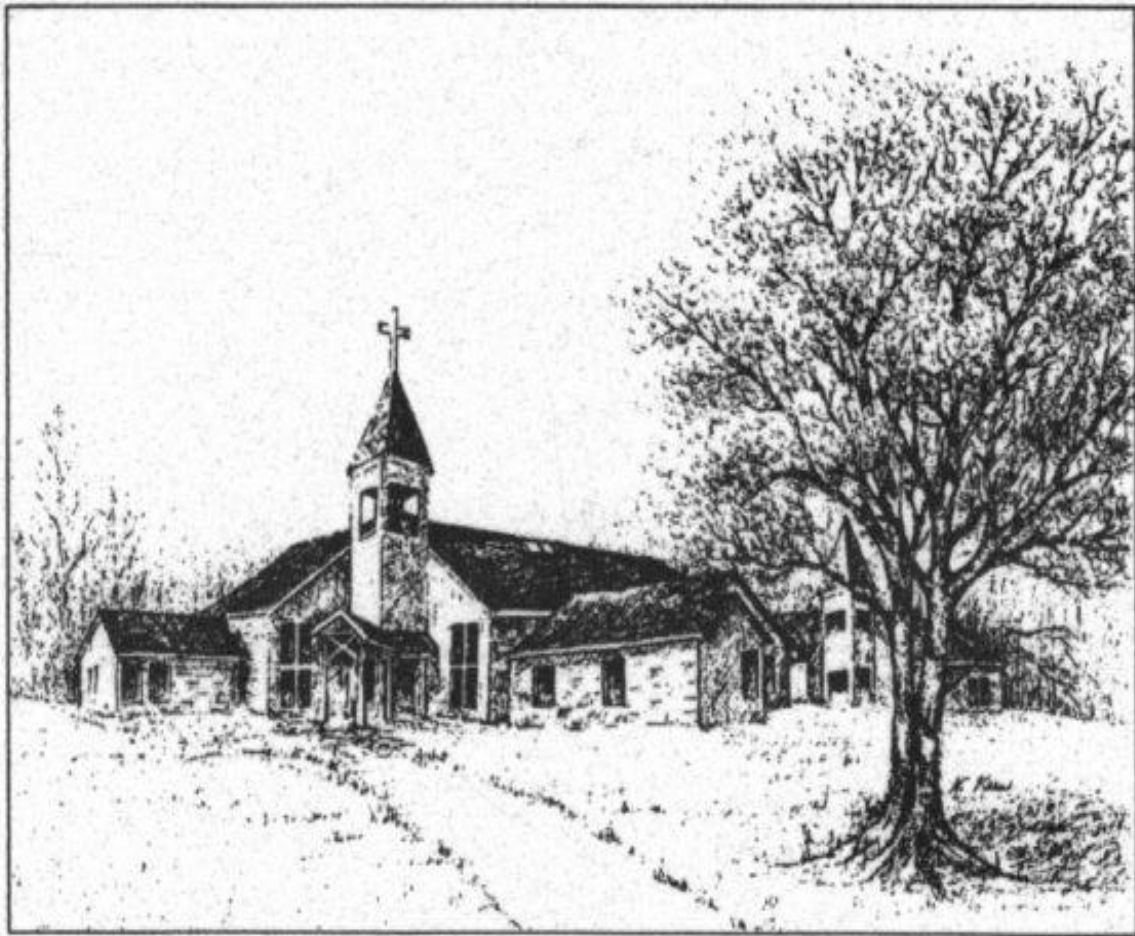


Faith Formation Handbook 2021-2022



St. Luke Catholic Church

Mint Hill, North Carolina

Dear Faith Formation Parents and Guardians,

As the pastor of St. Luke's Catholic Church, I would like to thank all of our parents for registering their children in our Faith Formation program. Your support is very important to us.

Faith Formation at St. Luke's begins in the first grade and continues up through High School. The important sacraments that your children will receive are First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. First Holy Communion and Confirmation are both two-year programs as required by the Diocese of Charlotte.

We would love for you to enroll your children in every year of Faith Formation beginning in the first grade. Every year is important because what they will learn about their faith will become for them a life-long treasure. You and your family will be able to celebrate important milestones in their lives when they receive Jesus for the first time in Holy Communion and the Holy Spirit in Confirmation.

As the children learn their faith at St. Luke's you will discover more about your own faith and the beauty of living that faith every day, especially at home. The family is called the "domestic church."

I hope that you will also be willing to help us in Faith Formation by signing up to become a catechist or teacher. There is great joy in being able to be with the children as they learn their prayers and lessons about God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Please feel free to approach me about any question or difficulty you may have. I will try my best to help you. God bless you always.

Father Paul Q. Gary

Dear Parents,

Your child's faith journey began the day they were born, and gained energy on the day of their baptism. That day, you as parents promised to raise your child in the faith, and we as the community of St. Luke promised to help you on this journey.

Faith Formation from grade 1 through Confirmation and youth ministry exists as part of that partnership. Continued enrollment in class is our wish for your child so that we, as a church, may be a part of your child's faith development.

In the high school years, all children are encouraged to join the Teens for Christ group that meets weekly. Participation in this group provides children with another phase of their faith journey: exploring their faith in a social setting, learning to ask questions about their own lives as they grow older, and answering questions with faith as the basis for their answers. They also continue to develop relationships with others within their parish family. Registration for Teens for Christ is not required.

We also support you as parents. We are here to answer your questions about faith, find ways to enrich yourself spiritually, and help with ideas to share your faith with your children. There are many opportunities at St. Luke for spiritual development as adults, as well as opportunities to volunteer in the Faith Formation program that will help you on your personal faith journey.

Attendance at Mass is important, as it is the source and summit of our life of faith. Please attend Mass, regularly, with your children and encourage them to participate in Mass as they grow and learn through the faith formation program.

Thank you for trusting us to partner with you as we walk together along your child's faith journey.

In Christ,

Kathy McKinney, Children Faith Formation Coordinator

kathymckinney@stlukechurch.net

704-545-1224 x12

Nathan Evangelisto, Middle School/Confirmation Coordinator

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Katy De'Ath, High School Youth Ministry

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Faith Formation Mission Statements

Diocese of Charlotte

The Mission of the Faith Formation Office is to assist in the implementation of the Bishop's Vision for the Faith Formation Mission of the Diocese of Charlotte. The Faith Formation Office provides programs which transmit the Gospel and so invite people to a personal and intentional faith in Jesus Christ. The programs offer the knowledge of how to practice the Catholic faith with coherent integrity as respecting and responsible citizens of this world and the next.

St Luke Faith Formation

"The Faith Formation team, as part of the community of believers will try to bring scripture to life through our living example, by learning, sharing and acting out our Catholic faith. In our ministry to our brothers and sisters of all ages we will nurture one another on our faith journey while deepening our understanding of our Catholic beliefs and traditions.

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The fundamental task of catechesis is to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus instructed his disciples, prayed with them, showed them how to live and gave them his mission. Our Catholic faith must be known, celebrated, lived and expressed in prayer and works. All Faith Formation programs follow and adhere to the teachings of the Church, and the doctrines of the Catechisms of the Catholic Church. The team of catechists under the direction of the Director of Religious Education have been guided in spirit and instructed on church doctrine, to assist each child in achieving his or her maximum potential in mind, body, and spirit within a Catholic environment.

Six primary tasks for Catechesis:

Knowledge: Promote the knowledge of the Catholic faith.

Worship: Promote knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and Sacraments.

Moral Life: Promote moral formation in Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Teach the Catholic how to pray with Christ.

Community Life: Prepare the Catholic to live in community and to participate actively in the life mission of the Catholic Church through the parish and diocese.

Service: To promote a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society.

GDC, NDC

What does a Catechesis look like?

"The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but also in communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ"

GDC, 80

ST. LUKE FAITH FORMATION

CLASS SCHEDULE

Classes are schedule after Labor Day through the end of May.

- Sunday 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Grades 6 – 8 (twice a month)
- Monday 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Grades 1 – 5
- Monday 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Grades 1 – 5
- Wednesday 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Grades 1 – 5
- Wednesday 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Grades 6 – 8 (twice a month)
- Wednesday 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Grades 1 – 5
- Sunday 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. High School Youth (T4C) meets every Sunday.

ATTENDANCE

All children should attend Faith Formation classes except in the case of illness or family emergency. If a child is currently sick, or has vomited or had a fever within the last 24 hours, they should not attend class. If your child is sick please email Kathy McKinney or Nathan Evangelisto, with the reason for the absence, so it may be marked as an excused absence. A child in Year 1 and 2 of Confirmation may only have two unexcused absences per year. A child in Year 2 of Holy Communion may have four excused absences per year.

BEHAVIOR

Students should follow directions, be respectful of the Catechist and other students, participate in the activities and treat others as Jesus.

If a child has special needs, that make it difficult to stay on task, please notify the Faith Formation Coordinators so that accommodations can be made during the class.

Disrespectful and/or disruptive behaviors will be communicated to the coordinators and will then be discussed with parents. If these behaviors do not decrease parents may be asked to stay in class to assist with the child.

CLASS CANCELLATION

In the event of severe weather, loss of power or other emergency at St. Luke, class may be cancelled.

Parents will be notified of cancellation via email (please make sure your email is up to date with the church office), a notice on the Faith Formation website and/or a text message via Remind (grades 1-5) or Planning Center (grades 6-8). Please be aware that class cancellation may not reflect your child's school closing.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Faith Formation classes for grade 6 and Confirmation Year 1 and 2 will meet in the modular unit (Spirituality center) behind the church. Parents should drop off their children at the roundabout near the front doors of the church no sooner than 10 minutes before the start of class. Students and catechists will gather in the brick area inside the sanctuary for a group prayer before walking back to the Spirituality center with their respective classes and catechists.

Pick up for the Sunday session:

Parents should park and walk into the brick area of the worship space to pick up their children at 8:00 p.m. children will not be dismissed on their own.

Pick up for the Wednesday session:

Parents should park and walk to the Family Life Center to pick up their children at 8:00 p.m. Children will not be dismissed on their own.

GRADES 1-5

Faith Formation classes for grades 1-5 will be held in the Family Life Center. Students should arrive for class five to ten minutes before the start time so as to get settled for prayer at the prompt start time of each session. Parents are to park and walk their child to the side entrance to the Family Life Center room (behind the columbarium). Students will wait in the family life room until all have arrived, prayer as a group and then be dismissed to class with their Catechist/Co-Catechist. When picking up your child at the end of the session, parents should park and enter the Family Life Center. Students will be brought into the room by the Catechist/Co-Catechist at the end of the session. The exception to the pickup procedure is for the 6:30 – 7:30 session on Wednesday evening. These parents will pick their children up in the church. Please enter the church and sit in the brick area until your child is brought to you by the Catechist/Co-Catechist.

GUIDELINES FOR THOSE WHO ATTEND CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Children attending Mecklenburg Area Schools, who are ready to begin their sacramental preparation, need to register for sacrament preparation with the Faith Formation program at St. Luke. Children need to attend Reconciliation services, retreats and practices for First Holy Communion at the family's parish. The final preparation for a sacrament does not occur at the Catholic School.

SPECIAL NEEDS AND MODIFICATIONS:

If your child has special needs please notify the Faith Formation staff to ensure that we can help in every way possible. Our desire is for your child to be part of the parish and community. We strive to accommodate all God's children and to welcome everyone in the parish community.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers play a vital role in the Faith Formation program. Without the support of many parents serving as Catechists, Co-Catechist, assistants or volunteers we would not be able to have this wonderful faith program. Each volunteer must participate in the requirements of the Diocese of Charlotte which include a background check, reading the Code of Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Policy, completing Protecting God's Children course and reading monthly bulletins. All these requirements may be completed online at www.virtus.org. Contact Kathy McKinney, kathymckinney@stlukechurch.net for more information on registering.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATIONS

“The three sacraments of Christian initiation closely combine to bring us, the faithful of Christ, to his [Christ’s] full stature and to enable us to carry out the mission of the entire people of God in the Church and in the world.”

Sacramental preparation, as required by the Diocese of Charlotte, is a two-year process. Typically, students begin preparation for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion in first grade to receive these sacraments in second grade and begin preparation for Confirmation in seventh grade to receive the sacrament in eighth grade. If a child enters the program at a different grade level accommodation will be made to place them in Year 1 of sacramental preparation or placed in the RCIC class. Contact the Faith Formation Coordinators for more information regarding your child’s placement in the sacramental preparation levels.

Baptism

In the beginning of the Rite of Baptism for Children, the parents of each child are asked if they understand their responsibility of training their child in the practice of the faith. The appropriate response for the parents is a reply that they do understand what they are undertaking. At the end of the Rite of Baptism, the celebrant blesses the parents while acknowledging that the parents will be “the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith.”

Children who require baptism at and elementary age, must be enrolled in the Faith Formation program prior to scheduling baptism.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

“Our Savior Jesus Christ, when he gave to his apostles and their successors the power to forgive sins, instituted in his Church the sacrament of penance. Its purpose is that the faithful who fall into sin after baptism may be reconciled with God through the restoration of grace.” (The Rite of Penance)

Critical Outcomes: The child

- a. is able to distinguish between accidental and deliberate wrong.
- b. is aware of the need for forgiveness and the child’s trust in the forgiving love of Jesus.
- c. is able to express wrongdoing and sorrow in his/her own words.
- d. freely desires to receive the sacrament.
- e. understands that the priest and the Church have a special role in bringing us God’s forgiveness.
- f. has completed a year of formal catechesis prior to the reception of First Penance.

Families will have a resource book, to be completed at home, that focuses on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This resource enhances what the children are learning during weekly Faith Formation class. Additionally, children and parents will be required to attend a retreat prior to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

All who have a part in the formation of children should consult and work together toward one objective: that even if children already have some feeling for God and the things of God, they may also experience in proportion to their age and personal development the human values that are present in the eucharistic celebration. These values include the community activity, exchange of greetings, capacity to listen and to

seek, and grant pardon, expression of gratitude, experience of symbolic actions, a meal of friendship, and festive celebration.”
(Dir. for Masses with Children)

Critical Outcomes: The child

- a. has sufficient knowledge to understand the mystery of Christ according to his/her capacity.
- b. is able to distinguish the body and blood of Christ from ordinary food.
- c. has a desire to receive the Lord Jesus reverently in Holy Communion with faith and devotion.
- d. has at least two years of catechesis prior to the reception of First Eucharist.

Families will be given a resource book, to be completed at home, that focuses on the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. This resource enhances what the children are learning during weekly Faith Formation class. Additionally, children and parents will be required to attend a retreat prior to the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.

RCIC PROCESS: RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR CHILDREN

Recognizing that not all students complete their First Sacraments in the second grade, the RCIC process prepares older students for First Reconciliation and First Holy Eucharist. Students attend Faith Formation classes for two years, with sacrament preparation in the second year. The process including home preparation, understanding of the sacraments, the knowledge of prayers, attending services, and practices for First Holy Eucharist.

CONFIRMATION: Sacrament of Initiation

"Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute 'the sacraments of Christian initiation,' whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of *baptismal grace*. By the sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence, they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed." CCC 1285, Order of Confirmation, Introduction 1 and Code of Canon Law, canon 879]

- The Sacrament of Confirmation is initiatory, completing Baptism.
- The goal of our program is to prepare candidates for an encounter with Jesus that becomes the foundation of lifelong discipleship; a relationship rooted in their identity as sons and daughters of God, filled with the Holy Spirit and equipped for the mission to which God has called them.

St. Luke Church candidates complete a two-year preparation process. Candidates typically begin preparing in the seventh grade, First Year Confirmation. The candidates are invited to receive Confirmation at the end of the Second Year. Our curriculum is CHOSEN by Ascension Press, a video series designed specifically for youth preparing for Confirmation. The process includes self-guided and home formation preparation: choosing a Confirmation Sponsor and committing to weekly interaction with sponsors, research and selecting a saint, and incorporating intercessory prayer. Candidates are encouraged to live their faith in action, as they volunteer at church and in the community, and most importantly by attending the celebration of the Mass. Candidates play an active role in their faith journey by personal commitment, inquiry, participation in liturgy, studying of the Word, seeking an understanding

of doctrine, bearing witness to God through evangelization, and turning to God in an ongoing prayer relationship.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The safety of every child is very important to us at St. Luke Church. With that in mind, the following safety protocols are in place at all times:

The parish priest, all staff members, and all Faith Formation and Youth Ministry volunteers:

- have submitted to and been cleared by a full background check.
- have read and adhere to the Code of Ethics Policy of the Diocese of Charlotte, and the Policy of the Diocese of Charlotte concerning ministry-related sexual misconduct by church personnel.
- have completed Protecting God's Children course and remain current with ongoing training.

In addition to adult training, the Protecting God's Children Safe Touch Curriculum is offered once every year for all interested children and parents. The Safe Touch lessons are part of a sexual abuse prevention program that is designed to assist parents in educating their children about ways to protect themselves. Through community efforts we can work toward making a safer world for our children.

The Safe Touch curriculum provides six lessons to be delivered over a three-year period. The lessons are broken down by age group so that the material presented is age appropriate. Parents are required to attend with their children, as the goal is to begin a conversation about safety that will continue in the home.

PRAYERS

First Grade: Section A

Second Grade: Section A and B; able to make up a prayer of their own.

Grades 3-5: Section A, B & C; able to make up a prayer of their own; familiar with Mass parts and ability to participate during Mass.

Grades 6 and up: Section A, B, C & D; able to pray the Rosary; understand Mass and play an active role in participating in Mass; participate in silent prayer time with God

Section A:

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come.
thy will be done

on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Guardian Angel Prayer

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen

Section B

Grace Before Meals

Bless us, O Lord,
and these Thy gifts,
which we are about to receive
from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen. *(A traditional version)*

or:

My God,
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong
and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you
whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help,
to do penance,
to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In his name, my God, have mercy.

(from the Rite of Penance)

Section C:

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle.
Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray;
and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host,
by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the other evil spirits,
who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Section D

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth;
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell;
the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into Heaven, and seated at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;
from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received, read and understand the procedures of the Faith Formation Handbook. It is my understanding that the procedures may be adjusted at any time and communication will be given to parents with explanation of the changes.

Family Name (print) _____

Parent Name (print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

August 19, 2021