

CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

Family Handbook
2017-2018



St. Ignatius Parish, Hickory

533 East Jarrettsville Road

Forest Hill, MD 21050

410-879-0959

410-838-0780

FAX 410-879-1352

www.stignatiushickory.org

Welcome to the Children's Faith Formation Program at St. Ignatius Parish. Whether your family has been in our community for some time or you are just joining us, we extend to you a gracious welcome. Our program is founded and defined by the Parish Mission Statement:

St. Ignatius, Hickory, is the oldest, active parish in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and is rooted in the gospel, faith, and tradition as a Roman Catholic Church. As a Eucharist-centered community, we seek to love our triune God and one another by:

- *Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His Real Presence among us in the Eucharist;*
- *Challenging one another to grow in holiness;*
- *Welcoming those who are interested in learning more about our faith; and*
- *Joining with other churches and community groups in comforting those who are sick, suffering, lonely, and less fortunate.*

With thanksgiving to the Father, we profess our hope in Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit throughout the third millennium and beyond.

In partnership with the Parish Staff, the Faith Formation and Youth Ministry Office and volunteers, and the Parishioners of St. Ignatius, we are here to help you and your children grow in faith. Please feel free to contact any of us for assistance.

Director of Faith Formation

Mrs. Concetta York

cyork@stignatiushickory.org

Coordinator of Faith Formation

Mrs. Nancy Elder

Nancy.elder@stignatiushickory.org

Coordinator of Faith Formation

Mr. Todd Twining

twining@stignatiushickory.org

Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Mrs. Susanna Twining

stwining@stignatiushickory.org

Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Lynn Duffy

lduffy@stignatiushickory.org

On August 29, 2002, the Archdiocese of Baltimore adopted new policies and regulations for employed staff and volunteers working with children and youth. Please be aware that our entire parish staff has been fingerprinted and had a Criminal History Background Check. All our volunteers have completed a Volunteer Service Application, had a reference background check, and a Criminal History Screening. All volunteers and staff have completed Shield the Vulnerable training.

OFFICES

- The Faith Formation and Youth Ministry offices are located in the west wing of the parish center on the upper level.
- Offices are open during the Weekly Children's Faith Formation classes and Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m. Offices are closed between 12 noon and 1:00 p.m. for staff lunch.

ADMISSIONS

- Families whose children are to be enrolled in the program must be registered members of St. Ignatius Parish.
- Families are offered the choice of our Weekly Program, our Middle School "Edge" program, or our Family Home Ministry Program for children in grades 1 through 8. Sunday and Monday sessions will also Kindergarten classes.
- For ages 3-5 we offer Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Tuesdays, 9:30-11 a.m.
- Children who are not baptized will be placed in the appropriate grade level for one year. After the first year, the child and family will be prepared for the reception of the sacrament(s).
- Children who will be preparing for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation are to be enrolled in, and attending regularly, Catholic Faith Formation classes approved by the Archdiocese, one year prior to (Immediate Preparation), and during the year of the Immediate Preparation of the Sacrament, as well as the sacramental preparation classes.

TUITION AND FEES

- Tuition and fees cover about one half of the total budget of the Faith Formation Program. Tuition is due at the time of registration. If a family is experiencing a financial crisis, please notify the Faith Formation Office.
- Catechists and Co-catechists who teach from September through April and have children in the Weekly Program will be charged a \$40.00 fee per family.
- Fees will be refunded for students who withdraw on the following schedule: 100% before classes begin; 50% after classes begin until January 1.
- Students who register after January 1st will pay 50% of the tuition fee.
- Parents need to keep the office informed of any home address, email address, or telephone changes for work or home.
- Sacramental fees, which are due at the Parent Meetings, are charged for materials for the sacramental programs.

PROGRAM POLICIES

- Attendance at class, weekend and holy days of obligation liturgies, reception of the sacraments, prayer time at home and the infusion of Catholic values are vital to the faith development of children. Students should miss no more than four (4) classes per school year except in the case of illness or family emergencies and all lessons need to be made up at home.
- Parents are asked to submit to the child's catechist a written excuse for their child's absence.
- When children are absent, or some classes of the week are cancelled because of school or weather related closures, **parents must make up the lesson with their child at home** and then show it to the child's teacher. A schedule of Class Lessons (syllabus) will be emailed to each family twice a year. There is no make-

up work for 9th grade Faith Formation. However, a student seeking Confirmation who misses more than five sessions without an excuse in written form will be **INELIGIBLE** for Confirmation that year.

- For Confirmation Immediate Prep there are fifteen sessions. Students can miss no more than three without an excuse in written form. Make-up work or alternative activities will be given to students who miss workshops or Retreat as these are required activities.
- Attendance records will be kept until one year after the student is confirmed. First Eucharist and Confirmation records are permanent records of the Church and thus will always be available in the Parish Office.
- This Faith Formation Program will respect the rights of custodial parents in regards to student records. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, we will provide the non-custodial parent with unofficial copies of records. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the Director with an official copy of that order.

FAMILY LIFE CATECHESIS COMPONENT

- The Archdiocese of Baltimore has a very strong commitment to the teaching of Family Life Catechesis in its schools and Faith Formation Programs. “To assist you in this endeavor, St. Ignatius will be teaching Catechesis for Family Life in grades K-5. This age- appropriate program about Christian living, chastity, character formation, and safe environment training promotes communication between you and your child. You are encouraged to review the program materials that the teacher/catechist will be using in the classroom. After examining the program, if you have any questions or concerns about your child participating in this program please contact the Director in the Faith Formation Office.”
Archdiocese of Baltimore, Dept. of Evangelization.
- Students in our Weekly Program and the Family Home Ministry Program in grades 1-8 will be given the materials, published by **RCL/Benziger Publishers**, c. 2011. All five units will be incorporated into the curriculum. The Family Home Ministry Program receives their materials in September. Students enrolled in the middle school “Edge” program will be using the Archdiocesan materials, *Created to Love*.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

- All church personnel, both the volunteers and employed staff, are obligated to abide by the *Code of Conduct for Church Personnel of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, 2003*.
- If a student is having problems in the class, parents should contact a Faith Formation staff person.
- If a problem does arise in the classroom, the catechist will contact the parent for assistance. If the situation is not corrected, either party may contact the Director for assistance, followed by the Pastor if necessary.
- Emails and telephone numbers of students’ parents will be given to the Catechist to be used for communications. This information will be kept confidential and only used for Faith Formation purposes. Any misuse of this information should be reported to the Faith Formation Office immediately.
- Students are expected to remain in their classroom at all times, except if excused by the catechist or staff personnel.
- Students should refrain from wearing inappropriate clothing. If it causes a distraction, the student will be asked to call a parent so that a change of clothing can be brought to the parish.

- **Toys, head-sets, tablets, cell phones, etc. should NOT be brought to class. If a student does bring an item to class and it causes a problem, the teacher will take the item and keep it until the end of class.**
- Weapons, or anything which can be construed as a weapon, will not be tolerated. The item will be confiscated and the parents will be notified immediately, along with the Harford County Sheriff's Office, if necessary.
- In the event of physical or verbal abuse on the part of a student towards another student or teacher, the student in question and his family will be notified within a reasonable amount of time. If the situation occurs a second time, the student will be dismissed immediately and alternative teaching will be discussed.
- Students who participate in off-site activities will be required to submit a permission form authorized by the Archdiocese of Baltimore and signed by the parents. Phone calls, verbal permission, and unauthorized forms will NOT be accepted. No one will be allowed to participate without having this form to the trip coordinator before the trip commences.
- **Students who must leave class early must present a written note from the parent to the catechist. Parents must come to the Faith Formation Office and sign the Log Book before the child is allowed to leave. (Parent may be asked to show photo identification.) The parent will be given a pass to present to the catechist so they can release the student.**

CONFIDENTIALITY AND HEALTH ISSUES

- All staff and volunteers will maintain student and family confidences except in the case where health, life, or safety of an individual is in question. In these cases, the Director or Pastor will be notified.
- **Volunteers are mandated by Maryland State Law to report any suspected abuse and/or neglect to the appropriate authorities. We will also follow archdiocesan policies on such matters as stated in, *Statement of Policy and Procedures in the Case of Child Abuse.***
- Parents are to report any special conditions of their child at the time of registration. If a condition arises after registration, the parents needs to immediately inform the Director in writing.
- Catechists will be informed of students' special needs and / or allergies the first week of class unless the parent objects and puts that objection in writing to the Director.
- Parents whose child has life-threatening conditions are required to provide us with a description of the child's condition and precautions from the doctor. Since our personnel are not trained to treat, to dispense, or to administer medication, a parent may be required to remain on site during class time in case an emergency arises with their child. The parent would then be asked to be Shield the Vulnerable certified since there will be substantial contact with children in the classroom.
- If a catechist assigns a student to keep a journal, the catechist is expected to read the journal and report to the Director or Pastor any life-threatening situation.

DROP-OFF, PICK-UP, PARKING AND TRAFFIC FLOW

- **Safety and Security:** The Faith Formation Office has developed the following plans in an effort to keep your children safe in our busy parking lots. Please adhere to these policies and review them with your children so they remain safe.
- When dropping off or picking up your child, please park in an available parking space. Do not park in the fire lane, disabled parking (unless displaying proper credentials) or the grass.

- The road on the side of the Faith Formation Wing is **ONE WAY** (going from front to back only). Please pay attention to the signs on the parking lots when driving for the safety of the children.
- **DROP OFF:** Students in grades K-3 will not be dismissed until a parent, or another responsible party, comes for them in their designated classroom(s). If a neighbor or other family member is to pick up your child please notify the Faith Formation Office beforehand. Students in grades 4 and up are permitted to leave the building after class has finished and meet their rides in the parking lot. Please talk with your children about where they will meet their ride.
- Students are expected to be picked up promptly at the end of classes. However, if for some reason their ride is late, the driver should come to the Faith Formation Office and pick up their student. Please talk to your children about what to do if you are late so they are prepared in case this situation should arise. Volunteers and Staff members are not permitted to take home students unless they have **written** permission from the parent or legal guardian.
- **ALL CLASSES:** During the dismissal of Faith Formation classes, students will be exiting from all three lower level doors. We ask everyone to exercise extreme caution as the children exit the building. Please watch for the children and remember to perform acts of charity on the parking lots as you come and go!

RECONCILIATION

- In an effort to help parents have their family celebrate this sacrament, special communal penance celebrations with individual confessions will be held twice a year during *regularly* scheduled class times in the **Parish Center Hall**. Other reconciliation times are: private confessions every Saturday afternoon between 3:00 and 3:45 p.m. in the Parish Church; and parish communal celebrations are also scheduled during Advent and Lent.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Emails through Constant Contact and announcements on the parish website, www.stignatiushickory.org will notify parents of the closure of classes in case of inclement weather. (Inclement weather **does not** include closures due to electrical outages, broken water pipes or high heat days where Harford County schools have been closed). If Harford County schools close for the day or close early for inclement weather, classes and all scheduled events for that day will be cancelled. If Harford County schools open late but dismiss on time, we will be open.
- If classes are being held but the weather or road conditions are bad in your area, please use your own judgment as to whether you can drive safely to bring your child to class. If this occurs complete the assigned lesson at home.

WEBSITES

- Parish web site: www.stignatiushickory.org
- Archdiocese of Baltimore: www.archbalt.org
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: www.usccb.org
- Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.: www.alive in christ.osv.com
- Mass times in churches throughout the USA: 1-800-627-7846; www.masstimes.org

RIGHT TO AMEND

This handbook is primarily a means of communication. It is meant to provide you, the parent/guardian, with helpful information on how we intend to go about our work. St. Ignatius Faith Formation Program reserves the right to amend this handbook as necessary. Parents will be notified in writing, if changes are made to any procedures or information contained in this Handbook.



St. Ignatius, pray for us