



SAINT ANN'S
A CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

2023-2024

Faith Formation for Grades K-6

Family Handbook

St Ann's Roman Catholic Church
Diocese of Syracuse, NY

104 Academy Street, Manlius NY 13104
Parish Office: 315-682-5181

Grades K-6 Faith Formation Coordinators:

Steve Nowicki, 316-990-8782 (cell)
Erin Nowicki, 316-990-8786 (cell)
FFK6@SaintAnnsChurch.com

Annual Letter to Parents

September 2023

Hello Friends!

Welcome to St Ann's Faith Formation for children in grades K-6. When we responded to God's call to baptize our children, we professed an oath to God: *"On your part, you must make it your constant care to bring your child up in the practice of the faith"* (from the Rite of Baptism). [Thank you for your abiding commitment to that oath](#), and for allowing us and our catechists to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with your family!

The Church teaches that *"The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute"* [CCC 2221], and that parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children in the virtues and the practice of the Catholic Faith. The purpose of Faith Formation at St Ann's is to support and accompany you in this important responsibility.

The curriculum we use – Finding God by Loyola Press – will help your children grow in their understanding of who God is, why He created us and how much He loves us. It will also help us understand how God's free gift of grace and our use of intellect and free will can help us grow in relationship with Him and see God in all things. It is God's will that we each enter a lifelong relationship with Him and practice the Sacramental life filled with prayer and Christian service. We are privileged to accompany you in forming your children in the Catholic Faith and we encourage your faithful practice of it through prayer and participation in the Sacraments!

Please read this family handbook to be aware of the goals and expectations of Faith Formation at St Ann's. If you have any questions, please contact us by phone, text or email. We ask for your prayers and support as we journey together to grow in our Catholic faith!

May God bless your family and may His grace and peace be yours in abundance!

Steve and Erin Nowicki
Faith Formation Coordinators K-6
FFK6@SaintAnnsChurch.com
Steve: 316-990-8782 (cell)
Erin: 316-990-8786 (cell)

Mission Statement

St Ann’s K-6 Faith Formation (FF) embraces the mission given to us by Jesus to make disciples of all nations (Mt 28:19). With your constant care, our mission is to help your children love the Lord God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love their neighbor as themselves, by teaching and living the Gospel message of Jesus faithfully handed down by the Catholic Church from the beginning. We hope to exemplify a love of God that leads to Christian discipleship resulting in service to one another in the family, the parish community, and to the world around us.

Parent Responsibilities and Expectations

Parents have the primary responsibility for the religious formation of their children [CCC 2223]. By working in solidarity with you, we hope to achieve our mission. The formation of your child as a disciple of Christ depends on an active faith life in your family, which includes:

1. Attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
2. Going to Confession.
3. Praying with your children.
4. Discussing the Catholic faith with your children.
5. Participating in parish life.

To help your children in Faith Formation:

1. Bring your children on time to each class.
2. Ensure they bring the required materials.
3. Ask them what they learned in class.
4. Review each lesson with them and complete at-home assignments.

Student Expectations

Our catechists love the Lord and volunteer their time and talent to support parents in teaching the Catholic Faith. This task is both rewarding and challenging. To be effective, we appreciate your support in setting these behavioral expectations for students:

- Be courteous and respectful.
- Be engaged and attentive.
- Complete assignments.
- Talk to parents about what was learned.
- Students must wait outside the classroom if the catechist is not present.
- If a student becomes ill during a class, parents or the emergency contact will be notified.

Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist

Faith Formation for second graders prepares children to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion, therefore we often refer to the second-grade class as “the Sacrament Class.” First Reconciliation is received in January, and First Holy Communion is received in May. Preparation for these Sacraments begins in kindergarten. Students enrolling in the Sacrament Class are expected to have at least one prior year of Faith Formation (if your student does not, please contact us). If you have a student older than 2nd grade who has not received these Sacraments, please contact us. We need copies of Baptism Certificates for any child enrolled in the Sacrament class that was not baptized at St Ann’s.

Registration & Fee	Annual registration is required prior to your student attending their first class. There are two options for registration:
	<p>1) register and pay online at https://saintannschurch.com/</p> <p>2) contact the parish office (315-682-5181 or parishoffice@saintannschurch.com) for a hard copy form to complete. Checks should be payable to St Ann’s Church.</p>
	The fee is \$50 fee per student with a max of \$150 per family. New and Second Grade students must submit a copy of their baptismal certificate if not baptized at St Ann’s.
Class Location, Time and Attendance	<p>Grades K-3 classes are held in Lynch Hall classrooms. Grades 4-6 classes are in the Parish Center. All classes are held on Sunday morning from 9:50 am to 10:50 am to encourage families to attend the 11am Mass. Weekly attendance at Mass is essential to grow in faith, hope and charity, and God wills this for our good which is why he commands it (Keep holy the Lord’s Day), and why the Church carries out the command faithfully.</p>
	If your child must miss class, please notify us by email at FFK6@SaintAnnsChurch.com or by text to 316-990-8782. We can provide at-home lesson plans.
Arrival and Dismissal	<p>For students in Lynch Hall:</p> <p>Arrival: Please park and escort your child into Lynch Hall to their classroom. Please use entrance numbers 2 and 3 on the attached map (entrance 1 goes to a classroom).</p> <p>Dismissal: Please park and meet your child at the classroom door. Mass starts at 11am so the parking lot could be busy.</p>
	<p>For students in the Parish Center:</p> <p>Arrival: Please drop your child off near the entrance to the Parish Center. At the start of the year, students will be greeted at the door and will be shown their classroom. If you arrive after 9:50am, please escort your child to the classroom if they don’t know the way.</p> <p>Dismissal: Please park in the yellow shaded areas shown on the attached map. Your students will meet you at your car. Mass starts at 11am so the parking lot could be busy.</p>
Prayer	Each class will begin and end with prayer. Depending on grade level, students will learn the different forms of prayer: praise, petition, thanksgiving and contrition. These prayers can be found in the Catholic Prayers section of your children’s textbook. We encourage parents to say these prayers with their children every day. Jesus taught about the necessity to pray without becoming weary (Luke 18:1). Prayer is communicating with God; it is an act of love that unites us with God.
Special Needs	If your child has any special needs including physical, sensory, cognitive, or social / emotional disabilities please let us know so we can better serve your child. We will make every effort to accommodate a child with special needs.
Cancellation of Classes	If classes need to be cancelled for any reason, a text message will be sent to parents ASAP from the church’s Flocknote system. It is important that we have your cell phone number for this purpose.

Communication	<p>We are here to accompany you on your family’s faith journey. We communicate to parents through our Flocknote system so please ensure mail@flocknote.com is an approved sender in your email app. You are also encouraged to contact us by phone, text or email anytime.</p>
	<p>Steve Nowicki, 316-990-8782 Erin Nowicki, 316-990-8786 FFK6@SaintAnnsChurch.com</p>
	<p>For current information about the K-6 program, goto https://saintannschurch.com/k-6/.</p>
Volunteers	<p>Volunteers are always welcome! Parents may volunteer in a number of ways including as a teacher or teacher’s aide, administrative help, help providing snacks and/or setting up for special occasions. All volunteers must attend a VIRTUS training session held by the Diocese of Syracuse. It is a requirement of the Diocese of Syracuse that no adult can be in the classroom without being VIRTUS trained. The VIRTUS training schedule is published at https://www.syracusediocese.org/safe-environment/initial-training-for-adults/ or you can email us for info.</p>
Curriculum	<p>The textbooks for grades K, 1, and 3-6 are entitled Finding God: Our Response to God’s Gifts® published by Loyola Press. The second-grade Sacramental class uses textbooks entitled God’s Gift: Reconciliation and God’s Gift: Eucharist published by Loyola Press. In addition, 2nd grade students receive 2 booklets entitled My Own Mass and My Own Reconciliation. This curriculum helps a child to start a life of intentional discipleship and is rooted in Scripture, Catholic doctrine, and Ignatian spirituality. Through this curriculum, children are offered a model of catechesis that embraces technology, responds to the ongoing invitation to enter into a deeper relationship with God, and encourages them to find God in all things. The Subcommittee on the Catechism, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has found the doctrinal content of these manuals, copyright 2013, 2016 and 2021, to be in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church.</p>

**Safe
Environment**

All clergy, religious and employees of the diocese, as well as any volunteer who comes into contact with children, are required to take **VIRTUS® Protecting God's Children** training. This training teaches how to build and maintain safe environments for our children to protect them from abuse.

All Catholic dioceses throughout the United States must provide age-appropriate Safe Environment training for children and youth in parish catechetical programs and Catholic schools. In grades K-6 we teach the **Circles of Care** lessons to students, which have been approved by the Diocese of Syracuse. These lessons teach students about appropriate and inappropriate boundaries and behaviors by peers and adults, the students' right to remove themselves from uncomfortable situations, and the importance of informing a parent or other trusted adult when something is not right. An overview of the Safe Environment Training Program and grade level lesson plans can be found online at

<https://www.syracusediocese.org/offices/catechesis/circles-of-care/>

Parents can request their children be exempted from this training, in which case they will be offered the grade-level materials to work with their children at home.

St Ann's Church Map

