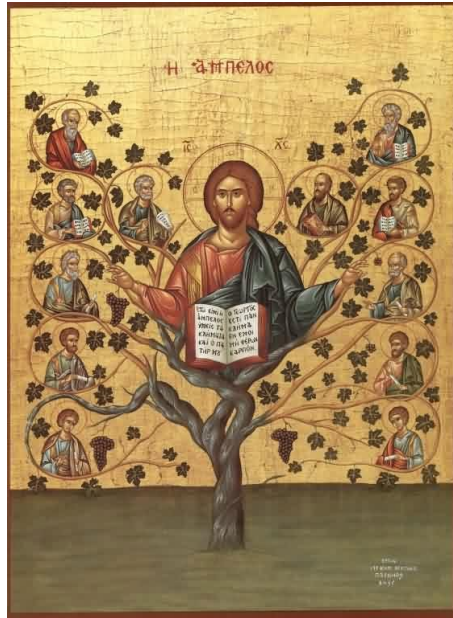


FAITH FORMATION FAMILY/STUDENT HANDBOOK



I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me.” John 15:5

CONTACT US

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WELCOME/MISSION

We warmly welcome your family to the St. Katharine Drexel Catholic Church Faith Formation/Catechesis Program for the formal religious formation of your child. The registration of your son/daughter indicates your commitment to raise your family with an appreciation of the Catholic faith and an understanding of the promises you made at the child's Baptism.

“Parents are the primary educators of their children.” (*General Directory for Catechesis*). The example of Christian life lived by parents/guardians is irreplaceable. Catholic families pray, attend weekly mass together, participate in parish activities, and assist in the financial support of the church.

Our Faith Formation/Catechesis Program is committed to nurture and instruct the children in the love of Jesus Christ and His Church. Our goal is for our students to learn to love the Holy sacrifice of the Mass while focusing in preparing the children for adult Christian living, stressing the teachings of Christ.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

We offer a continuous program for students from first grade through Confirmation. Curriculum is based on Scripture, Roman Catholic doctrine, prayer, traditions, and principles in an age-appropriate setting. The effectiveness of our program is dependent upon respect and cooperation between the students, parents, and catechists.

The curriculum implemented is in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church and has been approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday	5:15 – 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	3:30 – 4:45 p.m. or 5:15 – 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	5:15 – 6:30 p.m.
Thursday	5:15 – 6:30 p.m.

During the school year, the faith formation church office is open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. and on Friday from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. & 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. All other times please call the office and leave a message or send an email.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL POLICIES

Arrival Policy **STUDENTS ARE TO BE ON TIME.** Doors are locked 10 minutes after class starts. Students that are late must report to the office.

Vehicles: Families are required to adhere to all parking and traffic directions. For everyone's safety, please refrain from using cellular telephones while driving through the parking lot.

Drop-Off for students in Church classrooms: Please drive students to the bell tower door. This is the only door that will be open during drop-off. Please do not leave students in the parking lot. Safety is paramount.

Drop-Off for students in Portable classrooms: Please drive students to the car loop behind the church (back loop).

Dismissal Policy: **STUDENTS ARE TO BE PICKED UP ON TIME.** Parents of Elementary school children, park and pick up your child in the church or the portable. Students are NOT permitted to go to cars without parent. Do not leave your car in the fire lane.

Late Pick Up: Ten minutes after dismissal time all students remaining will be brought to the church office. Parent/guardian will be called. If an emergency arises, immediately contact us @ 954-389-1219.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class: Class attendance is taken each week and recorded. Students are expected to attend every class. Three or more absences may result in a delay in the reception of sacraments.

Absence: Please send an email to Hedalya hedalya@skdrexel.or or Carolina carolinp@skdrexel.org with the name of student and reason for absence.

Make-up Classes: Classes may not be made up by attending a different session. If your child has been absent, please ask the catechist if there is

any necessary make up work. At the catechist's discretion, make-up work may be assigned.

Homework/Projects: Homework is given at the discretion of the catechist. The purpose of homework is to reinforce and expand the child's understanding of the lessons and to keep the parents informed and involved.

Workbooks: The student is to bring his/her book and folder to class every session. If a book is damaged or lost during the year, a new one will be issued at replacement cost.

Mass: Students are to attend mass each week with their family.

Parent Meetings: Parents of students in Level 2 **First Communion and Confirmation** classes are **required** to attend designated parent meetings during the sacramental preparation year.

Calendar: The Faith Formation Calendar is located on our website

and in your child's folder.

Emergency Information/ Inclement Weather

When Broward County is under a **Hurricane Warning** our classes will be cancelled. For cancellations for other **weather related and county-wide emergencies** follow the decisions of the Broward County Public Schools.

CODE OF CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

The Ten Commandments will guide all behavior.

Respect is to be given to all adults and students at all times. All individuals involved in the Faith Formation/Catechesis ministry will exhibit appropriate behavior in speech and in actions.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress appropriately with modesty at all faith formation classes and events. The administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate dress in a Catholic formation program.

All discipline is based on Christian principles. Our objective is to reinforce positive behavior.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Volunteers

Volunteers are important and contribute to the success of our Faith Formation/Catechesis Program. We invite parents/guardians, grandparents, other adult, and teen parishioners to become involved in our Faith Formation ministry. All volunteers must fulfill the Archdiocese of Miami Volunteer requirements.

Each volunteer must complete an Archdiocese of Miami Volunteer Application form, be interviewed by the Catechetical Leader, sign a Volunteer Code of Conduct, be fingerprinted by the Archdiocese of Miami, and attend a VIRTUS Workshop, "Protecting God's Children". Volunteers are invited to attend Faith Formation meetings and workshops. The Archdiocese of Miami offers a Catechist Certification program.

Only approved volunteers may be present in the building during class. Any unauthorized people must exit the building at the start of class.

Virtus Lesson

All students in our Faith Formation/Catechesis Program will participate in a safety lesson provided to us by the Archdiocese of Miami. This lesson is part of an ongoing effort to help create and maintain a safe environment for children and to protect all children from the potential of sexual child abuse. These lessons were developed by the creators of the *Protecting God's Children™* program.

This safety lesson will be taught by the child's catechist or a member of our Faith Formation/Catechesis ministry. Our purpose for teaching these lessons is to assist the parents in keeping children safe and to reinforce what to do, if a potentially dangerous situation presents itself. Parents may opt in or out at the time of registration.

For more information on the program, visit the VIRTUS *Online™* website at <https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/parenthandbook.pdf>

Student Photos

The Faith Formation Program reserves the right to use student pictures in publications. Any parent/guardian who does not wish his or her child's picture used must notify the office in writing prior to September 10th.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Please contact the church office for a copy of this document.

Confidentiality

Catechists/Faith Formation volunteers will keep confidential information entrusted to them as long as no one's life, health or safety is at stake.

Reporting Physical/ Sexual Abuse

Parents and guardians should understand that State law requires a teacher or administrator who has reasonable suspicion that sexual or physical abuse has occurred to report this to the Division of Children and Family Services. The teacher or administrator who fails to fulfill this responsibility can be charged with sexual or physical abuse, because the silence contributes to the crime.

Harassment

The Archdiocese of Miami faith formation programs are committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, our parish will not tolerate harassment of employees, volunteers, or students. Such conduct is immoral and illegal and will not be tolerated.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, and/or visual, that is based on a person's protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status or other protected group status. The Archdiocesan faith formation programs will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible job benefits, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's work performance, or that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

Cooperation with Legal Authorities

It is the practice of the Faith Formation Program to cooperate with any local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers that contact the program during any criminal investigation. The faith formation office will attempt to notify the parents of any students sought to be interviewed during a criminal investigation on the program premises, unless directed by an investigator or law enforcement officer to the contrary, which is usually the case involving sexual or physical abuse. The faith formation office will attempt as well to have a representative present during such an interview, unless this is not permitted by the investigators, which is often the case in investigations involving sexual or physical abuse.

Student Withdrawal

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the faith formation program. The Church considers the parents to be the primary catechists of their children. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the faith formation program administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

Substance Abuse Policy

The use or possession of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs by any student on parish property or while participating in any faith formation sponsored activity is forbidden. Transgression of this rule will result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

Any student selling drugs on church property or at faith formation events will be immediately expelled. All Archdiocesan faith formation programs are committed to a drug free environment.

Weapons Policy

Weapons are not permitted anywhere on church grounds or at faith formation sponsored events. Students who bring weapons, who are in possession of weapons, or who threaten others with weapons or items used as weapons will be expelled from the faith formation program.

HEALTH ISSUES AND PROCEDURES

Medication Procedures

The administering of medicine to a child outside the doctor's office or a health institution is a parental responsibility and should not be delegated to faith formation program personnel except under unusual circumstances. Only when absolutely necessary medications will be administered:

- The faith formation program will never administer/dispense medicines (including over the counter drugs) to students without specific authorization by both a licensed physician and the parent of the students. An Authorization for Medication form must be completed and submitted by the parent. The name of the medication and dosage must be indicated on this form.
- All medication must be brought to the office with a parent's authorization.
- Only prescription medication can be brought to faith formation program and must be stored in the church office.
- Prescription medication must be in the original bottle, which must be labeled and must have the exact dosage.
- All medications will remain in a secure location. (By exception, students who are asthmatic may carry a prescribed inhaler and students with severe allergies may carry a prescribed Epi-pen with them during the faith formation program day.) A written log will be kept of dispensed medication.

Emergency Treatment

Emergency contact information provided will be used to notify a family in case of an emergency. When necessary 911 will be called.

Parents of children with severe allergies or disorders have the responsibility of listing that information on our online registration form under Special Needs or Health/Medical Needs.

Emergency Contact

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide the church office with phone numbers and emergency contact information.