

Parent Handbook
Church of St. Pius X Faith Formation
1205 12th Ave NW
Rochester, MN 55901
(507) 289-6317

Welcome to the Church of St. Pius X Faith Formation Ministry! We are excited to join your family on their faith journey. In this handbook, you will find our mission statement, the role of parents, the role of catechists and the faith formation program, general office information, registration policies, general policies, and sacramental guidelines.

FAITH FORMATION MISSION STATEMENT

As we face the challenges of an ever-changing world, the Faith Formation Ministry of the Church of St. Pius X strives to build community in our hearts by sharing our faith, strengthening family bonds and promoting social justice. We actively live in peace as we: celebrate our faith through worship and sacramental preparation, provide education for children and families and share our gifts through giving public witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Goals:

1. To build a spiritual base which allows continued growth in the Catholic Faith.
2. To instill respect for all of God's creation.
3. To demonstrate our Catholic Faith daily through genuine care and concern for humankind.
4. To provide a quality faith formation program.

Faith Formation Program:

1. First Grade – Students will be learning about the Trinity. God made all of creation good and that He knows us and loves us. Jesus is God's son. He is our friend and teacher and He died and rose from the dead for us. The Spirit is our helper and was sent at Pentecost. They will learn the Sign of the Cross, the Our Father and the Hail Mary.
2. Second Grade – Students will focus on the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. The children learn that as a Church we believe in Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that our parish family is called to service and the sacraments. The children will learn the Act of Contrition and Glory Be.
3. Third Grade – Students focus is the Catholic Church and what it means to us. They learn that Jesus' mission included teaching and calling the Apostles to carry on His mission. The Bible is introduced and the marks of the Church are presented. The children will learn one of the creeds either Apostles or Nicene.
4. Fourth Grade – Students' focus is the Ten Commandments, Virtues, Beatitudes and the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. The children begin an in-depth study of the Commandments and how they can be lived daily. The children will learn the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes.
5. Fifth Grade – Students review the ministry of Jesus before beginning an in-depth study of the Sacraments. They will learn how these Sacraments are to be lived in our daily lives. Children will learn the Seven Sacraments as well as a prayer to the Holy Spirit.
6. Sixth Grade – Students' focus is entirely on The Bible and how it is still pertinent in our lives

- today. They will be introduced to the Old Testament Books, the literary forms, creation stories, symbols, and the covenants. Also, the Exodus, Ten Commandments, Israel's Golden Age, the prophets, and exile are studied. The classes participate in a Seder Meal. They will learn The Prayer of St. Francis.
7. Seventh Grade – Students will continue their study of the bible by focusing on the New Testament. Students will learn about the importance of the New Testament, the authors of the New Testament, the culture of the New Testament, and life of Jesus within the New Testament.
 8. Eighth Grade – At an age when students are challenged to make crucial moral decisions, students will learn about morality within the context of the Catholic Church and how to live a Catholic moral life. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the Ten Commandments, sin, forgiveness, conscience, and virtues.
 9. Ninth Grade – To begin preparation for Confirmation, the students will explore the central beliefs of the Catholic faith. Students will deepen their understanding of divine revelation, the Holy Trinity, the Church as a community, leadership of the Church, and the disciples of the Church.
 10. Tenth Grade – Continuing their preparation for Confirmation, the students will understand the Rite of Confirmation, understand the meaning of church and the role of sacraments in their own life, understand the role of the Holy Spirit in their own lives and in the church. Students will also practice decision making as a Catholic Christian.

ROLE OF THE PARENT

Church of St. Pius X encourages parents to be involved in all aspects of their child's faith development. The importance of parents' role can be found in the Document on Education from the Second Vatican Council which states, "Parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it."

"Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another grow in faith by the witness of a Christian like in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission in teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2226*).

ROLE OF CATECHISTS AND THE FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

Parents are the first catechists. Through the parents, the faith is first passed on. As catechists, parishioners of the Church of St. Pius X are called to extend and support the parents' role. Catechists proclaim Christ's message, participate in efforts to develop community, lead people to worship, and motivate people to serve others. "Catechists are responsible for choosing and creating conditions which will encourage people to seek and accept the Christian message and integrate it more fully in their living out of the faith" (*National Catechetical Directory, No. 176*).

The Faith Formation program supports the parents' role through providing weekly faith formation classes for children, family faith sharing centers, sacramental preparation, family liturgies, RCIC, RCIA, Pre-Jordan, retreats and educational newsletters.

GENERAL OFFICE INFORMATION

If you have any questions or comments regarding the policies listed in this handbook, please call the Faith Formation Office at 289-6317.

Office Location: We are located at 1205 12th Avenue NW in St. Pius X Elementary School.

Office Hours: Monday – Friday from 9:00 – 4:00

If there is no one in the Faith Formation Office, please visit the Parish Office located at the corner of 12th Street NW & 14th Street NW between the hours of 7:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Faith Formation Staff:

Sally Magin
Elementary Coordinator
e-mail: smagin@piusx.org

Lisa Wilcox
Secondary Coordinator
e-mail: lwilcox@piusx.org

Alice Cullen
Secretary
e-mail: acullen@piusx.org

REGISTRATION POLICIES

- The family of the student **must** be registered as parishioners of Church of St. Pius X. You may register your family at the Parish Office located at the corner of 12th Street NW & 14th Street NW between the hours of 7:30 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Exceptions may be considered on an individual basis.
- Registration is required for attendance within faith formation classes.
- The registration forms must be submitted to the Faith Formation Office by August 31st.
- Tuition must accompany the registration unless other arrangements have been made with the Faith Formation office and/or the pastor.
- All families enrolling after September 19th must meet with the level coordinator before the child attends their first session. Participation in a seasonal sport is not sufficient cause for late enrollment.

GENERAL POLICIES

Arrival / Departure Procedures:

Elementary Students (Grades 1 – 6)

Students in Grades 1, 2 & 3 must be dropped off and picked up at their classroom. This may be by the parent or an older sibling. Students in Grades 4, 5 & 6 will meet in the gym. No student will arrive prior to 4:25. A bell will ring at 4:30 and classes will begin. If your child will be late, please call the Faith Formation Office to let us know and have them stop at the Faith Formation Office before going to their classroom. Pick up will be **PROMPTLY** at 5:45 P.M. If you arrive after 5:50 P.M., you will need to pick up your child in the FF Office. **Remember, students in grades 1, 2 & 3 must be dropped off at their classrooms and picked up at their classrooms.**

Secondary Students (Grades 7 - 10)

Students at the secondary level are to arrive no earlier than 6:55. Students need to go to the directly to Roncalli Hall (gym). For safety reasons, they are not to linger in the halls. When the bell rings, students should go straight to their classes. At 8:15, catechists will dismiss students. Parents need to pick up their children by 8:25. If a student has not been picked up by 8:25, the child will come to the Faith Formation office and the parents will be contacted. For your child's safety, if another adult other than a parent is picking up your child, please send a note to the office telling us that you grant this person permission to pick up your child.

Attendance: To help provide continuity basic to faith and religious education, we expect all students to attend faith formation classes on a continuous basis. If a conflict arises, the Faith Formation coordinators will address each conflict on an individual basis.

Change of Contact Information: It is imperative that we have up-to-date information on file. Therefore, please notify the Faith Formation Office of any changes of address or telephone numbers.

Classroom Environment: We have asked catechists to provide a positive and non-threatening classroom environment in which spiritual growth can thrive. Catechists define appropriate and acceptable behavior during the first class session. They also handle normal situations that require discipline. However, if a severe discipline problem occurs, the *Procedure for Dealing with Student Violation* is followed.

Violations of student's conduct generally shall be dealt with by the following procedures. The severity of the action may dictate omission or repetition of some steps and procedures.

1. Removal of the student from the classroom
2. Student/Coordinator conference
3. Coordinator/Teacher conference
4. Notification of parent(s) via mail or telephone by Coordinator (First/Second)
5. Notification of student's dismissal from the program by phone & mail
6. Coordinator/Teacher/Parent conference
7. Due process- Pastor/Coordinator/Parents

Property Care and Maintenance: The Faith Formation students and the Church of St. Pius X Elementary students share the classroom space. We ask that students do not bring food or beverage into the classroom. Furthermore, if a student damages or destroys property within the classroom or school as a result of intent or carelessness, the student/parent will be held responsible.

SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES

First Reconciliation/ First Eucharist

The Sacrament of Penance and First Reconciliation:

“Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example, and by prayer labors for their conversion”

“It is called the *sacrament of Reconciliation*, because it imparts to the sinner the love of God who reconciles: ‘be reconciled to God.’ He who lives by God's merciful love is ready to respond to the Lord's call: ‘Go; first be reconciled to your brother.’ ” – *The Catechism of the Catholic Church #1422, #1442*

The Sacrament of the Eucharist

“The Eucharist is ‘the source and summit of the Christian.’ ‘The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch.’ ”

“ ‘The Eucharist is the efficacious sign and sublime cause of that communion in the divine life and that unity of the People of God by which the Church is kept in being. It is the culmination both of God’s action sanctifying the world in Christ and of the worship men offer to Christ and through him to the Father in the Holy Spirit.’ ”

“Finally, by the Eucharistic celebration we already unite ourselves with the heavenly liturgy and anticipate eternal life, when God will be all in all.”

“In brief, the Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: ‘Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking’ ” – *The Catechism of the Catholic Church #1324 - #1327*

Here are general guidelines for the preparation for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist at Church of St. Pius the X. The Elementary Faith Formation coordinator will provide more information about these two sacramental programs during the Reconciliation Parent Meeting on Sunday, October 7, 2001 at 6:30 and the Eucharist Parent Meeting on Sunday, January 6, 2002 at 6:30.

- A copy of the student’s Baptismal certificate must be on file in the Parish Office.
- Student must be at least in 2nd grade.
- First Reconciliation is celebrated in December 2001.
- First Eucharist is celebrated in May 2002.
- First Eucharist students are required to attend **the Mini-Retreat**.
- Children and parents must take part in **Faith Sharing Centers**.
- Children will **interview with the pastor or a pastoral minister** before receiving First Eucharist.
- Parents must be involved in the preparation of their children for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.

Confirmation

“Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- It roots us more deeply in the divine filiation which makes us cry, ‘Abba! Father!’;
- It unites us more firmly to Christ;
- It increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- It renders our bond with the Church more perfect;
- It gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.”

“*Preparation* for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit – his actions, his gifts, and his biddings – in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands.”

“To receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace. One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit. More intense prayer should prepare one to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit with docility and readiness to act.” – *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1303, #1309, #1310

Listed below are the general guidelines for the preparation for Confirmation at Church of St. Pius the X. The Secondary Faith Formation coordinator will provide more information about the Confirmation program during the Parent/Candidate Meeting on Sunday, October 7, 2001 at 7:00.

- Candidates for Confirmation must be in at least 10th grade.
- Public school students **and** students who attend Lourdes High School **must register** to attend Confirmation classes through the Faith Formation Office.
- A copy of the student’s Baptismal certificate must be on file in the Parish Office.
- Candidates must attend all indicated classes, retreats, and activities. If conflicts arise, the Secondary Faith Formation coordinator will consider each conflict on an individual basis.
- Parents must be involved in the preparation of their children for Confirmation.
- Candidates are called to participate in **Christian service projects** that must be pre-approved by the Secondary Faith Formation coordinator. The service hours must be completed between September 26, 2001 and March 27, 2002. “The purpose of these projects is to help the candidates become aware of their own gifts and their potential for serving others according to the Catholic social teachings.” – *Catechetical and Liturgical Guidelines for Confirmation: Diocese of Winona*
- Candidates need to choose a **Confirmation mentor/sponsor**. A mentor/sponsor meeting will be on Sunday, October 28, 2001. This mentor/sponsor “should be one who is from the parish or area in order to maintain contact and foster a trusting relationship of support and encouragement... The mentor/sponsor helps the candidate grow in knowledge, attitude, and practices essential to being committed (confirmed) members of the Church and followers of Jesus, to be Spirit – sealed.” - *Catechetical and Liturgical Guidelines for Confirmation: Diocese of Winona*

The Diocese of Winona recommends that the sponsor be the Baptismal godparent of the candidate. However, if this is not possible, the candidate can choose another person. As stated in the *Catechetical and Liturgical Guidelines for Confirmation: Diocese of Winona*, the qualifications of a sponsor include the following:

- That the sponsor is sufficiently mature for this role;
 - That the sponsor belongs to the Catholic Church as a fully initiated member, having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and regularly participate in the Eucharist;
 - That the sponsor is not a parent of the candidate.
- Candidates are asked to choose a **saint** by Wednesday, November 7, 2001. Candidates are to study the saint throughout the year and reflect on the saint’s life. On March 27, 2002 candidates

need to turn in a paper on the saint. The format of the paper will be given at the Parent/Candidate meeting.

- Candidates are required to write a **letter to bishop**. Candidates need to write about what they have been doing to ready themselves for the sacrament and why they wish to be confirmed as a Catholic Christian. This letter is due on Wednesday, March 13, 2002. The format of the paper will be given at the Parent/Candidate meeting.
- Candidates will have an **interview with the pastor or parochial vicar**. Dates and times will be set later.
- Candidates and their parents need to participate in the **Faith Sharing Centers**. Dates and times will be set later.

IN CONCLUSION

We are anxious to begin our faith formation journey with you and your family. We look forward to becoming partners in growing in our love for Jesus. Please let us know if you have any questions and/or concerns about our faith programs.