

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH  
*Faith Formation Handbook*  
2018-2019



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[www.sjbh.org](http://www.sjbh.org)

# FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK

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*(Cover photo courtesy of Rachel Moreau)*

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to St. John the Baptist Faith Formation Program. We are so honored and humbled to be partnering with you on your children's faith journeys through our formation programs and process. Our Faith Formation team of staff, volunteer catechists, mentors, and aides are looking forward to sharing faith and learning alongside your children.

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, it states, "The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith." (CCC 1666). Through your leadership of role modeling the Catholic faith at home, your children will learn to live out their personal faith. As parents, we are reminded, through our child's Baptism, that we are to live our faith fully, actively, and consciously. At St. John the Baptist, our ministry is to support, assist, and encourage you as you live a Catholic Christian lifestyle for your family through love and example.

This handbook will provide you with valuable information about the Faith Formation Program. Please be sure to read and discuss it with your family. Please keep this as a reference for any pertinent questions you may have this year. We welcome any questions you have and look forward to ministering alongside you and your family.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Blessings,

Mrs. Kym D. Allex  
Mrs. Susan Casleton  
and the Faith Formation Team

## **FAITH FORMATION STAFF**

Staff members may be contacted by calling **434-2145**.

- ❖ **Coordinator of Grades 1-5, First Reconciliation and First Eucharist:**  
**Susan Casleton** Ext 205 or [scasleton@sjbh.org](mailto:scasleton@sjbh.org)
- ❖ **Coordinator of Youth Evangelization & Youth Formation Grades 6 – 12 & Confirmation:**  
**Kym Alex** Ext 214 or [kallex@sjbh.org](mailto:kallex@sjbh.org)
- ❖ **Coordinators of Churchtime: Cathy Seidl and Susan Casleton**  
Ext 205 or [scasleton@sjbh.org](mailto:scasleton@sjbh.org)
- ❖ **Faith Formation Secretary:**  
**Sherry Van Helvoirt** Ext 206 or [svanhelvoirt@sjbh.org](mailto:svanhelvoirt@sjbh.org)

**TO REPORT AN ABSENCE**  
**434-2145 Ext. 229**

### **OFFICE HOURS:**

**Monday – Thursday: 8:00am – 4:00pm**  
**Friday: By Appointment**

## **ATTENDANCE AND REPORTING ABSENCES**

Regular attendance of Faith Formation classes is required for students to achieve the best experience. Parents, please report absences prior to class by calling: **434-2145 ext. 229**.

## **CLASS CANCELLATIONS**

If **Howard/Suamico schools** are closed due to inclement weather, Faith Formation classes will **NOT** be held. Sunday evening classes will be notified at least 1 hour ahead of time.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Emergency Procedures are on file in the Faith Formation Office, in each catechist's handbook, and available upon request by calling the Faith Formation office.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL**

- ❖ **Grades 1-5:** Students enter Door 1 and report to their classrooms.
- ❖ **Grades 6-8:** Report to the Ministry Center upper level.
- ❖ **High School/Confirmation Preparation Groups:** Students enter Church and report to their Small Group assigned pew. Church doors will be locked after prayer has concluded. Candidates must use Door 1 to enter the school building when arriving late/after prayer time.

Doors will be locked after classes begin. In the event you are late, please ring bell at the door you are reporting to or call 434-2145, ext. 229. Students must then check in with the attendance office.

## **STUDENT SAFETY**

- ❖ For the safety of your children, please pick them up promptly.
- ❖ Students are NOT allowed to leave the Parish grounds during scheduled classes or activities for any

reason without the written consent or phone call from their parent/guardian.

- ❖ We do not assume responsibility for students who arrive late or leave before and after scheduled classes or activities.

## **CURRICULUM**

As mandated by the Diocese of Green Bay, students have:

- ❖ 30-35 hours of faith formation instruction.
- ❖ An annual Assessment of Catechesis Religious Education (ACRE) in grades 5, 8 & 11 which assesses the strength of our program and identifies areas that need improvement.
- ❖ A yearly Safe Environment class session in grades 1 through 11. These classes give children information to promote personal safety, good choices, and healthy relationships. Parents wishing to have their child/ren not participate will be given the opportunity to sign a Diocesan “opt out” form.

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

- ❖ Children in grades 1-5 use the *Alive in Christ*, Our Sunday Visitor series. Children receive a workbook specific to their grade.
- ❖ Children, with the help of their parents, are expected to learn the prayers appropriate to their age level. Prayers can be found in the back of your child’s *Alive in Christ* book.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

- ❖ Middle School students in grades 6-8 use Life Teen Edge program along with curriculum support.
- ❖ The Youth Formation nights rotate in a 3 year cycle. This cycle includes Scripture, Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Church and its History, Morality, Sacraments, and Catholic Social Teaching.

## **HIGH SCHOOL and Confirmation**

- ❖ Starting in High School, Grade 9, students will begin a two-year preparation integrated process towards the Sacrament of Confirmation. This two-year process includes material that can be found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Catholic Bible, Theology of the Body, and Chosen.
- ❖ This two-year integrated process is one where our students will grow in personal relationship with Christ, establishing and strengthening personal prayer and Sacred Scripture in prayer; personal growth in regular participation in Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- ❖ Our ministry goal is to help in training our students in personally practicing and strengthening their faith in preparation for their reception of Confirmation!
- ❖ Components integrated in the yearly process include: a parish-based retreat, multiple service experiences, personal growth opportunities, sponsor activities, Mass journal entries. This process is more detailed in the Confirmation Binder for all our students and parents available at the Mandatory Parent meeting held in the first weeks of Youth Formation Nights.

All pre-Confirmed, High School students are automatically considered Confirmation candidates; they begin their preparation

- ❖ as freshmen in high school. Only for 2018-2019 school year, we will have augmented schedule for the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. After this year, we ask all students begin this journey as freshmen.
- ❖ If a teen hasn't participated in Faith Formation classes or in Catholic high school theology consistently, he/she will need to meet with the coordinator to make arrangements before he/she can prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

- ❖ Confirmation families must belong to our parish or have their pastor send a letter granting permission to receive Confirmation at St. John the Baptist.

## **FIRST RECONCILIATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST**

- ❖ Children must have attended first grade Faith Formation or a Catholic school to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist in their second grade year.
- ❖ Children in second grade or older, who have not been enrolled in Faith Formation or a Catholic school and who have not received their First Sacraments must attend one full year of instruction **PRIOR** to the year in which the sacraments are to be received.
- ❖ All registered students preparing for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist and their parent/s attend the scheduled Parent/Child Meetings.
- ❖ Preparation takes place at home with the parents, as well as by attending several parent/child sessions.
- ❖ In accordance with the Diocesan guidelines/policies, **preparation and reception of First Reconciliation is to be received prior** to the reception of First Eucharist.
- ❖ First Eucharist families must belong to our parish or have their pastor send a letter granting permission to receive First Eucharist at St. John the Baptist.

## **YOUTH MINISTRY**

- ❖ Youth events are created for Middle School and/or High School teens to help lead them closer to Christ, the Catholic Church and their personal faith journeys.
- ❖ Events/activities sponsored by the parish and the Diocese are scheduled throughout the year. A calendar of events may be found on the parish website, as well as on the kiosks in the Narthex.
- ❖ Permission forms for off-site events are required. If a *full year liability form* is not already on file in the parish

office, one can be found on the parish website and available from Kym Alex on Monday and Wednesday nights.

❖ **Open Fish Bowl:**

- Middle School: Wednesdays, 6:00pm – 7:00pm in the Upper Ministry Center before class time.
- High School: Sunday nights, 6:30-7:00pm in the Narthex.

**CHURCHTIME**

- ❖ Four year olds through first grade are welcome to attend the Churchtime program during the 10:00 am Mass throughout the school year.
- ❖ The catechist leads children in understanding the day's gospel on their level through prayer, scripture reading, discussion, an activity sheet, and music.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)**

- ❖ A one week summer program for children in Pre-K through 5th grade.
- ❖ 6<sup>th</sup> grade and older are welcome to register as volunteers.
- ❖ Children come to know God and Jesus through the scriptures.
- ❖ Activities include Bible stories, music, crafts, skits, games, and snacks.

**HOME STUDY**

We truly believe that parents are the first and best teachers in the ways of faith. We also have seen the wonderful things that happen when a young person journeys with peers and great catechists to integrate faith in their lives. The goal is “How can we best serve this young person?” If you are considering home study, please contact the coordinator for your child’s grade to discuss.

The Diocese has guidelines for those who wish to home school regarding content, participation in Mass, retreats, etc.

## **VOLUNTEER INFORMATION**

Volunteers are vital to the success of the Faith Formation programs. Volunteers are needed as catechists, aides, substitutes and chaperones. Small class sizes can only be achieved with the help of a large number of volunteers. A Diocesan background check and attendance at a VIRTUS session is required. Please contact the coordinator of the grade you are interested in helping (see page 2).

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARTICIPANTS:**

All are expected to:

- Follow classroom rules
- Participate willingly in their learning
- Respect others' safety, well-being, and property
- Be accountable for their behavior and responsive to consequences
- Participate in creating a safe, positive environment conducive to learning

## **DISCIPLINE**

Our students show respect for their teachers, classmates, and the environment. If a student fails to follow the code of conduct, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The catechist will speak with the child.
2. The coordinator will speak with the child.
3. The coordinator will call and/or meet with the parent/s.

## **ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT/CELL PHONES**

Electronic equipment and cell phones are not to be used in the building during class times. Any student found using any electronic equipment/cell phone during class risks having their item confiscated by the catechist or coordinator for the class period.

## **FAITH FORMATION ADVISORY BOARD**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Through advising and supporting the Faith Formation staff, the mission of the Faith Formation Advisory Board is to help lead our parish youth in becoming committed Catholics.*

The Faith Formation Advisory Board is made up of representatives from our Faith Formation Program and parish community.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month, September through May, 5:45pm – 7:15pm in the Parish Office. Meetings are open to all parishioners.