

St. Patrick's Catholic Church
Office of Religious Formation
Summer Faith Formation Program
Catechist Handbook
June 2018



The Mission of St. Patrick's Parish Religious Formation Program is to partner with parents to provide opportunities for children in our parish to grow in their relationships with Jesus and their understanding of the Catholic faith.

**Office of Religious Formation
20500 West Maple Road
Elkhorn, NE 68022
(402) 289-4947**

Dear Summer Faith Formation Program Staff:

Welcome to St. Patrick's Summer Faith Formation Program. As a follower of Christ, you have responded to your Baptismal call and have agreed to share your faith with the children in our parish. I know the task you are undertaking isn't always an easy one. I also know the sacrifices are small compared to the personal satisfaction we receive helping others to develop a relationship with Jesus. Our goal is to partner with parents in their children's faith formation, to pass on the traditions and beliefs of the Catholic faith and to nurture individuals to become active disciples of Jesus.

With the continued support and dedication of so many, our faith formation programs have flourished and we offer many opportunities for our children to form their faith life through classroom lessons, Liturgy of the Word for Children, Vacation Bible School, parent/child retreats and service experiences.

This handbook is provided for your convenience. Its purpose is to provide continuity and stability. Hopefully, it will give everyone a more specific idea as to what is expected from him or her and what is to be expected of others.

If you should have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at (402) 289-4947. I will be happy to set up a time to meet with you.

God Bless,
Mary McMahan
Director of Religious Formation

**St. Patrick's Catholic Church of Elkhorn, NE
Office of Religious Formation
20500 West Maple Road
Elkhorn, NE 68022**

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How to Reach Us:

Religious Formation Office	(402) 289-4947
Parish Office	(402) 289-4289
Parish Fax	(402) 763-9530

Staff:

Pastor	Reverend Tom Fangman
Associate Pastor	Reverend Patrick Moser
Director of Religious Formation	Mary McMahan
Religious Formation Administrative Assistant	Kimberly Parsons
LWC Coordinator	Chris Else
Welcome Desk	Aimee Limongi

Religious Formation Committee Members:

Wendy Cobb	Joann Mancuso
Chris Else	Ann Rasmussen
Mary Hawkins	Chris Stara
Ron Hawkins	Kerrie Tabaka
Linda Mack	

Ex-Officio Members:

Reverend Tom Fangman, Pastor
Mary McMahan, Director of Religious Formation

**St. Patrick's Office of Religious Formation
Summer Faith Formation Catechist Handbook**

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Summer Faith Formation Program
Catechist Handbook**

Expectations of Summer Faith Formation Program Catechists

- Be a follower of Christ and conduct self in a manner that is consistent with the values of the Gospels and teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that children will be able to develop a relationship with Jesus and grow in their Catholic faith.
- Celebrate Sunday Mass regularly.
- Set aside adequate time to prepare and teach designated curriculum.
- Partner with parents in fulfilling their roles as the primary educators of their children in the ways of the faith.
- Dress should reflect and respect the Catholic Christian teaching environment served.
- Agree to attend Archdiocesan "Safe Environment" training sessions and complete the necessary forms for a background check.
- Acknowledge receipt and review of the Catechist Handbook.

Registration

The registration forms for the Summer Faith Formation Program are mailed in February. Class assignments are set on a first come/first serve basis. **Catechists are unable to approve class changes.** All requests for changes must be directed to and approved by the Director of Religious Formation.

In most cases, class sizes will be limited to 20 students per room. However, class sizes may be increased or decreased after visiting with the lead catechist regarding the dynamics of the group.

Catechists will be provided with a class list that will include the child's name, parent's name, family email address and phone number and include any special needs or medical alerts the child may have. This information is considered confidential and should never be given out.

Procedures Before Class

Lesson Plans: All catechists are asked to plan their classroom lesson in advance and utilize the approved curriculum for the grade level they are teaching. Preparation is essential when passing on the Catholic faith to the children in our parish.

Arrival: Catechists are to arrive 15 minutes before the start of class. Catechists must check their mailbox and obtain any messages or newsletters. Catechist should prepare their classroom and then meet their students in the lower level of the Activity Center. Once the bell rings, proceed to your classroom.

Catechist Updates: The Director of Religious Formation will communicate program needs and changes to the daily schedule via email. Each catechist will have a mailbox in the school copy/workroom. Please take the time prior to class to check your email and also your mailbox.

Procedures During Class

- Under no circumstances are students to be left in the classroom unattended. If assistance is needed, send a student to the Office of Religious Formation.
- Set classroom rules. (Review expectations of students found in both the catechist and family handbooks when setting your classroom rules.)
- Summer Faith Formation Program catechists are not allowed in the 5-day school teacher's desk. Computers in the classroom are not to be used by students.
- Summer Faith Formation Program catechists will be provided access to computers and projectors.
- Snacks may be shared during faith formation program classes, however, desks/tables and chairs must be wiped down.
- The only drink to be consumed in the classroom is water.

Attendance: Attendance cards will be placed in the catechist's mailbox at the start of each day. Catechists should take attendance at the beginning of class. Attendance cards should be placed outside the door. A check mark placed beside all students present, A for Absent, or T for Tardy. Parents of all students marked absent and not already excused will be phoned.

Late Arrivals: All students arriving late for class, must check in with the Religious Formation Office.

Behavior: Classroom disturbances will not be tolerated. Catechists should handle matters immediately, fairly and consistently. During the first class session, and as frequently as needed, review the expectations of each child and the discipline policy. Repeated disturbances should be brought to the attention of the Director of Religious Formation by sending students and the completed Discipline Form to the office. (Sample of the Discipline Form is included in the back of the Summer Faith Formation Program Catechist Handbook.)

Expectations for All Children Participating in The St. Patrick's Summer Faith Formation Program

1. Treat all people, including self, with respect.
 - Speak politely to peers and adults; do not use hateful words, or unnecessary criticism.
 - Listen while others are speaking.
 - Show respect for all different points of view.
 - Physical attacks are not allowed.
 - Forgive others when they have hurt you.
2. Attend and participate in all scheduled sessions for your grade level.
 - Be on time for class or scheduled activity.
 - Come to class prepared and open to the Word of God.
 - Show an eagerness to learn at all times.
 - Remain on task during all class sessions.
 - Complete outside assignments on time.
3. Respect the property of others and of our parish.
 - Keep track of all of the materials needed for class.
 - Help to take care of classrooms and church property.
 - Return borrowed items promptly

4. Electronic Devices.
 - Students should leave cell phones, and other electronic devices at home. If a student is caught using an electronic device, it will be confiscated and taken to the Office of Religious Formation. A parent will need to come to the Office of Religious Formation to retrieve the device.
5. 5. Clothing
 - All hats/baseball caps will be removed while on church/school premises.
 - All coats/jackets will be hung on a coat rack, or the back of student's chair.
 - No low riding pants that expose underwear, tops that expose undergarments, tops or shorts that expose mid-drift area either while standing or while seated, low cut tops, or clothing that advertises alcohol, tobacco, or messages that can be construed as a sexual innuendo or other non-Christian messages are allowed.

Discipline Policy

All children participating in our faith formation programs are expected to act appropriately while attending classes. In the event that a child misbehaves, the following steps will be taken to correct the matter:

1. The teacher will give the student one warning to stop the negative behavior.
2. If the child continues to misbehave, he/she will be sent to the Office of Religious Formation. The child will be asked to call their parent(s) and make them aware of the problem. The incident will be recorded in the office and the child will return to the classroom after he/she has notified his/her parents of the incident.
3. If the child is sent to the office a second time during the faith formation program, the Director of Religious Formation will place a call to the parents. The student will be required to complete one half hour of work detail to the parish for students enrolled in 1st through 5th grade and one hour of work detail to the parish for students enrolled in the 6th grade through Confirmation. The work detail and the time the work detail is completed will be at the discretion of the Director of Religious Formation. Work detail must be completed within a timely manner of the initial incident and the student's parents must be present while the student is completing the work detail. The incident will also be recorded in the office.
4. In the unfortunate event that a third incident occurs, a conference among the parents, student, catechist and the Director of Religious Formation will be held. At that time, a determination may be made that the child should be dismissed from the program for not exhibiting Christian behavior. If so, arrangements for home schooling will be offered. No refunds of registration fees will be made.

Guests: If you plan to invite guests to speak to your class, please visit with the Director of Religious Formation first. Students are not allowed to bring a friend to class with them during the Summer Faith Formation Program.

Homework: Homework can be given as a reinforcement of the lesson. It should be collected, remarks made, and returned to students. Being mindful of a family's summer schedule is important when making homework assignments.

Communication with Parents: Please provide a copy of communication you send to parents to the Office of Religious Formation. A copy of the communication will be kept on file.

Prayer: All faith formation program classes should begin and end with prayer. A suggestion would be to open class with a prayer that we come together as a faith community (i.e. Our Father, Hail Mary, etc.). Repetition of the prayers each class-time will assist students with memorization of the prayers. In addition to being able to recite the prayers, students should know their meaning. A list of prayers, their meaning and the grade level children should master these prayers is included in your Catechist Resource/Reference manual.

Classroom Clean-up: Each catechist is asked to erase whiteboards, leave desks in order, stack chairs, pick-up debris off the floors, wash desks if necessary, close windows if opened and return all supplies/Bibles to the Religious Formation storage cabinet in the classroom. Please check for leftover personal items (jackets, coats, etc.) and bring them to the Office of Religious Formation. Please leave a gentle note for the janitor if something happens in the classroom that could cause any concerns.

Dismissal Grades 1st-Confirmation

- All students, volunteers and visitors must enter and exit the building through the school entrance.
- For the safety of the children in our parish, the doors between the school building and Boland Hall will be locked while the Summer Faith Formation Program is in session.
- Students will be dismissed from the classroom by the catechist. The catechist must escort the students outside through the main doors of the school and wait with them in front of the school entrance until their ride picks them up.
- Students must remain on the sidewalk in front of the entrance to the school until their parents walk up to pick up their child or drive up to the designated pick-up area.
- Staff will be available to assist the children while in the pick-up zone. If a ride has not shown up within 10 minutes, the student should be taken to the Office of Religious Formation to wait for his or her parents.
- Children of Summer Faith Formation Program catechists are not allowed to be inside or outside the parish campus without the supervision of an adult. Please designate and discuss with your child (ren) where you will meet them at the conclusion of class.

Photo Copy/Resource Materials/Supplies

Photo Copy Code: If you need to make copies for your class, the copier code for catechists is **7600**. Since we do not have paid staff to support photo-copying, we will be unable to complete last minute photo-copy requests. However, if you have your lesson planned in advance, you can leave your photo-copy requests in the Office of Religious Formation; we will have a volunteer or staff member make the copies and place the copies in your envelope for the following day.

Copyright Law Consideration: Section 107 of the 1976 Copyright Act deals with “fair use” and specifically states that the fair use of copies in teaching “is not an infringement of copyright.” The “sticking point” is what the term “fair use” means. The section lists four factors to be included in the determination of fair use:

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- The nature of the copyrighted work;

- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole;
- And the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

Resource Materials: There are many children’s books, activity books and videos available for check out from the Office of Religious Formation. A list of resources available for check out is included on the parish website under the Religious Formation tab/Volunteer Opportunities. Please call or email the Religious Formation Administrative Assistant to reserve resource materials and DVD players. If you choose to view a video other than those available from the Office of Religious Formation, you must get approval from the Director of Religious Formation one day prior to the class you plan to view the video. Your request for approval must include the name of the movie, rating if provided and how the movie will apply to your lesson.

Supplies: Each classroom will have a bucket with basic supplies, glue, colors, markers, pencils, scissors, tape, stapler and hole punch. Please make sure trash, etc. is not left in the buckets, caps are on markers and glue bottles closed before returning the bucket to the Religious Formation storage area.

In addition to the above supplies, many other supplies may be available for your use in the classroom. Please take time to check out the Religious Formation storage closet before the beginning of the Summer Faith Formation Program. Any unused supplies should be returned to the location you found them. If you are in need of supplies that are “above and beyond” what is in the Religious Formation storage area, please discuss with the Director of Religious Formation to determine if there are funds available in our budget. Alternative ideas may be suggested.

Catechist’s Manuals: Manuals are handed out at the Catechist In-Service. All teaching materials and Catechist Resource/Reference manuals must be returned at the end of the Summer Faith Formation Program year so that they can be updated.

Catechist General Information

Summer Faith Formation Staff Attendance: For Safe Environment reasons, all catechists must notify the Director of Religious Formation of the date and time they will be unavailable to serve. A record will be kept in the Office of Religious Formation of Summer Faith Formation Program staff absences and stipends will be adjusted accordingly.

Attire for Summer Faith Formation Staff: Dress for Summer Faith Formation staff is business casual. Jeans and capris are allowed. However, dress must be modest and shorts are not allowed.

Children of Summer Faith Formation Staff: Children of Summer Faith Formation Program staff are eligible to be enrolled in the program. There is no discount allowed for children of Summer Faith Formation Program staff members. Daycare is not provided for children of staff members and children of staff members are not allowed in the classroom as a “helper” while the Summer Faith Formation Program is in session.

In-Services: Summer Faith Formation Program Catechists are required to attend an in-service and orientation prior to the start of the Summer Faith Formation Program. The date for the in-service will be provided to applicants at the time of the interview process and again at the time of hire.

Stipend: Summer Faith Formation Program catechists will receive a stipend in the amount of \$75.00 per day. A check for the stipend will be issued at the conclusion of the Summer Faith Formation Program.

Dispute Resolution

Our faith formation program staff is committed to working collaboratively with members of St. Patrick's parish community. In the event that you have any concerns or suggestions for changes in the faith formation programs here at St. Patrick's Parish of Elkhorn, NE., and the protocol for addressing your needs is as follows:

1. Set up an appointment, or address a letter to the Director of Religious Formation to discuss your concerns or suggestions for improvement in the faith formation program. Your matter will be addressed in a timely manner.
2. If you feel that your matters were not given sufficient attention, please address your concerns or suggestions in a letter format to the attention of the Religious Formation Committee. Your concerns will be addressed at the next scheduled Religious Formation Committee Meeting.

Miscellaneous Class Information

Cancellation of Class: In case of severe weather, a request will be made to the three major television stations, KETV, KMTV, and WOWT to broadcast our cancellation. Every effort will be made to post cancellations on the website.

Disaster/Tornado Drill: A disaster/tornado drill will be held during the first week of the Summer Faith Formation Program. The announcement is made over the intercom. Directions are posted in each classroom and provided to Catechists. (Copies are also provided in the Catechist Resource/Reference Manual.)

Fire Drill: A fire drill will be held during the first week of classes. The fire alarm system will sound. Catechists should take students outside. Directions are posted in each classroom and given to catechists. (Copies are also provided in the Catechist Resource/Reference Manual.)

Intruder in the Building: In the unfortunate event that an intruder is in the building, an announcement will be made. A copy of the procedures can be found in your Catechist's Resource & Reference Binder. When faith formation classes are in session, classroom doors are to remain locked and shut when students are present in the classroom.

Field Trips/Service Projects: Field trips/service projects are to be discussed with the Director of Religious Formation. Service projects involving the collection of money must be approved by the Director of Religious Formation and presented for discussion with the Human Needs Committee. After the field trip/service project is approved and date chosen, permission slips from the Director of Religious Formation need to be sent home for parent/guardian signature and returned before the student may attend. Field trip permission slips must be retained in the student's family file.

SAMPLE FORM
St. Patrick's Catholic Church
Office of Religious Formation
20500 West Maple Road
Elkhorn, NE 68022
(402) 289-4947

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

All children participating in our faith formation programs are expected to act appropriately while attending classes. In the event that a child misbehaves, the following steps will be taken to correct the matter:

1. The teacher will give the student one warning to stop the negative behavior.
2. If the child continues to misbehave, he/she will be sent to the Office of Religious Formation. The child will be asked to call their parent(s) and make them aware of the problem. The incident will be recorded in the office and the child will return to the classroom after he/she has notified his/her parents of the incident.
3. If the child is sent to the office a second time during the faith formation program, the Director of Religious Formation will place a call to the parents. The student will be required to complete one half hour of work detail to the parish for students enrolled in 1st through 5th grade and one hour of work detail to the parish for students enrolled in the 6th grade through Confirmation. The work detail and the time the work detail is completed will be at the discretion of the Director of Religious Formation. Work detail must be completed within a timely manner of the initial incident and the student's parents must be present while the student is completing the work detail. The incident will also be recorded in the office.
4. In the unfortunate event that a third incident occurs, a conference among the parents, student, catechist and the Director of Religious Formation will be held. At that time, a determination may be made that the child should be dismissed from the program for not exhibiting Christian behavior. If so, arrangements for home schooling will be offered. No refunds of fees will be made.

Discipline Report

Student's Name _____ **Grade** _____

Catechist/Assistant Catechist's Name _____ **Date** _____

Description of Incident:

Catechist/Assistant Catechist's Signature _____

Action Taken by RF Office:

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent Signature (If required) _____ **Date** _____

Director of Religious Formation Signature _____ **Date** _____

St. Patrick's Religious Formation
Summer Faith Formation Catechist Agreement
Summer 2018

The Mission of St. Patrick's Parish Religious Formation program is to partner with parents to provide opportunities for children in our parish to grow in their relationships with Jesus and their understanding of the Catholic faith.

As a Summer School teacher at St. Patrick's Religious Formation, I commit to the following for the 2018 Summer Session.

1. I am a follower of Christ and conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of the Gospels and teachings of the Catholic Church.
2. I will celebrate Sunday Mass regularly.
3. I will provide a loving, Christian atmosphere within the learning environment so that children will be able to develop a relationship with Jesus and grow in their Catholic faith.
4. I will commit to attend each class during the two-week session as scheduled, including the in-service and orientation scheduled prior to the start of the session. My attendance is required to set continuity in the classroom and achievement of the student's studies in their faith.
5. I will set aside adequate time to prepare and teach the designated curriculum.
6. I will partner with parents in fulfilling their roles as the primary educators of their children in the ways of the faith.
7. I will dress in the manner to reflect and respect the Catholic Christian teaching environment served.
8. I agree to attend Archdiocesan "Safe Environment" training sessions and complete the necessary forms for a background check.
9. I acknowledge receipt and review of the Catechist Handbook.

I commit to these expectations in good faith to work toward the achievement of the Religious Formation goals. In the event that I should fail to fulfill these expectations, I understand that the Director of Religious Formation will call upon me to discuss my responsibilities and any shortcomings may hinder future employment with St. Patrick's Religious Formation.

This Agreement is accepted by:

Teacher

Date

Director of Religious Formation

Date