is the responsibility of families to stay informed on upcoming events.

HOME ASSIGNMENTS/TAKE HOME FOLDER:

Student will bring their folder home. This folder will contain any work completed as well as any notices for the parents. It's the parents' responsibility to check the folder every week.

EARLY DISMISSAL:

If for any reason you must arrive early to pick up your child, please make prior arrangements with Mrs. Rosalynn and your child's catechist. The only individuals authorized to remove a child from the classroom during learning hours are designated staff members.

EMERGENCY CLASS CANCELLATION.

Classes will be cancelled when weather alerts are issued. If the weather causes an emergency, please keep your children at home. A message regarding emergency cancellation will be emailed to all parents when necessary. The decision to cancel classes in regard to severe weather conditions will be that of the Pastor and the Faith Formation Catechetical Leader.

HEALTH CONCERNS AND MEDICATIONS:

Any special medical needs of your child must be provided during registration. Special circumstances regarding any medication the student takes needs to be discussed with the Faith Formation Catechetical Leader. Allergy information is very important to provide. If a child is diagnosed with a medical condition after registration, please inform the Faith Formation Office as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY /FIRE PROCEDURE

In the event that the fire alarm sounds, all catechists and students will evacuate the building. Students will remain with their classes outside of and away from the building. Attendance will be taken. No one will be permitted to re-enter the building until the "all clear" signal is given by the fire department or the Faith Formation Catechetical Leader / parish staff member.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential in keeping the parents/guardian informed of their child's Faith Formation progress and events. All communication will be via e-mail: rfernandez@stcatherineofsienacc.org
Information on parish events and Faith Formation will also be available in the parish website:
www.stcatherineofsienacc.org

Once I receive an e-mail from you, I will add your email to the parent e-mail group. This will facilitate a more efficient way of contact between parents and Faith Formation.

CODE OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINE

CONDUCT/ DISCIPLINE POLICY

At St. Catherine of Siena Church, we believe in providing an educational Faith Formation environment that encourages each student to achieve his or her maximum potential spiritually, morally, intellectually, and personally. We always expect courtesy and respect from our students. Inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated. In the case of a student causing a disruption in class or displaying disrespectful behavior, these steps will be followed: After the first incident a verbal correction will be made by the Catechist. If the behavior continues, their behavior will be evaluated by the Faith Formation Catechetical Leader and may result in dismissal from the program.

NORMS ON THE USE OF CELLPHONE/ELECTRONICS

Students will not be permitted to use their cellphones or any other electronic devices during class including headphones, iPads, and laptops. Violations to this policy will result in removal from the class. The parent/guardian will be called by the program coordinator to pick up the student. We are not responsible for any electronics lost or damaged.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Students are expected to refrain from the following:

- Food and/or chewing gum in class.
- Use of bad language/cursing.
- Running on church property.
- Inappropriate attire for church.
- Leaving the classroom without permission.
- Taking or throwing objects and mistreating church property.
- Inappropriate public display of affection.
- Insubordination to catechists, aides, volunteers, support staff, and church employees.
- Actions that endanger the physical well-being of self or others, such as fighting or the intent to injure another.
- Use or possession of weapons, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, unauthorized prescription drugs, or any other dangerous substance.

SAFETY PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Diocesan Policy #PS006, Florida Statutes Chapters 415, 232.50: Any clergy, religious or lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Orlando, who knows, or has serious cause to suspect, that a child has been subjected to any form of abuse or neglect by any person, is expected to observe the following procedures immediately:

- Contact the Florida Department of Children and Families toll free, abuse registry-hotline the same calendar day the abuse is discovered.
- Respond to the local DCF call back with additional information.
- Cooperate with any and all authorities in the investigation of any child abuse report.
- The Faith Formation Catechetical Leader or Pastor must ALWAYS be with the child when he or she is being interviewed by the DCF worker.

FINGERPRINT POLICY

Nothing is more important to us than the protection and safety of your child. In light of this and at the urging of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, the Diocese of Orlando initiated a program requiring all volunteers to be safe environment trained, fingerprinted, and have background checks before they can participate in our programs. Catechists and employees have also completed this process. These are renewed every five (5) years.

OTHER DIOCESAN REQUIREMENTS

All parishes within our diocese are required to teach the Circle of Grace program: a faith-based, family-centered curriculum designed to serve two purposes: safe environment awareness as well as chastity, values, and virtues education for all students.

RESOURCES: FORMED THE CATHOLIC FAITH ON DEMAND

- Google search
- Formed.org
- Create an account.
- Find your parish by location or zip code (Ex. St. Catherine of Siena 34743).
- Type in Saint Catherine of Siena Kissimmee (you will see the parish name with the address. Click in the box.
- It will ask you to create a new account – Click
- Put your name and email in the corresponding box.
- Click on Sign up and *Formed* will be available to you.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Catechism of The Catholic Church Book available at the Catholic Book Stores.

DEDICATION PRAYER FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS



O my *Jesus my Lord, and my God!*

I thank You for the gift of my life and my beautiful family, made in Your image and likeness, and for the gift of our faith in You.

As a parent / guardian, you have called me to be a light to the child / children you have placed in my care. In your Holy Word, you tell parents to "bring up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). By grace, you have called parents to cooperate with You in the sending of new life into the world; and to provide for the education of their children. I am wholly unworthy to serve You in this way, and to take on this task to which You have called me. And yet, you have called me to do this for You nonetheless.

Help me to remember always that while this task of teaching the faith may be difficult that nothing is impossible with You; and that You earned for me on the Cross the grace to enable me to complete this task. Help me to trust in You in all things, and in this work of teaching the faith to my child / children most of all.

In Your presence now, I wholly dedicate myself to this task of teaching. I promise to be faithful to this work. With your divine assistance, to make my child / children's faith formation a priority in my life, to attend Mass each week as a family, and to foster prayer in the household.

O Jesus, I (Name), Your humble servant, surrender all things, and place this matter of my family's faith formation in Your loving and strong hands. My Jesus, I trust in You, in this and in all things. And it is in Your Name, and through Your Mother's Immaculate Heart, that I now seal this prayer.

Amen.

