

Corpus Christi Parish
Faith Formation Program
Student Handbook



Places and Locations for Faith Formation Sessions K-6

Waterville Site – St. Francis Faith Formation Center

Sunday morning 9:45 – 11:00 am

or

Tuesday afternoon 3:15 – 4:30 pm

Winslow Site – St. John Regional Catholic School

Sunday morning 8:30 – 9:30 am

Fairfield Site – Immaculate Heart of Mary School

Sunday morning 10:00 – 11:15 am

Oakland Site – St. Theresa Church

Wednesday afternoon 3:15- 4:30 pm

ORGANIZATION OF CORPUS CHRISTI PARISH

Located at:

**Corpus Christi Parish Office
70 Pleasant Street
Waterville, Maine 04901
872-2281**

Administrator: Fr. Phil Tracy
Parochial Vicars: Fr. Dan Baillargeon, Fr. Paul Murray
Parish Manager: Doris Smith
Bookkeeper: Debbie Hebert
Administrative Assistant: Jo Vigue
Receptionist: Bobbi Baker
Secretary: Barbara Lawe

Located at:

**St. John the Baptist Church
26 Monument Street
Winslow, Maine 04901
872-2373**

Pastoral Life Coordinator (PLC): Kim Suttie
Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL): Elaine Gordon
Faith Formation Assistant: Karen Maclean

Faith Formation Policies and Procedures

The mission of the Catholic Church is to bring the message of Jesus to all people. When parents ask for baptism for their child, they accept the responsibility of training him or her in the practice of the Catholic faith. It is the duty of the parents, with the help of the Godparents, to bring up the child to keep God's commandments as Jesus taught us, loving God and neighbor. This is faith formation, which last a lifetime.

As a parent, you are the first teacher of your child. Your child will learn from you what is important to you about our faith. Bedtime prayers, traditions such as using an Advent wreath, saying the rosary, Lenten sacrificing, attending weekend Liturgy, saying grace before meals, etc. all teach your child very important lessons at an early age.

When parents present their child to the Church for Baptism, they are reminded that they have the responsibility to “bring up their child in the practice of the faith.” (Rite of Children 56) therefore parents are expected to attend all parent meetings concerning their child(ren) and to work with their child(ren) at home as needed.

There is help available to carry out this responsibility. **Corpus Christi Parish** provides Faith Formation programs at many levels of development. There are several session opportunities within our program for children in grades K-6.

Elementary Grades K – 6

Children study faith and doctrine from the **FAITH FIRST** series. This is a spiral approach to learning the faith, which means that the four pillars of the **Catechism of the Catholic Church** (Creed, Sacraments, Morality and Prayer) are taught and developed on every grade level each year. Students will experience Doctrine, Scripture, and the liturgical seasons of our Catholic faith. This approach ensures that the beliefs of our faith are reinforced for our children as they grow, develop and mature.

Prayer is central to the life of a Catholic Christian and so our children should be familiar with the most common prayers of our faith. By the end of each year the children should know these prayers:

Kindergarten: The Sign of the Cross and Glory Be

Grade 1: The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.

Grade 2: The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and Act of Sorrow

Grade 3: The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Sorrow, and Mass responses

Grade 4, 5 & 6: The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Sorrow, Mass responses and the Apostles Creed

Sacramental Preparation

Sacramental Preparation is an important function of the Faith Formation program. After an appropriate period of prayer and study, students in the **second grade** receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation, and First Eucharist. This is a vital period in the faith development of our young people, in need of specialized and focused preparation. Receiving three sacraments within a period of nine months is an exciting but also challenging time—one that demands extra formation.

Fundamental to a Christian way of life is our need to forgive and receive forgiveness. The sacrament of Reconciliation is the sacrament of peace through which people restore harmony and unity to families, communities, and the world. This sacrament urges us to ask for the Father's forgiveness in all of our actions and to bearers of peace and forgiveness in our daily lives.

Children are prepared for this sacrament in the fall with reception of the sacrament before Christmas. A child must receive this sacrament before preparing for the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist constitute the sacraments of Initiation. Confirmation completes the sacrament of Baptism. Eucharist is the heart of Christian life. In the Eucharist we are nourished by God's Word, and with His Body & Blood, which brings about a transformation calling us to greater love of God and neighbor. Children are prepared for Confirmation and Eucharist in the spring with celebration of the sacraments in April or May, depending on the Bishop's schedule.

The preparation for and celebration of these sacraments are a period of entering more fully into a relationship with God. While a wealth of information will be taught, it is the deepening of the relationship with God that is central. Attendance at all sacramental preparation classes is essential. However, we understand that some children spend time between parents who are divorced or separated, and that one parent may not place the same importance on this preparation. If this is the case, please be in touch with the PCL so that plans may be made for your child to receive all of the information necessary.

The requirements for reception of these sacraments include:

- **A baptismal record if the child was not baptized in one of the Corpus Christi churches**
- **Completion of Grade 1 Faith Formation**
- **Regular attendance at Faith Formation sessions**
- **Attendance at celebrations specific for the sacraments**
- **Regular attendance at Sunday Mass**
- **Attendance of parents at all parent meetings**
- **Completion of all family lessons (six for Reconciliation, seven for Confirmation/Eucharist)**

Christian Initiation for Children

Children who have reached at least the age of reason (seven) who have not been baptized, or who have been baptized but have received no formal education for completing the sacraments of initiation (Confirmation and Eucharist) participate in a program of Initiation for Children leading up to full initiation and /or full communion with the faith community at the Easter Vigil.

If you have a child that fits into this category, please be in touch with the PCL.

Junior High Youth Ministry Grades 7-8

Junior High Youth Ministry teaches young people in grades 7 & 8 how to live out their faith in a community. A team of adults shares the responsibilities of the sessions and activities. Service is a big part of this program. Projects may include working at the Soup Kitchen, cooking for the Homeless Shelter, ringing bells for the Salvation Army, etc.

Catholic Youth Ministry for High School (CYM)

The **High School Youth Ministry** program is available for students in grades 9 – 12. Students meet Sunday evenings at St. John Regional School in Winslow. Contact the parish office for more information.

Teaching Your Child at Home

If you prefer to teach your child at home please contact the Parish Catechetical Leader for our **Home-Based** materials. FAITH FIRST has excellent materials to assist you in your efforts to pass on your faith.

CODE OF BEHAVIOR

Children and Youth involved in programs at **Corpus Christi Parish** will be held to the following expectations and code of behavior:

- They will show self-control, courtesy, cooperation, and respect for themselves and others around them.
- They will recognize that they are lifelong learners.
- They will value and experience the opportunities for spiritual growth and social participation in the life of our church community and society.
- **Corpus Christi Parish** promotes an environment free of harassment based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, economic status or disability. We expect everyone to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner while in class and in church.
- The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of that individual and his/her parents. During programs children and youth may wear any appropriate casual attire. Young people are encouraged to wear their "Sunday best" at Masses and other special liturgical functions. Hats are not to be worn in church or during prayer time.
- **Corpus Christi Parish** is very fortunate to have excellent facilities and equipment. All members of the parish community should take pride in our properties and do their part to keep them looking good at all times. Therefore snacks and beverages (including gum) which are allowed in the Faith Formation classes **will not be allowed in any of the churches or chapels.**
- An important goal of Christian education is the Christian development of the person. Discipline is necessary for that development. It is important that students respect themselves, each other and their leader. They are expected to

conduct themselves in a manner that does not interfere with the rights and safety of others. Parents will be notified if a problem arises.

Violations could result in removal from the program and suspension from any future programs until a meeting can be held with the child or youth, the parents/guardians, the Parish Catechetical Leader/Youth Minister, and Pastor. A course of action will be decided upon at that meeting.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Registration takes place each year during the first week of September. Registration forms are mailed to all students of the previous year. Forms for new students are available at the catechetical office in Winslow, the parish office in Waterville and in all churches. **Each student should be registered before attending the first class.** A registration fee of \$15.00 (\$30.00 maximum per family) is asked of each student in grades K-8 to help cover the cost of books.
- All students in our Faith Formation classes are expected to attend each class session. Please plan to have your child(ren) **arrive no more than fifteen minutes** before the start of that program and have them report directly to the designated location for each site. **Please do not leave your child unsupervised!**

All children and youth are expected to arrive on time and remain through the entire program unless a parent or guardian comes into the building and sees the catechist/youth minister to let them know that their child is to be dismissed early. Please pick up your child no more than fifteen minutes after the ending time of the program.
- Children will be held in their classrooms until a parent arrives to pick them up. If a group is to leave the parish grounds for an event, permission forms will be required and all guidelines for drivers from the *Risk Management Policy Handbook* will be followed.
- If a student wishes to bring a visitor to class for a day, they should check with their catechist and notify the Parish Catechetical Leader. Visitors should be of appropriate age for that class.

- If you know that your child is going to be absent from a class, please contact either the catechist or PCL. If the absence is sudden as in the case of illness, either the catechist or PCL will contact the family with information about that class. If a child is absent more than one time, the Parish Catechetical leader will be in touch with the family. It is the responsibility of the parent to see that their child receives any material that was used during the class and that if there is work that needs to be completed, it is taken care of before the next class.

If a child becomes sick during a class, the catechist or PCL will call a parent to pick up the child as soon as possible.

Medication cannot be dispensed to a child without written permission and instructions from the parent and from the child's doctor. The medicine must be in the original container clearly labeled.

- The fire directions for leaving the building in the event of a fire are posted in all of the classrooms. When an alarm rings, children and youth must follow the directions given by the catechist supervising them. Students who may be in the bathrooms or other areas of the building should use the nearest exit to leave the building. A complete list of all fire exits and other fire codes can be found in the *Risk Management Policy Handbook*.
- If for any reason Faith Formation classes or Youth Ministry activities on Sunday are canceled, parents will be contacted by telephone. A telephone tree will be given out to all Sunday students at the beginning of the year. It will be the parent's responsibility to call the next person or persons on the list.
Tuesday and Wednesday classes will be canceled only if school is canceled on that day.
- A telephone is available at all sites for local calls.
- If your home address, telephone number or both changes please notify the Parish Office and the PCL as soon as possible.
- Children and youth are advised not to bring anything of extreme value to programs or events. Electronic games, cell phones and other such devices should be left at home.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENTS

- To attend Mass every weekend and be active members of the parish
- To register their children and send them to each Faith Formation session
- To encourage the proper attitude in their child
- To help develop the love of God
- To help develop respect for themselves and each other
- To cooperate with leaders to improve their child's behavior
- To volunteer as needed in the classroom or outside activities
- To assume responsibility for any willful damage done by their child to church property

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CATECHISTS

- To attend Mass every weekend and be active members of the parish
- To be prepared for each session
- To gather all necessary materials ahead of time
- To meet their students in the Faith Formation Center at the start of each session
- To supervise their students
- To report to the Parish Catechetical Leader any incidences of misbehavior
- To share their faith with the young people
- To be in contact with the parents in the event a child is absent from class
- To be in contact with the PLC in the event that a child misses more than one class
- To contact the first parent on the telephone tree in case of cancellation

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENTS

- To attend Mass each weekend and be active members of the parish
- To arrive at class on time
- To be courteous and respectful of other students and leaders
- To respect the authority of the leaders
- To respect the rights and property of others
- To participate in class discussion and projects
- To be prepared for each session as needed