

Faith Formation Information and Policies

In order to best serve you, we ask that you carefully review the following, **please note that some of the information has changed since last year:**

First Communion Part 1 and 2 (gr. 1-2) Sunday, 9:50am-10:50am*

Our First Communion program is designed to both serve as a foundational catechetical program for the children of the parish, and prepare them to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. The First Communion program is a two year program, as mandated by the Fall River Diocese, which prepares the children to receive these important Sacraments and to allow them to become better acquainted to the faith that we believe. **Students will receive the sacraments in the second year of their preparation.** Also, as part of this program, we encourage each of the students to attend Mass on a weekly basis (if possible before class at 9:00am or after class at 11:00 am) so that they can make a connection between the Mass and their class lessons.

*If for some extenuating circumstance your child cannot attend class on Sunday morning, please contact Jonathan Galo so that we can perhaps make other arrangements.

Faith Formation Classes (gr. 3-7) Sunday, 9:50am-10:50am OR Monday, 4:15pm-5:15pm

Our general Faith Formation classes are designed to further educate and form our youth in the faith. Each grade will cover a particular theme over the course of the year that relates to particular aspects of our faith. These themes include: the Church, Old Testament, New Testament, Sacraments, Morality, etc. As in years past, we are offering an option for which day and time you would like to have your child attend class. Because of our limited building space, priority on which day you would like your child to attend class will be given to those who turn in their registrations earlier.

Pre-Confirmation & Confirmation: Encountering Christ Sunday, 11:00am-1:15pm

The Confirmation formation preparation is a two year program, as mandated by the Fall River Diocese, which generally begins in the 8th grade, with the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the spring of the student's freshman year in high school.

- For Pre-Confirmation (gr. 8): Students will meet twice a month as a group for sessions as well as attendance at the 11am Mass. Students will learn about some of the fundamentals of our Catholic faith and learn the basics of living a life as a disciple of Christ. Students will also engage in small group discussions during each session, sharing with each other their thoughts on the particular topics presented. Those who participate in the program will also be expected to attend Mass each week, as the Church prescribes.
- For Confirmation: Encountering Christ (gr. 9): Confirmation sessions will be held twice a month on Sunday mornings, beginning at 10:45am with check in, 11am Parish Mass (with emphasis on reaching out to youth with contemporary music ministry and technology), followed by a general or small group session in the church basement ending at 1:15pm. Rather than a classroom setting, adults serving as mentors will assist in the general and small group sessions sharing not only their knowledge of the faith and being an example of the faith. Students will learn the various ways in which they can “Encounter Christ” in their everyday faith lives. Those who participate in the program

will be expected to attend Mass each week and to participate in one of the various ministries our parish has to offer (to help enrich their lives of faith).

COMPLETE AND RETURN REGISTRATION MATERIALS BY AUGUST 13

For NEW families: Please review all the information on the registration form *very* carefully. Information will be emailed on a regular basis, so *please* include your email address in the space provided. A copy of a **Baptismal Certificate** (unless baptized at St. Anthony's) is **REQUIRED** for each child entering the program for the first time. Please complete **BOTH SIDES** of the registration form, **sign** the appropriate fields, **include** your registration payment and mail it, or bring it to either the Parish Office or Faith Formation Office by **August 13th, 2017**.

For RETURNING families: Please review the material attached to your registration packet to make sure that everything we have on record is up to date. Please make any corrections on the record and return it along with the registration form. *If you have a new child* entering into our program, please include their name, date of birth, baptism date/location, any notes (i.e. allergies, medical issues, disabilities, etc.) in the space provided on the form. **Please complete all appropriate fields on the registration form, include your program fee and return it by Sun. August 13th, 2017.**

Registration Fee

The registration fee for this upcoming program year will be \$30 per child with a \$60 family maximum. Please note, the suggested donation amount has increased from last year due to our need to cover the cost of textbooks and materials. Those who volunteer as Catechists will have their fee waived for the year. No one will be denied participation in our program due to financial hardship. Please contact Jonathan Galo with any concerns about the registration fee.

Calendar

Please post the enclosed annual calendar somewhere in your home for easy reference. Parents who have children who are in First Communion Part 2 or Confirmation Part 2 should make special note of any important dates regarding parent meetings, retreat, rehearsals, and sacramental celebrations (First Reconciliation, First Communion, Confirmation, etc.). More information about the various events going on within our program will be made available to you through our weekly newsletters/emails. All of these important dates can also be easily found on our website at: **<http://www.stanthonyscapecod.org/faithformation>**

Parent Meetings

In the weeks prior to the beginning of our Faith Formation classes, we will hold several informational meetings for new families to our program. Families who are **new to our program** or who have a child beginning in our **1st Communion Prep pt. 1 (gr. 1)** program, are welcome to attend an information meeting on **Wednesday, September 13 at either 10:00am or 6:00pm**. Additional meetings for those who are in sacramental years (First Communion Part 2, Confirmation) will be held during the year. All of these meetings will be announced through email/newsletter, and on our website at **<http://www.stanthonyscapecod.org/faithformation>**

Catechists, Substitutes, and Office Helpers

Many people are needed to implement our Faith Formation Program. Please consider how you can help and indicate your availability on the back of the registration form. **Catechists** teach groups of no more than 12 children of the same grade. *Teaching experience is not required.* Love of children and a desire to help them become better disciples of Jesus are the most important qualifications. Team up with a friend if you're nervous about teaching alone. Contact Jonathan for more information and then make a decision. All catechists will be provided with ongoing guidance and support throughout the year.

Substitutes are needed to teach classes when the Catechist is unable to attend.

Office Helpers are needed to make copies, organize materials, and assist as needed.

Classroom Assistants are needed to help out in the classrooms, assisting the catechists as needed.

Child Protection Training and CORI Checks for Volunteers

Every parish volunteer *must* complete a *CORI* form every year and *must* attend *Child Protection Training* once. If you have never completed training, a training session will be provided as we approach the beginning of the new school year. New *CORI* forms are available in the Faith Formation Office.

Mass Attendance

One of the most important expectations of our program is that families will worship regularly with us at our weekend Masses. Worship is the central activity and tenet of our faith, and to not include it in our regular catechetical practices is to take away the crux of both our faith and our community. Our parish provides many different opportunities for throughout the weekend to attend Mass. Our Mass schedule is as followed: Saturday- 4:00pm; Sunday- 7:30am, 9:00am, 11:00am. Twice a month we also offer a teen Mass that is more focused on the youth with contemporary music and technology at the 11:00am (see parish bulletin or website for more information on dates).

Class Attendance

Children and young people are expected to be present for all classes, retreats, service projects, and special events (as per the student's calendar). We do recognize that illnesses and other unplanned conflicts may arise and that we want what is best for your family. However, in the interest of the well-being of the program and all of its participants, we ask that you observe the following:

- When a child will be absent, please notify **Jonathan Galo** at **508-548-3515** or **stanthonyfaithformation@comcast.net**. We are responsible for your children while they are with us. It helps us greatly to know when they will not be here.
- Those students who do not often attend Faith Formation classes lack the opportunity to build and feel comfortable within a community, and also have less of a chance to build and explore their faith. Additionally because of their absence, distress is created for staff, catechist, and other families who must plan around those children. Out of concern for the wellbeing of a particular child, if there is an excessive amount of absences recorded for a particular student, that student's catechist will inform the Faith Formation office and the child's family will be contacted about their intention to remain in the Faith Formation program.

Class Cancellation

In the event that classes need to be cancelled (either for inclement weather or other circumstances) the following will be the procedure that the office of Faith Formation will follow. A blast email will be sent out to all faith formation families in addition to a memo being posted on our Faith Formation web page <https://www.stanthonyscapecod.org/faithformation>. Please note that there are no Faith Formation sessions when there is no school **ALL day in Falmouth.**

Arrival and Departure

All children are to remain in the classroom except under extraordinary circumstances. Please encourage your children to use the rest room prior to the beginning of class. If your child needs to be dismissed early, you must come into the building and notify Jonathan Galo that you are picking up your child who will accompany you to your child's classroom. When picking your child up from Faith Formation classes we ask that you do not park between the safety cones and *Fatima Hall*. **For the safety of the children, they will not be released until a parent/guardian comes to pick them up inside the main hall of *Fatima Hall* and that child's catechist sees that they are picked up by someone.**

Classroom Policies

There are several policies that we have in place for classroom conduct and homework:

- We expect students to conduct themselves in a respectful, loving, polite, and enthusiastic manner to both their catechists and their peers. However, there are times when a student's behavior might affect the safety of those within the program and whose behavior might fall outside what is acceptable in a parish setting. Behavioral issues will be addressed in the following manner: First, the catechist will speak with the child to address their concerns. If the problem remains unresolved, Jonathan Galo will speak with the child regarding the issue. Lastly, a family meeting will be arranged to resolve the problem.
- Due to the fact that some of the children in our program have serious allergies a **NO FOOD/DRINK** policy will be enforced. We ask that children finish their snack before they enter the building. Please notify Jonathan Galo if your child has any medical condition that requires the availability of food/drink during class time.
- Each week your child will bring home pages from the lesson(s) of the day. Please review these with your child, and help him/her complete the "Take Home" section of each chapter. **The completed "Take Home" page must be signed by a parent/guardian and brought back to the next class.**
- Use of cell phones and other electronic devices are prohibited during class time.
- Because of the concern we have for the safety and wellbeing of everyone within our program, any and all items that compromise safety in any way (i.e. knives, drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, weapons of any type) are ***strictly prohibited*** from the St. Anthony campus. If such a situation arises where a child is found with any of these items, a parent will be informed ***immediately*** and the proper procedures will be followed.

Photography

As indicated in the new faith formation family registration form, there will be instances where photos may be taken at certain Faith Formation events during the course of the year which may

otherwise be electronically displayed on St. Anthony's Parish website. Your child's first name may be included as a caption to the picture. By selecting the option **I grant permission** on the registration form, you release St. Anthony's Parish from any liability resulting from or connected with the publication of your child's photograph. This authorization will remain in effect for the duration of your child's participation in the Faith Formation Program. By selecting the option **I do not grant permission**, we as a program do not have permission to post any picture of your child on our website or other public forum.

Media

All of this information can be found on our web page at <http://www.stanthonyscapecod.org/faithformation>. In addition, we will be sending out a weekly newsletter throughout the program year to let you know of what is coming up with our program! If you have any questions about anything, please feel free to get in touch with Jonathan Galo at stanthonyfaithformation@comcast.net or at 508-548-3515.