

# All Saints



## Faith Formation Handbook

2009-2010

Preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ

at all times



if necessary use words

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**Whoever welcomes one such child**

**for my sake**

**Welcomes me**

Dear Parents

Welcome to a new year of Faith Formation! May God grant each of your families an abundance of grace, peace and holiness this year. If you are new to Faith Formation at All Saints - Welcome to the family! We're glad that you have come to share your journey of faith with us.

Because God has given you the responsibility as primary educators of your child; your direction for your child's Faith formation always comes first. The catechists of All Saints are privileged and prepared to assist you in the work of faith formation knowing that it is the most important aspect of your child's education. Learning to be Jesus' disciple is life-long labor of joy - the more we know Him, the more we love Him and the more we grow in this love the greater our happiness. We are excited to walk along side you and your child on the incredible journey of Faith.

All Saints Faith Formation program is comprised of three segments:

**Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**—3 year olds through Seventh Grade. The Good Shepherd approach to faith formation, developed in Rome, is Montessori based. The atrium (CGS classroom) setting is retreat-like, quiet, calm and serene. We are grateful to be able to offer Catechesis of the Good Shepherd believing that it is a beautiful way to bring the children into a closer relationship with God.

**Youth Group** - Eighth-Twelfth grades. Our youth come together to grow in and share their faith in the more energized atmosphere of Youth Ministry. Their studies include the Didache Series texts, E3 Bible Timeline for Scripture study, Theology of the Body for Teens, a segment on discerning their life's work and other resources, including Church documents, to help them live a life of vibrant faith within the culture so that their lives bring Christ to all they encounter. The youth group will dedicate time to outreach projects in order to help them share the gifts that God has given them with the world. They will also be trained in a Liturgical Ministry of their choice and practice tithing as a group.

We welcome you to accompany your child to class any time. The calendar inside this handbook lists the class schedule for leading Evening Prayer and music. The students are especially appreciative when their parents are there on the evenings when their group leads Evening Prayer.

The following pages contain important information you'll need for this year including the calendar and catechists phone numbers. **Please take a moment to acquaint yourself with our policies. Changes to the policies are underlined.**

It is most important that all of our students are practicing their Faith including reception of the Sacraments and attendance at Holy Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday. This is the foundation upon which all other learning rests. Your daily example of Christian living will be most important in bringing your children closer to Christ. The way you live and the way you pray, both personally and as a family is the strongest instruction in Faith your child will get. Know that we support your efforts. God bless each of you and your families. We pray that together we may see a year of conversion and growth in the Faith of your child and your family.

# Registration

If you haven't filled out a registration form for your child please go to the office to register him or her. The Faith Formation registration fee is \$25 per child with a family maximum of \$75. If financial need is an issue please register your child and contact Mrs. Peterson later.

## Arrival & Departure

Faith Formation begins at 6:30 PM with all students in the church for Evening Prayer. Upon arriving, the students go directly to the pew designated for their class. Families are encouraged to come and participate with their student in Evening Prayer. Level I (3-6 y/o) Good Shepherd Parents will accompany their child to evening prayer and bring them to their atrium or designated place after being dismissed from Evening prayer.

Dismissal time is 7:45 PM. For the safety of our All Saints students **all parents are required to go to their child's classroom to pick them up, with the exception of Youth Group whose parents have signed a waiver.** The catechists may not release your child to anyone but you unless they are listed on the **Student Release Authorization Form** that you will find in this handbook. If you are involved in a carpool please fill out the form in this handbook listing the person(s) who have your permission to come to the classroom to get your child. We will keep these sheets on file from year to year so it is not necessary to fill out a new sheet unless there is a change. Again, the catechists will not dismiss a student to anyone except the parent or persons listed on the form. **Please return the forms to the office not to the catechist.** We will make copies for the catechists. You may fill out one form for your entire family.

## Communication & Cancellation

Our main form of communication will be email. Any information that used to necessitate a note home will be emailed instead. This is a much more timely, reliable and cost effective method to get the information to every family. Cancellations will also come through email. Some of the television stations have changed policy and will now only broadcast cancellations for schools. This and the fact that the decision to cancel has to be made by early afternoon in order to give the schools time to get it to the students caused us to look at alternatives. **Please make sure that we have your email address and be sure to check it before you come on Wednesday evenings.** If you do not have access to email please make arrangements to get the information from another Faith Formation family that does. If you need help doing this please contact Mrs. Peterson 515-523-1943. We have families who have volunteered to assist in this area. As before, if students are dismissed early or school is cancelled due to inclement weather we will not hold classes that evening. Because of the distances some students come we may cancel classes when the schools don't. **Cancellations and important announcements will also be listed on the parish's website—[www.parishesonline.com](http://www.parishesonline.com) enter Stuart's zipcode 50250 or the parish name**

# Proclaiming the Gospel in Our Actions

Realizing that our Baptism calls us to lead a life of great dignity (and joy) as a child of God we are mindful that our actions should always be respectful. This respect should be extended to all our brothers and sisters in Christ no matter what their age. It is our hope that all of us will encourage and support each other in this important responsibility so that our time together will bear much fruit.

Time spent in the church should be a time of quiet and reverence remembering that we are here in the awesome presence of God. Food, gum, drink, talking and distracting behavior are inappropriate in the church as well as the classroom.

Our clothing should always reflect the great dignity that God has given to us. Clothing or accessories that are too revealing, that are a distraction to those around us or otherwise do not support our Christian beliefs are not appropriate. Students may be invited to put on a pair of sweatpants or a sweatshirt or parents may be called to pick their child up if the child is dressed inappropriately.

Cell phones are to be turned off or on silent while Evening Prayer and Faith Formation are in session. If a student has a cell phone that is causing a distraction in any way - the catechist will keep the cell phone during class or it will be taken to the Faith Formation office where it can be picked up by the **student and the parent** after class.

## Attendance

Attendance is taken in all classes each Faith Formation evening. If your child will not be in class please call the office at 523-1943 before 6:00. If your child is absent and we have not heard from you one of the attendance volunteers will call your home. This policy is implemented as a safety precaution.

## Discipline Policy

If a student's behavior is not what it should be the catechist will address the behavior with the student. If it continues the catechist will take the matter to Mrs. Peterson. If it persists the student's parents will be contacted. The parents may be asked to attend classes with their child.

## Family Based Catechesis

There is one class built into our schedule designated as Family Based Catechesis Night. On this evening the students will remain at home to do their lessons with their family. We will send home lessons which will be appropriate for the entire family.

In addition, families of second grade students will have First Reconciliation preparation and First Communion preparation lessons that will be family based. The Confirmation class will also have family based segments. We will go over the details of these lessons at the sacramental parent meeting later this Fall.

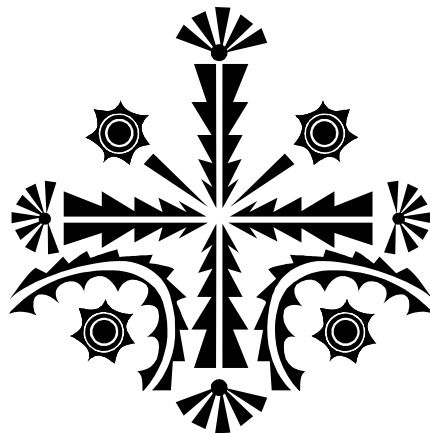
# Safety

In the event of a fire, the catechists will determine the closest exit and lead the students outside. Protocols are set up for the various areas within the building where the students are likely to be—parish hall, church, classroom, library, gathering space and working sacristy. The office assistant will check the bathrooms and lead any students to safety by the most expedient route. Once the students are outside, Mrs. Peterson or her designee will check with each catechist to make sure all students who were in the building that evening have safely exited. It is the policy that each catechist have their student roster with them at all times and that they know who is absent that week.

If a tornado warning is issued the students will go first into the restrooms until they are full, then to the alcove outside of the main restrooms, then to the coat closet. If additional space is needed students will be directed to the alcove outside of the business office.

## Safe Environment

Each of the catechists and Faith Formation volunteers at All Saints are required to attend the Virtus safe environment training provided by the Diocese of Des Moines. In addition, background checks are required for them and all parish staff. It is our intention to do all that we can to insure the protection of our children. We also monitor class spaces, hallways and bathrooms every ten minutes during the evening, If you have any questions about this policy please call Mrs. Peterson 523-1943



## Student Release Authorization Form

My child \_\_\_\_\_ has permission to be dismissed to the following person(s) after Faith Formation class: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Youth Group Waiver Form

My child \_\_\_\_\_ has permission to be dismissed to his/her own recognizance after Faith Formation class. I understand that I take responsibility for their actions and whereabouts once they leave their classroom.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_