

St. Joseph Church Family Faith Handbook 2023-2024

St. Joseph Religious Education Mission Statement

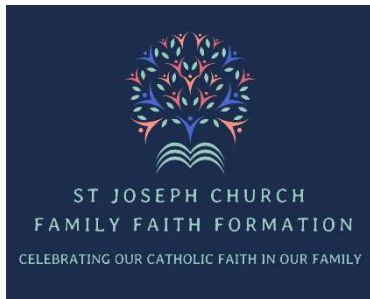
The mission of St. Joseph Religious Education is to build a foundation of faith, in partnership with parents, from which our children will continue to learn about God and the Roman Catholic Church.

THE FAMILY/PARISH 5 POINT PARTNERSHIP

Our program's components are **The Family, The Weekly Home Lessons, The Monthly Dinner and Gathering to Share, The Weekly Gospel, and Weekly Mass attendance with your children.**

The family is essential in passing down the Catholic faith. Here are some ways to do this:

- ❖ We show our children our belief in God in good times and in bad.
- ❖ We model loving behavior to others.
- ❖ We lead and teach by example and kind words.
- ❖ We pray together and for others.
- ❖ We forgive and ask to be forgiven.
- ❖ We share with those in need.
- ❖ We celebrate birthdays, weddings, births, deaths, family reunions, holy days and holidays. This is our way of recognizing God's gracious generosity; realizing the gift of Himself and the gift of each other.
- ❖ We eat together as a family and share stories of our day.
- ❖ We regularly attend Mass as a family and celebrate our Sacramental Life. We support our parish with our time, talent and treasure.
- ❖ Our homes are the Domestic church, we display Holy reminders such as Holy images of Jesus, Mary and the Saints. Catholic books and the Holy Bible are in our homes. Prayer helps as well as Sacramentals like Holy Water, Rosaries and house blessings that may be incorporated into our family lifestyle.



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FAMILY FORMATION GRADES K-6

In the fall of 2018 we started a new program called Family Faith Formation.

Why Family Faith Formation?

It is for the preservation of our faith and family.

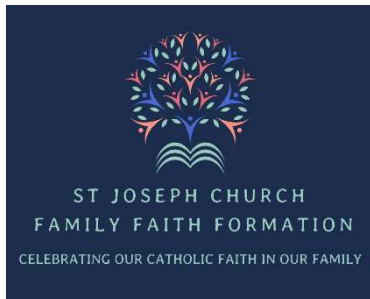
A careful reading through the documents of the Catholic Church quickly reveals the Church's great understanding of the importance of the family. As a Church, we realize our ineffectiveness to catechize children if the parents are not involved in the development of the faith life of their child. By inviting parents to go deeper to re-educate/re-evangelize themselves in the Catholic faith they will be equipped to answer questions and to realize their important role as primary teachers of the faith. This is what Family Faith accomplishes. Adult catechesis teaches and encourages parents and provides them with the Catholic "know how" to share the Good News of Jesus. It is a great gift from God to see and experience our families' lives, lived through a life of faith.

In appreciation of the beautiful gift that has been handed down to us from Jesus himself, we, your St. Joseph Catholic family, offer ourselves to you to learn more about our Catholic faith and Heritage, and to share these truths with your family.

We have chosen to teach through the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies Program. The program materials are engaging, down-to-earth, and easy to understand. **Family Faith Formation is meant to bring the family together once a week to learn their Faith in joy and with excitement.** I was attracted to this format because it focuses weekly on the Gospels for the coming Sunday. Questions will arise in regular conversation throughout the week, while with your children, and you will have more confidence and resources for the answers. With each home lesson and parent gathering, we hope you will begin to see sparks of light and conversion in yourselves and in your children.

MONTHLY DINNERS AND GATHERING TO SHARE

Family Faith Formation joins parents and children together. Families will share a meal together or a play time in the Gym (40 minutes). Then students will remain in the meeting room to gather with their class. After supper is cleaned up, parents will move to the Library for their parent session. **Out of the 9 MONTHLY sessions, we are expecting that each child not miss more than one session per school year. It is the parents' responsibility to communicate with the Coordinator if the family has to miss a session. Sick children or parents should not attend the monthly session. Please stay at home and get better! Your family will continue to do the Gospel Weeklies at home with your family.**



St. Joseph Church

Family Faith Handbook

2023-2024

MEETING TIMES

The families with children in grades K-6 will meet monthly on Sunday from 3:30 to 5:30. Children in grades 7-12 are welcome to participate in a monthly faith program gathering called Edge and Lifeteen. They have different meeting times. Call 860-379-3369 for Lindsay Rodgers, the SJC Youth Ministry/Confirmation Coordinator, for information about these programs.

PARENT SESSIONS

At least one parent/guardian needs to stay for the parent session. **Day Care, if needed, will be provided for the time in which the parents are in the adult session.** In the event a parent is not able to attend, ask a grandparent to come instead.

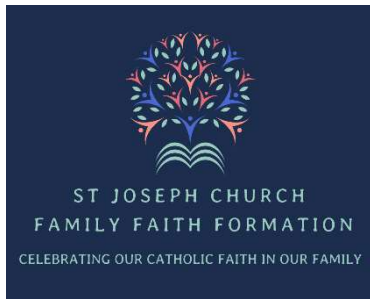
ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

- ❖ Please be on time to the parish center. Families coming in late disrupt the gathering. If you are going to be late, call and leave a voicemail, email or text the Coordinator prior to being late. ❖ Park in the Parish Center Parking Lot to the left upon entering. *Please do not park in the school parking lot to the right.* Please pull all the way around the Parish building and fill up our parking area first. You may park on the street if there is an activity at the school.
- ❖ Do not leave your children unattended. Arrive and depart as a Family.
- ❖ Children are not allowed outside the building without a parent.
- ❖ After the Adult session is finished, your children will wait for you to meet them with their teacher.

GOSPEL WEEKLIES HOME LESSONS

You, as parents, are the primary teacher of the faith! We want to help you in any way possible. We ask that you do your best in covering the home lesson material. Your teacher will be available via email for questions. Your Family Faith Formation is designed to be informative and relational. It is not memorization as much as it is to be comprehensible, integrational, and life-giving. **Each weekly lesson has 2 parts. First, The Gospel Weeklies, which introduces you and your student to the Words of Jesus in the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday Mass, and second, a small lesson in the Catechism Handbook, which teaches the church doctrine. Both of these parts are important. The teachers are focusing on The Handbook, leaving the Gospel weeklies to be done at Home. Please make sure your student completes the Gospel Weeklies every week. And review the Handbook for Catechetical teaching.**

There is also an online quiz, which your student will be expected to complete. Don't worry, there is an answer sheet for your reference.



St. Joseph Church Family Faith Handbook 2023-2024

MASS ATTENDANCE

From The Catechism of the Catholic Church

Mass is important. see CCC 1166 <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/para/1166.htm>

But why should we go? CCC 1345 <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/para/1345.htm>

Gathering together as the believers in the Life, Death and Resurrection of Christ Jesus is what Christ called us to do. Jesus invites us to be with Him in the Word and the Eucharist on the Seventh Day; the Day of His Resurrection. He cannot force us, but it is clear, it has been our call to Holiness since the beginning of the church in the first century (see CCC 1345). **Remember our program's five components are The Family, The Weekly Home Lessons, The Monthly Dinner and Gathering to Share, The Weekly Gospel, and Weekly Mass attendance with your children.**

**Mass times at St Joseph Church are Saturdays at 4pm and Sundays at 8am, 10am, & 6pm
Families are in agreement to attend Mass weekly and on Holy Days.**

STUDENT CONDUCT

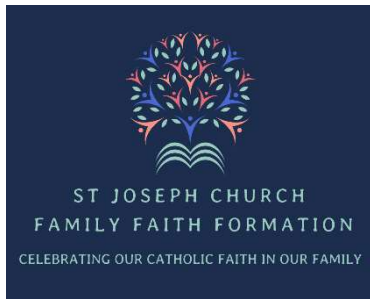
Name tags should stay with the catechist

In order to maintain an atmosphere conducive for learning, each instructor will operate using these classroom guidelines. The student will:

- 1. Listen**
- 2. Follow directions**
- 3. Cooperate with others**
- 4 Accomplish designated tasks**

Should there be students who are a disruption to the lesson, they will be redirected two times per class. The child will then be sent to join the parent session. The Director will discuss the situation privately after class.

All student records are shared with their catechist, so that appropriate redirection will be implemented.



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PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEO RECORDINGS

Occasionally, the catechists or church personnel, or parents will take photographs or video clips of the children during religious education events. These may be used on the Church's website. Names will not be published. Please complete the Photo Permission Form.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Anita Panagakos Grades K-6 SJC Family Faith Formation Coordinator
860-795-6522 or apanagakos@stjoseph-winsted.org

Lindsay Rodgers Grades 7-10 SJC Youth Ministry/Confirmation Coordinator
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