

PROGRAM POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Due to the restrictions caused by the Coronavirus, the FCFF sessions will be conducted virtually this year, once a month.

Parents of all age children, 5th-8th graders, and high school students preparing for Confirmation, will attend via Zoom from 10:30 am-Noon. After the opening presentation, they will view a segment of the Ascension Press series: T3 Matthew: Thy Kingdom Come. Then they will be separated into breakout rooms according to the ages of the children. For parents of PK-4th graders, the goal of the breakout rooms will be to learn ways to pass on faith concepts to their young children. The goal of the breakout sessions for the older children and their parents will be to encourage discussion between parent and child to process one of the concepts in the video.

Children in Grades PK-4th grade will not be present for the Zoom sessions. Instead they will have a pre-recorded class that will be uploaded to the website for them to see at any time during the month. (1st graders are welcome to join the PK/K class if parents choose.)

REGISTRATION FOR THE ZOOM SESSIONS

Parents will receive an email each month asking them to sign up using "Sign Up Genius" to indicate which breakout session they would like to attend. Those parents who have a 5th-8th grader must stay with that child since the sessions will be interactive. However, if you also have children in PK-4th grade and both parents can attend, the other parent should register with his/her email address to attend the PK-4th grade group.

It is essential that parents register in a timely way to allow the person responsible for technology to place them in the group they chose.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The diocese requires that all parents receive the Policies/Standards for keeping children safe from sexual exploitation and a brochure that suggests ways to help keep your child safe. Parents are asked to sign the electronic form under the parent tab of the website indicating they received these resources, which are also on the website. We are also required to provide age appropriate instruction to the children, if their schools do not provide it, to enable them to recognize the danger signs that could lead to sexual exploitation. If your child does not receive this instruction at school, we will need your signature for permission to include or exclude your child for this program.

HOMEWORK

2 home lessons per month are provided electronically on the website under the "Monthly Home Lessons" tab. They are designed to be completed as a family. Homework should be returned electronically and will be recorded in the family's file. When working with children of varying ages, parents may need to read and explain to younger children. Most times, a simpler exercise is included for PK-1st graders. If your child is very young, you should still complete the more complicated homework yourself to enhance your own understanding of the faith, so you can pass it on as your child matures.

ANNUAL REGISTRATION

It is important that children continue in the formal faith formation program each year until they receive Confirmation. Families are asked to complete registration forms online for the coming year before the end of May.

A certificate of Baptism is REQUIRED for all students entering the program for the first time.

In the case of parents who are divorced: By law, we cannot restrict either parent from access to the children's religious education records nor from participating in the Family Centered Faith Formation program, unless we have on file in the office a copy of the custodial section of the divorce decree indicating the courts have mandated this restriction.

Please do not put us, or your children, in an uncomfortable position by making requests we cannot legally consider.

TUITION AND FEES

\$250 per family

Sacrament preparation fees
Reconciliation/Eucharist: \$85
Confirmation: \$65

\$50 late fee for returning families (after July 1)

Tuition fees are expected from each family unless special arrangements have been made with the Pastor or Director. No family will be denied entrance into the program for financial reasons.

All families are expected to contribute to the support of the Church through their weekly donation. This not only helps to defray the parish subsidy allotted to the Religious Ed. program, but also helps to fulfill the Precept of the Church which requires all Catholics to give of their time, talent and treasure to support the Church. Donations may be sent to the Church or made through the parish website - st-francis-xavier.org

SACRAMENTS

Children generally receive First Reconciliation and First Communion in Second Grade. Parents are expected to participate in their child's preparation for these sacraments by covering the material in the sacrament textbook and attending events that are planned. Children learn the value of the sacraments long before they begin preparing to receive them. Be sure your children attend Mass weekly when it is allowed and you take them to Reconciliation regularly when it is offered, once they have received First Reconciliation.

8th graders attend special Confirmation sessions each month in addition to attending FCFF with their parents.

The diocese requires that children have two consecutive years of religious instruction before receiving the sacraments. Therefore, students coming into FCFF later than the usual time will be required to participate for one year before entering the sacrament preparation program.

FAMILY PROGRESS REPORTS

A record of attendance and homework completion will be kept in a family file. At the end of the year, each family will receive documentation of this for their own records.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Families are expected to perform a minimum of 2 "Works of Mercy" service projects each year and to report on their service experience using the electronic forms on the website. A list of Service Suggestions is provided to assist you in choosing your projects. At least one project should be a Corporal Work of Mercy and at least one should be a Spiritual Work of Mercy, as explained in the Service Suggestions resource.



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Family Centered Faith Formation - FCFE

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Parents' Prayer

Dear Lord,
Thank you for the children
You have entrusted to us.
They are so precious!
Watch over and protect them
as they mature
and grow closer to You.
Help them to realize
that You are all they need
to live a fulfilled life
here on earth.
Let Your light shine through us
for them to see
so that they may know
that You are the way,
the truth and
the life.
Thank You, Lord, for allowing us
to partner with You
in nurturing these children. Amen

CALENDAR 2020-21 Family Formation Sessions will be held this year via Zoom 10:30 am-Noon

September 27
October 25
November 22
January 17
February 14
March 14
April 18

PLEASE NOTE: PK-4th graders will not attend these sessions. Instead, a pre-recorded presentation will be uploaded to the website for them to view at any time.

Philosophy of Family Centered Religious Education

"Those who have given life to children and have enriched them with the gift of Baptism have the duty continually to nourish it... In a certain sense, nothing replaces family catechesis, especially for its positive and receptive environment, for the example of adults, and for its first explicit experience and practice of the faith." (General Directory for Catechesis, 177-178)

The goal of Family Centered Faith Formation is to assist parents in passing on the faith to their children by offering them an opportunity to increase their own understanding of the faith and by structuring a program that encourages a continuing dialogue between parents and their children.

In addition to participating in the Family Centered Faith Formation Program, what can parents do to nurture their children's faith?

- ATTEND MASS TOGETHER WHENEVER IT IS ALLOWED. The Mass is the central worship of our Catholic faith. It conveys to us the great love of God. Not only did He redeem us through the death and resurrection of his Son, but He offers Himself to us, body, blood, soul and divinity as nourishment for the journey of life. How can we refuse this great gift? With this in mind, don't just attend Mass - actively participate - pray the words of the prayers and sing the hymns yourself, and encourage your children to do the same. Encourage your children to learn the Mass prayers and responses. If Mass is not allowed, then watch a virtual Mass at home. Teach your children this Prayer of Spiritual Communion that they may pray when reception of Holy Communion is not possible:

"My Jesus,
I believe that You are truly present
in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment
receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you."
Amen.

- When the sacrament of Reconciliation is allowed, encourage reception of the sacrament by using the instructional resources provided and by modeling through your own example.

- Let your children know that their faith development is important to you. Set aside a specific day and time each week to complete the home lessons together.

- Use the Commandments and the Beatitudes in making decisions. Help your children learn to use them in their decision-making, too. Make your home a place of justice and peace with consistent and respectful discipline.

- Pray together at home. Encourage prayer at meals, morning and bedtime. Praying the traditional prayers of the Catholic faith is the best method of memorizing them. (A resource, "Passing on the Faith", can be found on the website to help with the prayers.) But, also pray spontaneously with your children. Take the opportunities that present themselves each day in the joyful as well as sad moments. Pray aloud a word of thanks, or praise, or petition or apology to the Lord. Let your children hear those words from your lips as the automatic response to day-to-day experiences.

- Read the Bible and Catechism at home. Each family is given a Bible and Catechism and homework assignments to help you become more comfortable using them.

- Perform at least two Works of Mercy service projects with your children each year. Living our faith is just as important as knowing it, if not more so. Show your children the joy that can be derived from following Christ's example of serving others. Service Suggestions are provided on the website to help you with this.

- Attend additional adult religious education presentations at St. Francis Xavier and other parishes whenever possible, to continually advance your own knowledge and practice of the Catholic faith and to enhance your own spiritual development.